



presents

**A BENEFIT READING OF
Epstein Oratorio or, A Modern Hymn to Demeter**

Written by Karen Malpede

Directed by Alex Keegan



**To Benefit the work of The Public Integrity Project's
Epstein Files Litigation which supports Katie Phang's
work to release all of the Epstein Files.**

**Ellen Stewart Theatre
66 East 4th Street, NYC, 10003
October 1-2, 2026**

A Benefit Reading of Epstein Oratorio or, A Modern Hymn to Demeter

CREATIVE TEAM

**Written by Karen Malpede
Directed by Alex Keegan
Stage Management by Lisa R. Stafford*
Lighting by Tony Giovannetti
Press Rep: Don Summa**

**Epstein Oratorio benefit reading producers:
Karen Brooks, Michal Gamily,
Julianne Hoffenberg, Evangeline Morphos**

CAST

**Kathleen Chalfant*
Phoebe Chaplin*
Christen Clifford*
Stella Everett*
Robert Farrior*
Tu Morrow*
Delilah Napier*
Barney O'Hanlon*
Lena Pepe*
Roger Raines*
Titus Welliver***

***Members of Actors' Equity Association.**

**There will be a talkback immediately after the play, with
journalists Wajahat Ali and Ellie Leonard.**

We wish to express our gratitude to the Performers' Unions:

**ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION
AMERICAN GUILD OF MUSICAL ARTISTS
STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS SOCIETY
AMERICAN GUILD OF VARIETY ARTISTS
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**through Theatre Authority, Inc. for their cooperation in
permitting the Artists to appear in this program.**

Author's Note:

This is a play in which contemporary facts are interwoven with ancient myth, which holds a deeper truth.

A poetic language of feeling is here juxtaposed to the transactional interactions, propositions, and empty aggrandizements of the so-called Epstein class.

Based upon reading and research into the files, the victims speak their collective truths. The victims are our children, betrayed. Just as Demeter fought for her daughter Persephone's return from the underworld, it is incumbent upon us to fight for our children's right to life on a fecund, peaceful planet.

Initiates into the Eleusinian Mysteries of Demeter followed the same path annually for centuries, from Athens to Eleusis, performing the same playful rituals, before entering into a cavern beneath the earth where, helped by a hallucinogen, they shared in a vision of life everlasting.

Underground, they surrendered to the will of the goddess, and they lost their mortal fears of death. They surrendered to nature, to the timeless round of the seasons we have now so threatened; they pledged themselves to the nurture of future generations.

The language of the myth holds the secrets of life ever renewing life, which is love.

We need nothing else but our lush language of love to render obsolete prejudice, violence, selfishness, hate.

--Karen Malpede

**Special thanks to
Jennifer Hobbs and Laurie Arbeiter
for their belief in and support of this work.**

Special thanks to Michal Gamily, whose initiative and vision brought this program to life and made this project possible.

CREATIVE TEAM

Karen Malpede (Playwright) is known for her 23 poetic plays on pertinent subjects: *The Beekeeper's Daughter* (rape in the Bosnian war, starred George Bartenieff and Christen Clifford in Italy and New York); *Prophecy* (the effects of the Vietnam and Iraq wars on veterans and the people who love them, starred Kathleen Chalfant and George Bartenieff), *Another Life* (a surreal indictment of the US torture program, with Bartenieff as the mogul and Clifford as his enslaved trophy wife played in New York and London), *Extreme Whether* (based on the life of Dr. James Hansen, played at La MaMa and in Paris as part of the ART COP15). Other plays include *Us*, in which two actors play six characters—their selves and their parents as lovers—directed by Judith Malina, starring George Bartenieff (Obie Award); *Better People*, a surreal farce about reproductive technology and genetic engineering, *Blue Valiant*, (about human and animal grief written for and starring Kathleen Chalfant and George Bartenieff filmed for YouTube). With Bartenieff and Lee Nagrin, Malpede co-founded Theater Three Collaborative in 1995. Bartenieff and she created *I Will Bear Witness*, from the Holocaust diaries of Victor Klemperer; Bartenieff played 52 characters and she directed. (Obie Award). *Troy Too*, about Covid, Climate Change and Black Lives Matter, was produced at HERE in 2022, starring the esteemed Greek actor Lydia Koniordou, as Hecuba. Koniordou had earlier directed Malpede's adaptation of Christa Wolf's novella, *Kassandra*. Malpede's plays are published in three collections, *A Monster Has Stolen the Sun and Other Plays*, *Plays in Time*, and *4 by Malpede plus and Intervention*, and in anthologies. She is editor of *Iraq and Afghanistan in Seven Plays*, *Women in Theater: Compassion & Hope*, and *Three Works by the Open Theater*, with Joseph Chaikin; her first book of theater history, *People's Theater in America, 1929-1972*, with an introduction by John Howard Lawson, is a classic. *Epstein Oratorio or, A Modern Hymn to Demeter* has just been published by Tough Poets Review. Her acclaimed 2025 memoir of life in the downtown avant-garde, *Last Radiance: Radical Lives, Bright Deaths* is available from any bookseller.

Alex Keegan (Director) is a director whose recent work includes the world premieres of *Dilaria* by Julia Randall (DR2) and *Manning* by Benjamin Benne (Portland Stage). She's currently the Beatrice Terry Director in Residence at The Drama League, an Audrey Resident at New Georges, and on faculty at Wesleyan University. Additional directing includes: *Affinity* co-adapted with Ryan Adelsheim from Sarah Waters' novel (Yale Drama), *Maiden Voyage* (The Flea), *Predictor* (AMT), *Auntie Vanya* (Ars Nova ANT Fest), *Birds of North America* (Chester Theater Co.), and new work with Rattlestick's Terrence McNally Incubator, WP Theater, The Orchard Project, INTAR, Primary Stages, NYTW Adelphi Residency, EST/Sloan Project Commission, and The New Group. Alex is an alum of the WP Lab, Rattlestick Directing Fellowship, Drama League Directing Fellowship, Roundabout Directors Group, TFANA's Shakespeare Project, The Civilians R&D Group, Williamstown Directing Corps, New Georges Jam, and Lincoln Center Directors Lab. MFA: Yale Drama. alex-keegan.com

Tony Giovannetti (Lighting) is thrilled to return to the Annex with another show with Theatre Three and Karen Malpede after decades of collaboration. (Theatre Three Collective founded by George Bartenieff, Lee Nagrin, and Karen Malpede)

Lisa R. Stafford (Stage Manager) is a NYC based stage manager whose recent works include the world premiere of Douglas Lyons' *Mother. Daughter. Father. Son* at the Adirondack Theatre Festival and the world premiere of Robert Schenkkan's *ReCON\$truXion* at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival. NYC: *The Chekhov Dreams* (Theatre Row), *The Astonishing Times of Timothy Crachit*, *Through the Darkness*, *Composure* (Workshop Theater). Regional: *Kudzu Calling* (Alabama Shakespeare Festival), *An Enemy of the People*, *The Hobbit*, *The Coffin Maker* (PPT); *Almost Heaven*, *Million Dollar Quartet* (Riverside Theatre); *Rock of Ages* (Engeman Theater). Lisa is also the Production Coordinator for the Broadway Stage Management Symposium. Lisa received her BA in Theatre from Catawba College, where she is a member of the Blue Masque Theatre Hall of Fame, and her Masters in Theatre Education from UNC-Greensboro.

PERFORMERS

Kathleen Chalfant (Demeter) BROADWAY: *Angels in America* (Tony/Drama Desk nom.), *Racing Demon*, *Dance With Me*. OFF-BROADWAY: *A Woman of the World*, *Wit* (Drama Desk, Lucille Lortel, Outer Critics Circle, Drama League, Connecticut Critics Circle, Obie Awards), *For Peter Pan on Her 70th Birthday*, *A Walk in the Woods* (Drama Desk nom.), *Tales from Red Vienna*, *Miss Ovington & Dr. Dubois*, *Talking Heads* (Obie Award), *Dead Man's Cell Phone*, *Nine Armenians* (Drama Desk nom.), *Henry V* (Callaway Award). OTHER NY CREDITS: *Pen Pals*, *Here There Are Blueberries*, *The Year of Magical Thinking*, *Hellzapoppin': What About the Bees?*, *The Vagina Monologues*, *Iphigenia and Other Daughters*, *Endgame*, *Sister Mary Ignatius...*, *The Investigation of the Murder in El Salvador*. FILM: *Familiar Touch*, *Old, Isn't it Delicious?*, *R.I.P.D.*, *The Bath*, *In Bed With Ulysses*, *Lillian*, *Duplicity*, *The People Speak*, *Lackawanna Blues*, *Perfect Stranger*, *Dark Water*, *Kinsey*, *Laramie Project*, *Random Hearts*, *A Price Below Rubies*, *Murder and Murder*. SELECT TELEVISION: Series Regular on "The Copenhagen Test", Recurring on "The Affair", "The Strain", "The Americans", "House of Cards", "Rescue Me", "The Book of Daniel", "The Guardian", "Law and Order" "One Life to Live", "Madam Secretary", "High Maintenance", "Elementary", "Muhammad Ali's Greatest Fight", "Georgia O'Keeffe", "Voices from the White House". AWARDS: 1996 OBIE Award for Sustained Excellence, 2004 Lortel Award for Sustained Excellence of Performance, 2015 Lifetime Achievement Award from the League of Professional Women. 2018 OBIE Award for Lifetime Achievement. She received the Drama League and Sidney Kingsley Awards for her body of work and holds an honorary doctorate in Humane Letters from Cooper Union. Chalfant stars in the acclaimed film, *Familiar Touch*, for which she was awarded Best Actress in the Horizon competition at the 2024 Venice Film Festival.

Phoebe Chaplin (Nameless Girl 3) is a recent graduate of Emerson College's Theater and Performance major. She is very grateful to be a part of this piece and in this company.

Christen Clifford (Mother) is an actor, writer, and artist who has appeared in 3 of Malpede's plays: *Going to Iraq/Blue Heaven* (TNC), *The Beekeeper's Daughter* (Veroli, Italy; Lee Nagrin's *Blue Whale*; and Off B'way), and *Another Life* (John Jay; Irondale; RADA London). Clifford has performed at the Public Theatre, Joe's Pub, The Culture Project, HERE, The Town Hall, Classic Stage Company, and regionally in Boston, Burlington, and Buffalo among others. Her writing has appeared in the anthologies *The M Word: Real Mothers in Contemporary Art and Women in Clothes* (NYTimes bestseller, reissue coming in 2026). She has also published in *Salon*, *The Huffington Post*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, *Cultbytes*, *CultureBot*, *Hyperallergic*, *VICE*, *Broadly*, and *Filmmaker Magazine*. Her art has been seen at The Brooklyn Museum, The Lyman Allyn Museum, Crystal Brides/The Momentary, Eva Presenhuber, The Newark Museum of Art, The New Museum, LACE, Project for Empty Space, The Armory Show, Times Square Arts, and The Museum of Motherhood. She has co-curated *Experiments and Disorders* with Tom Cole at Dixon Place for over 15 years, and she teaches at The New School. More at www.christenclifford.info and @cd_clifford.

Stella Everett (Persephone) Theatre: *Giant* (Broadway), *Five Models In Ruins, 1981* (Lincoln Center Theater). TV: "Running Point" (Netflix), "Not Suitable For Work" (Hulu), "Evil" (Paramount+), "East New York" (CBS). Film: "Ride Or Die" (Tribeca Film Festival 2025). The Juilliard School. Fendi Vanguard Award recipient.

Robert Farrior (Men's Chorus) Theater: *Italian American Reconciliation* directed by Austin Pendleton at the Flea, *Diva* at the Pasadena Playhouse (w/Annie Potts & Richard Kline), *The God Game* at Hudson Stage; founding member of Los Angeles' award-winning avant-garde Zoo District Theater Co, where he appeared in several productions including *Spurt of Blood* by Antonin Artaud and *Metaluna & the Amazing Science of Mind Revue* by Carol Burbank, *Romeo & Juliet* at Barnio, *Secret of Life* by David Simpatico at Wolfskill. Selected film: Oliver North in "American Made" (w/Tom Cruise), "Stolen Girl" (w/ Kate Beckinsale & Scott Eastwood), "Babygirl" (w/Nicole Kidman & AntonioBanderas), "Rob Peace" (Chiwetel Ejiofor, dir), "Tenure". Selected television: "Mindhunter", The Law & Order Triple Crown: "L&O" & "SVU" & "Criminal Intent", "FBI: Most Wanted", "Blue Bloods", "Gossip Girl". Current favorite quote is from the Dalai Lama: "Be kind whenever possible. It's always possible."

Tu Morrow (Nameless Girl 1) is an actress known for her roles in films and TV shows like *Catch a Killer* (2024), *CHAPTER 51* (2025), *Queens ABC* (2021), and *Lifeline* (2025). Morrow also is a musician. Playing instruments including classical piano, bass, guitar and is also a songwriter. Morrow has established herself to be a versatile performer across multiple mediums.

Delilah Napier (Daughter) Theater: *A Mother* (Baryshnikov Arts Center), *Our Class* (BAM Fisher & Classic Stage Company), *The Merchant Of Venice* (Classic Stage Company) *The Member of the Wedding* (Williamstown Theatre Festival), *Taming of the Shrew* (Powerhouse/NYSAF) TV: *Criminal Minds*, *Billions*, *The Sinner*, *Gossip Girl*. Film: *Doom Scroll* (upcoming), co-wrote/directed and starred in *Floating Carousel* (winner of the Woodstock Film Festival 2025), first feature - Voyeur winner "Best Actor" and "Best US Feature Film" at the SoHo Film Festival (now on Amazon Prime.) Currently in development with writing partner, Lucy Powers, on a new screenplay with production company, Star Thrower, and in pre-production on a new film, *In the Blue*, with Passage Pictures.

Barney O'Hanlon (Men's Chorus) as a member of SITI Company, Barney appeared in *FALLING & LOVING*, SITI Company's collaboration with Elizabeth Streb's Extreme Action Company, choreographed by Elizabeth Streb, directed by Anne Bogart. Previously he appeared in SITI Company's production of *The Bacchae* at the Guthrie. Also with SITI Company at BAM's Next Wave Festival: *War of the Worlds*, *bobrauschenbergamerica*, *Hotel Cassiopeia*, *Trojan Women*, *A Rite* (with Bill T. Jones/ Arnie Zane Dance Company), and *Steel Hammer* with the Bang on a Can All-Stars. He appeared in American Document, SITI's collaboration with the Martha Graham Dance Company at the Under the Radar Festival and the Joyce Theater, and was featured in Ann Hamilton's *The Event of the Thread* at the Park Avenue Armory. Also at BAM: choreography and performance for Charles L. Mee's *The Glory of The World*, directed by Les Waters. Barney choreographed the world premiere of Anne Washburn and Dave Malloy's musical *Little Bunny Foo Foo*, directed by Les Waters at Actors Theatre of Louisville; Anne Washburn's *10 out of 12* at Soho Rep, directed by Les Waters; and Sarah Ruhl's *The Oldest Boy*, directed by Rebecca Taichman at Lincoln Center Theater. In 2023 SITI Company received an Obie award for lifetime achievement.

Lena Pepe (Nameless Girl 2) is an actor based in New York City. Broadway: *The Balusters* directed by Kenny Leon (MTC). Off-Broadway: *Cornelia Street* (Atlantic Theater Company), *Baby Teeth* (IRT), *Trailer Treasure* (Target Margin) *Suburbia* (Brooklyn One). Regional (select): *I'm Not Rappaport* (Shadowland Stages), *Purgatorio* (Edinburgh Fringe), *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* (Shadowland Stages). Film/TV: "Devil in Disguise: John Wayne Gacy" (Peacock), "The Legend of Juan Jose Mundo" (Available on Amazon Prime & Apple TV), "To the Floor" (Resident Dilettante), "Blue Face" (Independent). Lena earned a BA in Drama from Vassar College and holds certificates from the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts (LAMDA) and the Atlantic Acting School. She is a co-founder of The Writer's Salon. Instagram: @lena.pepe

Roger Raines (Men's Chorus) is an actor, writer and native New Yorker. He is delighted to be at La MaMa working with this excellent company.

Titus Welliver (Hades) is perhaps best known for his portrayal of Michael Connelly's iconic detective, Harry Bosch in the acclaimed Amazon Prime series "Bosch" as well as his characters from "Deadwood." Most recently Titus's new series "The Westies" on MGM+ has emerged as a critics favorite and will begin production on a second season in the late spring. Titus has just completed filming the final season of the Netflix series "The Night Agent". Some of Welliver's film credits include "The Town," "Gone Baby Gone," "Promised Land" and recent releases "Ricky" (Sundance Best director award), "The Fix" and the upcoming release of "Killing Castro" with Al Pacino.

EPSTEIN ORATORIO BENEFIT READING PRODUCERS

Karen Brooks (Epstein Oratorio benefit reading producer) After decades as a professional bassoonist, Karen Brooks founded and led Mill City Summer Opera which performed in the ruins of a historic flour mill in Minneapolis. Karen learned all aspects of production from ten consecutive seasons of running the opera company and developed a sixth sense for what makes a successful show. Since moving to New York City, Karen has engaged in the development of small scale theater productions and non traditional opera. She currently serves on the boards of Experiments in Opera, Amanda + James, and the New York Academy of Art. Many thanks to both the courageous Epstein survivors who have come forward and the journalists who have reported their stories.

Michal Gamily (Epstein Oratorio benefit reading producer) is an Israeli-born actress, producer, director, and activist who has worked in film, television, and theater in both Israel and the United States. She has been associated with La MaMa for the past 31 years and has been a member of the Great Jones Repertory Company. For the past 13 years, she has served as Series Director and Curator of La MaMa's Coffeehouse Chronicles, a series celebrating the history and legacy of experimental theater. Gamily is also the founder of No Visa Productions, which curates and produces contemporary dance festivals and theater productions. Her recent productions include *Benghazi Bergen Belsen* and *Fire/Escape*.

Julianne Hoffenberg (Epstein Oratorio benefit reading producer) has developed and produced a number of noteworthy theater, documentary and social justice projects and events over her 40+ year producing career, including the Lortel Award-winning play *Betrayed* by George Packer which ran off Broadway and played at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in DC (when that really meant something). Working for Fisher Stevens' documentary company she was production manager on several films including *Beware of Mr. Baker* which won Best Doc at SXSW. She is a proud member of Naked Angels theater company, Co-Founder of Project A.L.S., Advisory Board member of SAY, works for noted social justice organization Until Freedom, and has been producing high profile readings with Kenneth Lonergan and Mark Ruffalo in an effort to save the historic landmark building West Park Presbyterian on the upper west side. This past spring she made her Broadway debut as Co-Producer of the limited engagement *Celebrity Autobiography*. Julianne is currently developing several theater projects and producing her first feature film by Alexander Chaplin.

Evangeline Morphos (Epstein Oratorio benefit reading producer) is a producer and educator who has worked in theatre, film, television, and new media. She has produced over twenty-five off-Broadway productions, including new work by Sam Shepard, David Mamet, David Rabe, and Frank Pugliese. Most recently she produced *Dilaria* by Julia Randall. She was a Professor in the Theater and Film Divisions of Columbia University for twenty-five years; and before that she was Chair of the Undergraduate Drama Department at NYU. She has headed up several not-for-profit companies that developed new plays and new writers. She has written frequently about culture and politics in the WSJ, Politico, Reuters and other media outlets.

TALKBACK GUESTS

Ellie Leonard is an author, editor, and independent journalist, advocating for survivors of sexual assault and investigating the Epstein Files. I have written two books, am working on a third, and recently transplanted my family of six from Missoula, Montana to just outside New York City.

Wajahat Ali is host of *The Left Hook*, on substack, where he speaks with all manner of knowledgeable people on topics covering foreign and domestic policy. Katie Phang, Joy Reed, are among his frequent guests. He is author of the memoir *Go Back Where You Came From*; he wrote on politics for the New York Times and is the author of a play produced by Ishmael Reed and performed around the country.

Tough Poets Review publisher of Epstein Oratorio or, A Modern Hymn to Demeter is a nonprofit literary press publishing provocative books and a biannual print-only journal.

ADDITIONAL CREDITS

Photos by Jackie Rudin, Salem Krieger, and Ellen Lynch

Cover of the book, published by Tough Poets Review

Artwork by Marie Louise Plum

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A full program with information on this
production can be found on the
La MaMa website page of

Epstein Oratorio or, A Modern Hymn to Demeter

In addition you can scan the
QR code Poster located in the theatre lobby
for access to the digital program.

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Rendering: 74 East 4th St.

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(Mon - Fri 11am to 5pm)

NOW PLAYING

**Epstein Oratorio or, A Modern
Hymn to Demeter**

Oct 1-2, 2026
Ellen Stewart Theatre

**All My Bodies
Queer New York
International Arts Festival**

Oct 1-4, 2026
The Downstairs Theatre

La MaMa Kids: Elementary

Oct 3-4, 2026
Community Arts Space

Coffeehouse Chronicles

Oct 4, 2026
Ellen Stewart Theatre

**Brooklyn United Live
Back To School Edition**

Oct 8-11, 2026
Ellen Stewart Theatre

COMING SOON

**Only Under
Queer New York
International Arts Festival**

Oct 8-9, 2026
The Downstairs Theatre

**Once Upon Tomorrow
Queer New York
International Arts Festival**

Oct 10-11, 2026
The Downstairs Theatre

**UNCONDITIONAL, A New
Musical Memoir**

Oct 15-25, 2026
The Club

Doll Day Afternoon

Oct 15-25, 2026
The Downstairs Theatre

**Coming Home: Tibetan Singer
Yungchen Lhamo**

Oct 16-17, 2026