



Crocus Hill Ghost Story

A collaboration between Zeitgeist, composer/flutist **Julie Johnson**, writer **Cheri Johnson**, and filmmaker **DJ Mendel**, *Crocus Hill Ghost Story* is a macabre tale of a house possessed, accompanied by a wildly evocative and colorful score performed live by Zeitgeist, Johnson, and KrisAnne Weiss, narrator. Inspired by the author's experiences living in a St. Paul mansion during the 1980s, the work explores the complex relationship between two longtime friends and the evolution of their relationship as they experience a haunting. Suitable for teenagers through adult.

Crocus Hill Ghost Story is a concert-length production of roughly 60 minutes in length. The work is designed to be suitable for a variety of venues and can be set up, performed, and loaded out in the same day. A projection surface is required, and a sound system and piano is helpful, but not required.

Flutist and composer **Julie Johnson** has a distinct sound and approach—rougher and more soulful than a typical classical sound, yet more pure than a typical jazz player's—that she brings to many multi-genre projects, including places where, she's been told, the flute doesn't belong. As a creator and a performer of new music, Julie's work walks the line between composition and songwriting, art music and popular music, between genres as seemingly different as classical and blues. A finalist for the McKnight Fellowship for Performing Musicians and a winner of grants from the Minnesota State Arts Board, the American Composers Forum, the Lanesboro Arts Center, Springboard for the Arts, MacPhail Center for Music, MRAC, and a Banff Centre residency, she plays in many styles, working to bring both the flute and her audiences to music they haven't been in contact with before.

Writer **Cheri Johnson** has received awards and fellowships from the Minnesota State Arts Board, the McKnight Foundation, the Bush Foundation, Yaddo, the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, and The Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown. Her poetry, fiction, plays, and reviews have been included in magazines such as *The Hollins Critic*, *The Rio Grande Review*, *Pleiades*, *Glimmer Train Stories*, *Puerto del Sol*, *Cerise Press*, *New South*, *Phantasmagoria*, *The Emprise Review*, and *Provincetown Arts*. She has studied writing at Augsburg College, Hollins University, University of Minnesota, and as a part of the Loft Literary Center Mentor Series, and she has taught writing at the University of Minnesota, Augsburg College, the International Music Camp Summer School of Fine Arts, and The Loft Literary Center, as well as through the SASE Wings program at Intermedia Arts.

D.J. Mendel is an actor, director, writer and filmmaker who has worked extensively with avant-garde theater-makers as well as emerging new writers, directors, and theater groups. His one man show, *Dick Done Broke*, was recently presented at the Bushwick

Starr Theater and he most recently starred in the European Premiere of Elizabeth ou l'equity, which played at the prestigious Theatre du Rond Point in Paris. Mendel recently starred in Hal Hartley's feature film, *Meanwhile*, and other film roles include Richard Sylvarnes' *The Cloud of Unknowing*, and *H.C.E* (2007), both debuting at the Tribeca Film festival, and the title role in Salvatore Interlandi's critically acclaimed *Charlie*. As a director, Mendel has been a longtime collaborator with Cynthia Hopkins, directing many of her shows and others such as Daniel Bernard Roumain's *Symphony for the Dance Floor* and *Darwins Meditation for the People of Lincoln*, both premiering in NY at BAM's Next Wave festival. He has directed two feature films: *Make Pretend* (which he also wrote) and *Planet Earth: Dreams*, penned by Richard Foreman as well as many shorts, including the award winning, *Crazy for The Ballet*. His own plays, *Tom, Dick & Harry* and *Dick Done Broke*, were presented at The Ontological-Hysteric Theater in New York and his play *Exhaust Pipes and Manifolds* was produced and presented by the Ground Floor Theater Lab. Mendel is also a professor at NYU's Tisch School for the Arts where he is the Head of Advanced Actor Training at Playwrights Horizon's Theater School.

KrisAnne Weiss, mezzo-soprano, has performed leading roles in many operas, including *L'Italiana in Algeri*, *The Dangerous Liaisons*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Così fan tutte*, *Carmen*, and *Madama Butterfly*. She has appeared with the Pine Mountain Music Festival, Fargo Moorhead Opera, Opera Omaha, and Minnesota Opera. She has performed with Valley Chamber Chorale, St. Catherine Choral Society, the Bakken Trio, Mississippi Valley Orchestra, Bel Canto Chorus of Milwaukee, Duluth-Superior Symphony Orchestra, Nautilus Music-Theater, and the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, among others. An advocate of contemporary music, Ms. Weiss has premiered a number of works, among them John Tartaglia's orchestral work *Dark Night*, *Glad Day*, Edie Hill's *Amy Lowell: A Rare Pattern*, and the lead role in Chris Gable's opera *The Ladysmith Story*.

Lauded for providing "a once-in-a-lifetime experience for adventurous concertgoers", **Zeitgeist** is a new music chamber ensemble comprised of two percussion, piano and woodwinds. One of the longest established new music groups in the country, Zeitgeist commissions and presents a wide variety of new music for audiences in the Twin Cities and on tour. Always eager to explore new artistic frontiers, Zeitgeist collaborates with poets, choreographers, directors, visual artists and sound artists of all types to create imaginative new work that challenges the boundaries of traditional chamber music. Up to date information about the ensemble and its activities can be found at www.zeitgeistnewmusic.org



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