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**Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts and
Brooklyn's National Sawdust Projects
Present
*(M)iyamoto is Black Enough***

Thursday, March 14, and Friday, March 15, 2019, 8:00 pm

**The Compelling Program of Music and Spoken Word
Exploring the Criticism Surrounding the First Bi-Racial Miss Universe Japan
Pageant Winner,
Is a Bold Narrative about Struggle, Joy, Celebration, Justice and People**

(Beverly Hills, CA February 21, 2019) The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts and National Sawdust Projects, the producing arm of Brooklyn's acclaimed National Sawdust, present *(M)iyamoto is Black Enough*, a collaborative musical and spoken word exploration of meaning and conversation based on the controversy surrounding Ariana Miyamoto, the biracial Miss Universe Japan 2015 winner who weathered backlash for her lack of "pure" parentage – that she was not "Japanese enough" – on Thursday, March 14 and Friday, March 15, 2019, 8:00 pm, in the Lovelace Studio Theater at The Wallis. With music composed by Andy Akiho and text by two-time National Poetry Slam champion Roger Bonair-Agard, *(M)iyamoto is Black Enough* creates a brash symphony of hard-driving funk and punk rhythms and biting social commentary. It features Akiho on steel pan and percussion, Sean Dixon on percussion, Jeffrey Zeigler on cello and Bonair-Agard's spoken word. This bold narrative about people, justice, struggle, joy and celebration is also a cerebral jaunt through belief systems. Critics proclaim, "This is exactly what we need to hear right now," (*Arts & Culture Texas*). This is the first collaboration between The Wallis and National Sawdust, a non-profit organization that provides resources and programmatic support to both emerging and established multi-cultural artists and composers who tell their stories through music. National Sawdust is named after the building's original tenant, a sawdust factory.

"National Sawdust, a celebrated incubator of classical and new music, fosters groundbreaking work with a distinctive social viewpoint," says The Wallis' Artistic Director, Paul Crewes. "The Wallis is pleased to partner with them to bring the

powerful and compelling (*Miyamoto is Black Enough* to audiences in Southern California.”

Miyamoto, a Japanese national who grew up as a self-described mixed race “hafu,” is the child of an African American father and Japanese mother. As the country’s first biracial pageant winner to represent Japan at The Miss Universe competition, where she made it to top 10, she drew hostile criticism, much of it on social media. But for the artists involved in *(Miyamoto is Black Enough*, including two “hafu” — a Trinidadian-Brooklynite Black man, and an Irish/Finnish/Swedish hip-hop influenced drummer— Miyamoto is certainly Black enough.

A free pre-concert “Prelude” at 7:00 pm, which includes a complimentary glass of wine provided by The Henry Wine Group, features Classical KUSC’s Brian Lauritzen in conversation about the evening’s program with the musicians.

Single tickets are \$40. Visit TheWallis.org, call 310.746.4000, or stop by in person at the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts Ticket Services Office located at 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210.

About the Artists:

ANDY AKIHO (steel pan/percussion), hailed as "mold-breaking," "alert and alive," "dramatic," and "vital" (*The New York Times*), is an eclectic composer and performer of contemporary classical music. His recent engagements include commissioned premieres by the New York Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra, Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, and Carnegie Hall's Ensemble ACJW; appearances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and at the Kennedy Center. Akiho's numerous awards include the 2014-15 Luciano Berio Rome Prize, the 2015 Lili Boulanger Memorial Fund, a 2014 Fromm Foundation Commission from Harvard University, the 2014 American Composers Orchestra Underwood Emerging Composers Commission, a 2014 Chamber Music America (CMA) Grant with the Friction Quartet and Jenny Q Chai, a 2012 CMA Grant with Sybarite5, the 2012 Carlsbad Composer Competition Commission for the Calder Quartet, and the 2011 Finale & ensemble eighth blackbird National Composition Competition Grand Prize. Additionally, his compositions have been featured on PBS's "News Hour with Jim Lehrer" and by organizations such as Bang on a Can, American Composers Forum, and The Society for New Music. Akiho's debut CD *No One To Know One*, on innova Recordings, features brilliantly crafted compositions that pose intricate rhythms and exotic timbres around his primary instrument, the steel pan.

JEFFREY ZEIGLER (cello) is considered one of the most versatile cellists of our time. Acclaimed for his independent streak, he has commissioned more than three dozen works, and is admired as a potent collaborator and unique improviser. Zeigler has been described as “fiery,” and a player who performs “with unforced simplicity and beauty of tone” (*New York Times*). He was the cellist of the internationally renowned Kronos Quartet for eight seasons, with whom he collaborated with such luminaries as John Adams, Noam Chomsky, Henryk Gorecki, Steve Reich and Tom Waits. Zeigler has since enjoyed a multifaceted career, including collaborations with Yo-Yo Ma, Laurie Anderson, Roomful of Teeth, Philip Glass, Foday Musa Suso, John Corigliano, Vijay Iyer, Tanya Tagaq, Terry Riley and John Zorn, and members of the Eroica Trio and the Cleveland and St. Lawrence Quartets. In addition to dozens of albums, Zeigler is featured on the soundtrack of the Academy Award-winning film, *La Grande Bellezza*, and the Golden Globe-winning film, *The Fountain*. He is also featured in an on-screen cameo in Amazon Prime’s Golden Globe Award-winning series "Mozart in the Jungle." Zeigler has appeared as a soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Toronto Symphony, the Royal Danish Radio Symphony, the Basel Symphonie, among others, and garnered the Avery Fisher Prize, the Polar Music Prize, the President’s Merit Award from the National Academy of Recorded Arts and the Chamber Music America Richard J. Bogomolny National Service Award and The Asia Society’s Cultural Achievement Award.

SEAN DIXON (percussion) is a composer, producer, drummer, bassist and music educator based in New York City. He has performed, toured and/or recorded with Gotye's Ondioline Orchestra, Maxwell, Aloe Blaac, Doyle Bramhall II, Amy Helm, Helga Davis, and many others, appearing at such venues as National Sawdust, The Park Avenue Armory, The Kennedy Center, Philadelphia's The Kimmel Center, and Mass MOCA, as well as at such festivals as MONA FOMA in Tasmania, The Sydney Festival, New York City's River To River, and France's Trans-Musicales. In 2018, he garnered his first Off-Broadway experience as a collaborator and performer in Jomama Jones' *Blacklight* presented at The Public Theatre and The Greenwich House Theatre. He also founded and co-led The Chesterfields with guitarist/vocalist Scott Sharrard and has nurtured professional relationships with numerous local singer/songwriters and a host of jazz, blues, pop, and R&B artists, establishing himself as a diverse and colorful collaborator.

ROGER BONAIR-AGARD (spoken word), a poet and spoken-word artist, was born in Trinidad and Tobago and moved to the United States in 1987. His collections of poetry include *Tarnish and Masquerade* (2006); *Gully* (2010); and *Bury My Clothes* (2013), which was a long-list finalist for a National Book Award. He contributed to the collection *Burning Down the House* (2000), a selection of poems from the Nuyorican Poets Cafe. He is a two-time National Poetry Slam champion and has appeared on programs such as HBO's "Def Poetry Jam" and the PBS "NewsHour," among others. A former Cave Canem fellow, Bonair-Agard performs his work and leads workshops internationally. He has been a writer-in-residence with Vision Into Art and a poet-in-residence with Young Chicago Authors. He is the cofounder and artistic director of the louderARTS Project and teaches poetry at the Cook County Temporary Juvenile Detention Facility in Chicago.

About the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts:

Since opening its doors in October 2013, The Wallis has produced or presented more than 250 dance, theatre, opera, classical music, cinema and family programs to an ever-expanding audience. Located in the heart of Beverly Hills, California, The Wallis brings audiences world-class theater, dance and music, performed by many of the world's most talented and sought-after artists. Featuring eclectic programming that mirrors the diverse landscape of Los Angeles and its notability as the entertainment capital of the world, The Wallis offers original and revered works from across the U.S. and around the globe. The mission of The Wallis is to create, present and celebrate unique performing arts events and educational programs that reflect the rich cultural diversity of our community. Nominated for 48 Ovation Awards, seven L.A. Drama Critic's Circle Awards and the recipient of six architectural awards since opening in 2013. The Wallis is a breathtaking 70,000-square-foot venue that celebrates the classic and the modern and was designed by Zoltan E. Pali, FAIA, of Studio Pali Fekete architects. The building features the restored, original 1933 Beverly Hills Post Office (on the National Register of Historic Places) that serves as the theater's dramatic yet welcoming lobby, and houses the 150-seat Lovelace Studio Theater, GRoW at The Wallis: A Space for Arts Education (a gift of Gregory Annenberg Weingarten and Family and the Annenberg Foundation) and the contemporary 500-seat, state-of-the art Bram Goldsmith Theater. Together, these structures embrace the city's history and its future, creating a performing arts destination for L.A.-area visitors and residents alike.

For more information about The Wallis, please visit: TheWallis.org.

For downloadable photos, please visit: TheWallis.org/Press.

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EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

WHAT:

Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts and Brooklyn's National Sawdust Present
(M)iyamoto is Black Enough

Andy Akiho, steel pan and percussion
Sean Dixon, percussion
Jeffrey Zeigler, cello
Roger Bonair-Agard, spoken word

WHEN:

Thursday, March 14, 2019

Friday, March 15, 2019, 2019

8:00 pm – performance

7:00 pm – free pre-concert Prelude conversation

WHERE:

Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts
Lovelace Studio Theater
9390 N. Santa Monica Boulevard
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

PROGRAM:

(M)iyamoto is Black Enough

music by Andy Akiho

spoken word by Roger Bonair-Agard

TICKET PRICES AND INFORMATION:

\$40 (prices subject to change)

TheWallis.org/miyamoto

310.746.4000

Box Office – Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts Ticket Services

9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd, Beverly Hills, CA, 90210

RUNNING TIME:

Running time is one hour and fifteen minutes, with no intermission.

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