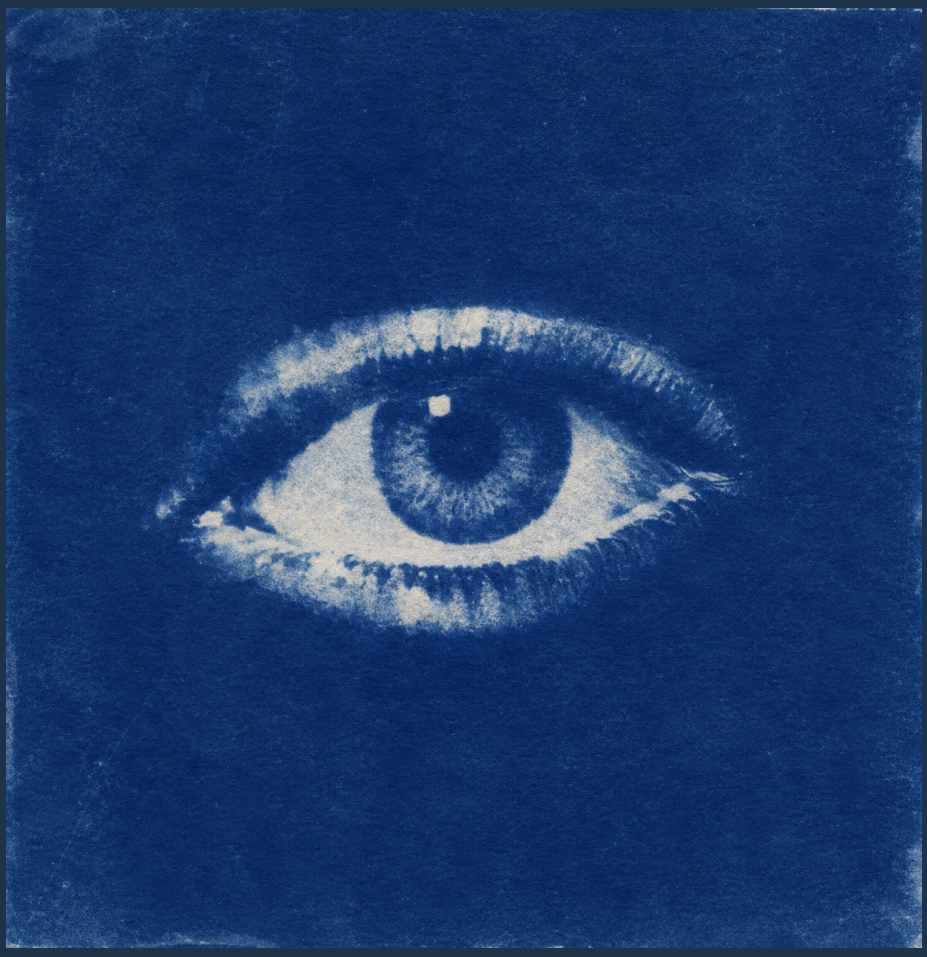
As a part of Ethan Shoshan's exhibition "For Those Without a Tribe"

THE TIDE BETWEEN US



Performance by Johnson Huynh

Featuring Jackson Grove, Madison Hilligoss, Matthew Jiang, and Luis Vega-Torres

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2026 - 7 PM

FLUX IV - 55-21 2ND ST, LONG ISLAND CITY, NY

Program

I. SONGS OF THE SAILORS

High Barbary
Traditional arr. Arthur E. Hall

Johnny Come Down Hilo
Traditional arr. Timothy C. Takach

Cape Cod Girls
Traditional arr. Emily Crocker

Fish in the Sea
Traditional arr. Joris van der Herten

Minnie the Mermaid
arr. Dennis Driscoll

All For Me Grog
Traditional arr. Stephen Hatfield

II. THE CALLING

Incantation and Ritual
Everett Gates

Gorge
Barry Cockcroft

Syrinx
Claude Debussy

Water Shadows
Akira Nishimura

III. IN BETWEEN

Crystal Glass Sound Bath

Performing Artists

Rooted in the belief that art is a practice of connection, JOHNSON HUYNH is a Brooklyn-based saxophonist, vocalist, and interdisciplinary artist whose work bridges music, movement, cultural memory, and community. A queer Vietnamese-American raised in Des Moines, Iowa, Johnson approaches performance with the belief that the body itself is an instrument. He holds degrees in Music Performance and East Asian Studies (Japanese) from New York University and a Master of Music from the Manhattan School of Music, where he studied saxophone under Dr. Paul Cohen. His work in contemporary music includes premiering more than twenty new works by New York City-based composers and international artists. His performances span venues including Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Merkin Hall, and Green Room 42.. Through collaboration and interdisciplinary exploration, Johnson continues to build connections across cultures and artistic practices.

JACKSON GROVE is a Minnesota-born, New York City-based performer, choreographer, and educator. He holds a BFA from Boston Conservatory and has performed nationally, including on the First National Tour of Broadway's Funny Girl. His performance credits include Broadway Sacramento, Pittsburgh CLO, The Ordway, and KC Starlight, as well as appearances at New York Fashion Week and in Times Square. A former Minnesota nominee for the Jimmy Awards, Jackson has also performed with Collide Theatrical Dance Company. His choreography has been recognized by the Hennepin Theatre Trust, and he has taught at Peridance NYC and Broadway Dance Center. This December, he makes his NYC choreographic debut at Choreographer's Carnival.

MADISON HILLIGOSS is a Brooklyn-based performing artist, choreographer, and educator specializing in tap dance. Their work centers rhythm, storytelling, and community building. Highlights include The Tap Dance Kid and Machinal at New York City Center, Anything Goes (The Muny), 42nd Street (The Ordway), Indianapolis Symphony, Seattle Symphony, American Pops, 60 Minutes with Greta Gerwig, Northern Michigan Dance Festival, and Dance Lab New York. More at madisonhilligoss.com and @madisonhilligoss.

MATTHEW JIANG is a New York City based Chinese-Canadian countertenor currently pursuing his Bachelor of Music at the Manhattan School of Music studying with Cyndia Sieden. His recent operatic performances include Ottone in Monteverdi's L'incoronazione di Poppea and Ninetta in Offenbach's La Périchol, as well as scenes as Cesare in Handel's Giulio Cesare in Egitto and Bertarido in Handel's Rodelinda. In addition to operatic repertoire, Matthew is a skilled concert soloist, having performed as the Alto Soloist in Brahms' Liebeslieder Walzes, Britten's Rejoice in the Lamb, and Pergolesi's Stabat Mater. Matthew will appear as the role of Annio in Mozart's La clemenza di Tito as part of the Manhattan School of Music Undergraduate Opera Theater's upcoming scenes program.

LUIS VEGA-TORRES is a Puerto Rican baritone raised in Cincinnati, Ohio. He has spent the last two summers at the Chautauqua Opera Conservatory, where he has performed Le Directeur in Poulenc's Les mamelles de Tirésias, the Count in Mozart's Le nozze di Figaro, and the guitar-playing Wedding Singer in Manuel de Falla's La Vida Breve. In competition, Luis has earned top prizes from the National YoungArts competition, the National Association of Teachers for Singing, Schmidt Vocal Arts, and more he has also been a chorus member with the Cincinnati Opera. Luis is a student of Jack LI Vigni.

Program Notes

The Tide Between Us began with a summer trip to Wareham, MA (the armpit of Cape Cod). During my time there, I spent afternoons swimming in the water with territorial ospreys overhead, wandering near cranberry bogs, trying to name the birds based on their calls across the landscape, and evenings gathered around a bonfire on the beach. At night, I listened to a group of Yalies singing barbershop quartet music beneath a full moon. The voices carried across the beach, mingling with the sound of the waves and the conversations of people gathered around the fire. I remember being struck by how naturally music, landscape, and community seemed to exist alongside one another. There was no concert hall, no formal audience, and no particular reason for everyone to be there beyond enjoying the moment together.

I carried these experiences with me as I began imagining this performance. I became interested in the sounds and traditions of coastal life, in the music people sing together, and in the relationship between the human voice and the natural world. Sea shanties preserve stories and rhythms passed between generations, while the saxophone offers a more personal exploration of sound, breath, and expression. The crystal glass sound bath brings another dimension to this exploration through the interaction of glass, water, and vibration. Across these different musical forms, I find myself returning to the same questions: How do we listen to the world around us? How do we find one another through sound? And what happens when we share an experience that none of us could create quite the same way alone?

I. SONGS OF THE SAILORS

High Barbary

Traditional English ballad, arranged by Arthur E. Hall

"High Barbary," also known as "The Coast of Barbary," is an old English maritime ballad telling the story of a sailing vessel's encounter with pirates off the coast of North Africa. Passed down through generations of oral tradition, the song reflects the sea as a place of danger, adventure, and uncertainty. Unlike work songs designed to coordinate labor, narrative ballads allowed sailors to share stories and entertain one another during long voyages. Its recurring phrases and dramatic storytelling give the piece an almost theatrical quality, inviting listeners into a world where every voyage holds the possibility of the unexpected.

Johnny Come Down Hilo

Traditional sea shanty, arranged by Timothy C. Takach

"Johnny Come Down Hilo" is a traditional shanty associated with American sailing vessels and the cotton trade. Like many work songs, it uses call and response: a lead singer delivers a phrase, and the ensemble answers with a recurring refrain. This

structure helped sailors coordinate repetitive physical labor while creating a shared sense of rhythm and community. Its history reflects the cultural exchanges that shaped maritime music, particularly the influence of Black musical traditions in American port cities. The interplay between individual voice and collective response makes the song a lively expression of the communal spirit at the heart of sea shanties.

Cape Cod Girls

Traditional sea shanty, arranged by Emily Crocker

"Cape Cod Girls," sometimes known as "The Codfish Shanty," is a lively maritime work song associated with American sailing vessels. Its playful lyrics poke fun at coastal communities and their inhabitants, reflecting the humor and teasing that were common in sailors' songs. The tune is related to the broader family of maritime melodies that traveled between ships and evolved through oral tradition. Emily Crocker's choral arrangement brings this spirited material into a contemporary ensemble setting. Its buoyant character and recurring phrases capture an important side of life at sea: beyond hardship and danger, there was also room for laughter, mischief, and camaraderie.

Fish in the Sea

Traditional sea shanty, arranged by Joris van der Herten

The sea has long inspired songs that balance the familiar with the fantastical. "Fish in the Sea" draws on the imagery of the world beneath the water's surface, where countless forms of life move beyond our view. Maritime songs often rely on memorable melodies and recurring phrases, making them easy to share and adapt across generations. Joris van der Herten's arrangement brings this material into a choral setting, continuing the tradition of reimagining folk-inspired music through collective performance.

Minnie the Mermaid

Arranged by Dennis Driscoll

Originally published in 1923 by songwriter B. G. DeSylva under the subtitle A Love Song in Fish Time, "Minnie the Mermaid" began as a playful novelty song about a man who dreams of meeting a mermaid at the bottom of the sea. With its whimsical underwater setting, cheeky humor, and lighthearted tale of an unlikely romance, the song reflects the theatrical spirit of early twentieth-century popular music. Its lyrics and character have evolved through decades of performances and oral tradition, with later versions taking on a more mischievous and sometimes bawdy tone. What began as a charming musical fantasy became a song that could be reshaped by each generation of singers, adding their own humor and personality to Minnie's underwater adventures.

All For Me Grog

Traditional folk song, arranged by Stephen Hatfield

"All For Me Grog" is a traditional drinking song about a sailor who has spent his money on alcohol and tobacco, leaving himself with little more than worn-out clothes and another voyage ahead. The word grog originally referred to a mixture of rum and water issued to sailors in the British Royal Navy. Like

many folk songs, its lyrics have circulated in different versions, changing as singers carried it between ships, pubs, and communities. Beneath its humorous tone is a portrait of hardship softened by camaraderie. Stephen Hatfield's arrangement captures the song's spirited character, bringing this collection of maritime stories to a lively close.

II. THE CALLING

Incantation and Ritual

Everett Gates

Written in 1963, Everett Gates's Incantation and Ritual is a work for unaccompanied saxophone, flute, or oboe. The composition belongs to a period when composers were increasingly exploring the expressive possibilities of solo wind instruments beyond their traditional roles in orchestral and chamber music. Its dedication to Karina Rascher connects it to the development of the solo saxophone repertoire.

The title suggests two connected ideas: an incantation, a spoken or sung invocation intended to summon something, and a ritual, a sequence of gestures whose meaning is created through repetition and intention. These concepts offer an intriguing framework for hearing the piece. Its three movements—Adagio, Allegro Moderato, and Allegro Molto—create a progression from a more deliberate opening toward increasingly animated musical energy.

Without accompaniment, the saxophone must establish its own atmosphere and momentum. Breath, articulation, register, and silence become essential parts of the musical language. The performer is both the source of the invocation and the one carrying out the ritual. The piece invites listeners to consider how sound, through repetition and transformation, can take on a meaning beyond the notes themselves.

Gorge

Barry Cockcroft

Barry Cockcroft's Gorge for solo alto saxophone was composed in 1994 following a holiday on a houseboat at Lakes Entrance in Victoria, Australia. While traveling through the waterways of the Gippsland Lakes, Cockcroft noticed that the narrow channels formed steep gorges, where the sound of his saxophone bounced off the surrounding cliffs. Depending on the boat's distance from the banks, the echoes seemed to speed up or slow down. This experience became the inspiration for the composition.

Cockcroft was particularly interested in recreating electronic-sounding effects through acoustic performance. Rather than using electronic processing, the saxophonist produces the impression of echoes through carefully terraced dynamics—distinct levels of volume that suggest sound traveling outward and returning from a distant surface. The composer even invites listeners to listen for the occasional suggestion of seagulls.

The result is a musical landscape created entirely by one instrument. The saxophone

becomes both the source of sound and a participant in an imagined environment, responding to the space around it. Through changes in dynamics and articulation, Cockcroft recreates the sensation of sound traveling through an expansive natural landscape, demonstrating how a single instrument can suggest an entire acoustic world.

Syrinx

Claude Debussy

Composed in 1913, Claude Debussy's Syrinx was originally written for solo flute as incidental music for Gabriel Mourey's play Psyché. It accompanied a scene involving the death of the Greek god Pan, whose mythical instrument—the panpipes—was created from the reeds into which the nymph Syrinx transformed herself while fleeing his pursuit. The work was first performed by flutist Louis Fleury, who played it offstage during the original production.

Debussy's writing captures the ambiguity and longing of this myth through a single, unaccompanied melodic line. Rather than relying on conventional harmonic progressions, the music moves through fluid phrases, chromatic gestures, and subtle changes in direction. Its sense of freedom can feel almost improvisational, as though the melody is discovering its own path in real time.

Although originally composed for flute, Syrinx has become an important work in the broader wind-instrument repertoire and is frequently explored through transcription. Heard on saxophone, its expressive possibilities take on a different character: the instrument's richer, more vocal quality brings another dimension to Debussy's solitary melody. The story of Syrinx is ultimately one of transformation and longing, with the panpipes becoming a lasting musical reminder of the nymph who disappeared.

Water Shadows

Akira Nishimura

Akira Nishimura's Water Shadows was composed in 2011 for solo alto saxophone and dedicated to Japanese saxophonist Nobuya Sugawa, who premiered the work in Tokyo on December 2 of that year. The piece developed from Nishimura's earlier saxophone concerto, Esse in Anima (1999), continuing his exploration of the expressive possibilities of the instrument.

In his own program note, Nishimura describes the saxophone's timbre as aqueous, imagining its melody flowing like water through the air. When this stream of sound encounters light, it creates fleeting, translucent shadows. He compares these shadows to human beings traveling through time and space, carrying their souls with them.

This imagery offers a beautiful way to approach the work. The saxophone becomes more than a melodic instrument; it becomes a current, constantly shifting in color, shape, and intensity. Its sound suggests something simultaneously tangible and elusive, much like reflections moving across the surface of water.

Nishimura's description connects the natural world to human experience. Water, light, and shadow become metaphors for memory, impermanence, and the passage of time. The work asks listeners to consider the relationship between sound and physical imagery: how something as intangible as a musical phrase can evoke something as vivid as moving water or a fleeting shadow.

III. IN BETWEEN

Crystal Glass Sound Bath

An immersive sound experience

This sound bath explores the relationship between sound, water, and vibration through the simple act of playing a crystal glass with a wet fingertip. As the finger glides around the rim, friction creates a sustained tone that resonates through the vessel. Adding water changes the glass's vibration and pitch, allowing the performer to shape the sound by adjusting the amount of water inside. Each glass produces a distinct frequency and character, and when several are played together, their tones overlap to create an evolving landscape of resonance.

Water becomes both a musical medium and an active participant in the performance. As the glass vibrates, the water responds with ripples and movement, making visible some of the vibrations that might otherwise remain imperceptible. The performer can experiment with different levels of water, pressures, and gestures, discovering how small physical changes can produce unexpected shifts in sound. The result is a musical experience shaped as much by touch and observation as by listening.

Unlike a traditional concert, where music often moves from performer to audience in a defined direction, a sound bath creates a more open relationship between the two. The performer initiates the sounds, but the audience completes the experience through its attention, presence, and individual response. Everyone shares the same acoustic space, yet each person may experience the vibrations differently. There is no single way to listen, and no expectation of a particular response. The quiet between tones becomes just as meaningful as the sounds themselves, allowing room for reflection, stillness, and a sense of togetherness.

The relationship between performer and audience is an important part of the experience. While the performer guides the sounds through touch, movement, and experimentation, the audience contributes through its own attention and presence. The music unfolds in real time, leaving space for unexpected moments, subtle changes, and individual responses. Rather than following a predetermined musical destination, the experience develops through the shared act of listening.



Across distances, through sound, and in the spaces between, we find one another. Thank you for being part of this moment.