



Annie Dorsen

• **Prometheus Firebringer**

Theater

June 27 - 28

8:30 PM

REDCAT

Roy and Edna Disney CalArts Theater

CALARTS

California Institute of the Arts

We gratefully acknowledge that we operate on the traditional lands of the Tongva, Tataviam, and Chumash people including the Gabrieleño, Fernandeno, and Ventureño; members of the Takic and Chumashan language families; and other Indigenous peoples who made their homes in and around the area we now call Los Angeles. We honor their ancestors past, present, and future, and recognize their continued existence and contributions to our society.

CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

Writer, Director, Performer: Annie Dorsen

Sound Design: Ian Douglas-Moore

Video and Systems Design: Ryan Holsopple

Lighting Design and Technical Direction: Ruth Waldeyer

Software design and Programming: Sukanya Aneja

Voice Prints: Okwui Okpokwasili, Livia Reiner

3D Artist: Harry Kleeman

Dramaturgy: Tom Sellar

Producer: Natasha Katerinopoulos

Company Manager: lyvon E.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Annie Dorsen considers how the proliferation of artificial intelligence in our daily lives feels unprecedented and asks: “Have we been here before?” Each evening of this performance, the predictive text model GPT-4 generates speculative versions of the lost final play of Aeschylus’ *Prometheia* trilogy. Performed by a chorus of AI-generated Greek masks, this story from ancient Greek mythology tells how Prometheus stole the god’s fire for humans—sparking sudden and dramatic advances in technology and the arts, as well as dramatic new sources

of conflict. Dorsen delivers a text composed entirely of quotes from the internet on tragedy and memory, what machines are learning from us, and knowledge (and ignorance) of societal undoing. At the heart of the piece lies the same question that philosopher Simon Critchley observes animates Greek tragedy: “What shall I do?” Probing existential questions about truth and agency, this engaging performance continues Dorsen’s exploration of the contradictory impacts of technology.

Prometheus Firebringer contains loud sounds.

On June 27, there will be a post-show Q&A with Annie Dorsen, moderated by REDCAT Deputy Director and Chief Curator, Performing Arts, Katy Dammers.

Original support for Prometheus Firebringer was provided to Bryn Mawr College by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, Philadelphia. Prometheus Firebringer is supported in part by commissions from New York Live Arts’ Live Feed Residency Program with additional support from Partners for New Performance, and Media Art Xploration’s MAXmachina laboratory, funded in part by Science Sandbox. The piece was developed with the support of the Eureka Commissions program created by Onassis Foundation, and the Mercury Store.

ROY AND EDNA DISNEY CALARTS THEATER

Prometheus Firebringer *is part of the performance program for All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace, and curated by Katy Dammers and Edgar Miramontes.*

All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace *is among more than 70 exhibitions and programs presented as part of PST ART. PST ART: Art & Science Collide, the latest edition of this landmark regional event explores the intersections of art and science, both past and present. PST ART is presented by Getty. For more information about PST ART: Art & Science Collide, please visit pst.art.*



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ABOUT THE ARTIST

Annie Dorsen is a theater director working at the intersection of algorithmic art and live performance. Her most recent project, *Prometheus Firebringer*, premiered at Bryn Mawr College in January 2023, and had a New York premiere at The Chocolate Factory in May, co-produced by New York Live Arts and MAX Media Art Xploration. The piece then moved Off-Broadway to Theater for A New Audience in Fall 2023.

Previous algorithmic performances include *Infinite Sun*, an algorithmic sound installation commissioned by the Sharjah Biennial 14 (2019), *The Great Outdoors* (2017), *Yesterday Tomorrow* (2015), *A Piece of Work* (2013), *Spokaake* (2012), and *Hello Hi There* (2010). These pieces have been presented at numerous theatres and festivals world-wide, including at the Brooklyn Academy of Music (New York), Hebbel am Ufer (Berlin), the steirischer herbst festival (Graz), the Holland Festival (Amsterdam), and Festival d'Automne (Paris).

A retrospective of Annie Dorsen's algorithmic work was presented in 2022, at Bryn Mawr College with major support by the Pew Center for Arts and Heritage. The publication *Algorithmic Theater: Essays and Dialogues, 2012-2022* was created as a literary companion to the event, collecting a decade of writings by and about Dorsen, including dialogues with artistic collaborators in addition to provocative essays on theater and technology.

She has taught at University of Chicago and Bard College, and been a frequent guest lecturer at numerous universities and art schools in the US and abroad.

Dorsen is the recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship, the Spalding Gray Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Foundation for Contemporary Arts Grant to Artists Award, and the Herb Alpert Award in the Arts.

ROY AND EDNA DISNEY CALARTS THEATER

She recently graduated from NYU School of Law, with a focus on tech policy and civil rights.

IN THE GALLERY

Hande Sever: *Take off your eyes*

Through August 10

Hande Sever explores cultural and political archives by excavating texts and images that shape historical narratives.

Abigail Raphael Collins: *BLACKOUT*

Through August 10

Abigail Raphael Collins uses video installation and experimental nonfiction to listen to what is considered unspeakable.

REDCAT CREW

Lighting Programmer: Mahlick Ceesay

Deck: Rachael Neinast

Audio Engineer: Mahlick Ceesay

Audio Assistant: Anthony Storniolo

QLab: Natalie Nicholas

Camera Operator: Ed Carlo Arafiles

Wardrobe: Jean-Paul Jones

REDCAT STAFF

Jacques Boudreau, Facilities and Production Manager

Jheanelle Brown, Film Programming

Chu-Hsuan Chang, Associate Technical Director, Lighting

Brent Charles, Box Office and Visitor Services Manager

Katy Dammers, Deputy Director and Chief Curator,
Performing Arts

Talia Heiman, Assistant Curator

Allison Keating, Deputy Director, Finance and Operations

Daniela Lieja Quintanar, Chief Curator and
Deputy Director, Programs

Lucio Maramba, Associate Technical Director,
Audio and Video

Adam Matthew-McMillen, Director of Production
& Technical Director

Naomi Oppenheim, Front of House Manager

João Ribas, Steven D. Lavine Executive Director of
REDCAT & Vice President for Cultural Partnerships

Rolando Rodriguez, Administrative Manager



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