

CENTER FOR THE ARTS

CURRICULUM GUIDE 2019–2020



Taylor Mac

A 24-Decade History of Popular Music (Abridged)

Saturday, September 21, 2019 at 7:30pm

CFA Theater

For the last 20 years **Taylor Mac**—who uses the gender pronoun “judy”—has created performance events that provoke and embrace diverse audiences. At Wesleyan, judy will perform the Connecticut premiere of the highly immersive and outrageously entertaining two-hour abridged version of *A 24-Decade History of Popular Music* (2016), a subjective history of American culture and dysfunction since 1776. The show highlights various musical styles and artistic voices, ranging from murder ballads to disco, Walt Whitman to David Bowie.

“One of the most exciting theater artists of our time.”

—*TimeOut New York*

Taylor Mac’s performance at Wesleyan is funded in part by the Expeditions program of the New England Foundation for the Arts, made possible with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, with additional support from the six New England state arts agencies.

Presented in partnership with Wesleyan’s Center for the Humanities and Theater Department, with support from Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

Co-produced by Pomegranate Arts and Nature’s Darlings. Above photo of Taylor Mac by Sarah Walker.

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FREE RELATED EVENTS

“Drag Queens and Radical Faeries and Judys, Oh My!”

Thursday, September 19, 2019
at 4:30pm

Allbritton Center, Room 311,
222 Church Street

A panel discussion on gender performance and queer histories in sound and dance with Assistant Professor of Theater, African American Studies, and Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies **Katie Brewer Ball**, Associate Professor of Music **Roger Grant**, and Associate Professor of Dance and Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies **Hari Krishnan**, moderated by Professor of Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Sociology, and Science in Society **Victoria Pitts-Taylor**.

Hosted by Wesleyan’s Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program.

A Conversation with Taylor Mac

Friday, September 20, 2019 at 6pm

Memorial Chapel, 221 High Street

Moderated by **Sean F. Edgecomb**, Assistant Professor of Drama at The City University of New York’s Graduate Center and the College of Staten Island.

Areas of Study:

American Studies, Anthropology, Art History, Center for Humanities, Civic Engagement, College of Letters, Dance, English, FGSS, Film Studies, Government, History Music, Psychology, Religion, Social. Cultural and Critical Theory Sociology, Studio Art, Theater, Writing

Proposed Themes:

Acceptance, Activism, Alternative Histories, American History, American Identity, American Music, Audience Participation, “Beautiful Freak”, Civic engagement, Camp, Collaboration, Community Building, Disco, Drag, Durational Performance, Glam Rock, Humanity, Immigration, Inclusivity, Marginalization, Masking to Expose/ Reveal Truth, Material Cultural Studies, Nationalism, Patriarchal History Making, Prejudice, Politics, Queer Studies, Radical Openness, Resistance, Representation, Revolution, Social Movements, Trauma

Conversation Starters:

- In what ways can durational and participatory theater break down audience defenses?
- How does American history function in the show to “queer” contemporary time?
- How do Machine Dazzle’s costume designs serve to resist misogynistic, homophobic, singular, and whitewashed notions of American identity?
- What different forms/methods of resistance are harnessed in the performance?
- In what ways does Mac reclaim or recast new notions of nation-building?
- How has song/music historically served as a function/strategy of resistance within American history?

Queer Cocktail Hour (21+)

Saturday, September 21, 2019 at 5pm

Conspiracy, 350 Main Street, Middletown

Join fellow audience members for pre-show drink and food specials from 5pm to 6pm at Conspiracy. Ages 21 and up. Entrance is underneath the marquee (follow the stairs to the second floor). This facility requires stairs and may not be accessible for those with physical disabilities.

Talk by Professor Sean F. Edgecomb

Monday, September 23, 2019 at 6pm

Daniel Family Commons,
Usdan University Center

A talk by **Sean F. Edgecomb**, Assistant Professor of Drama at The City University of New York’s Graduate Center and the College of Staten Island, who is currently co-editing a volume on the work of Taylor Mac with David Roman.

This event is part of Wesleyan’s Center for the Humanities Monday Night Lecture Series.

In Conversation: Machine Dazzle

Tuesday, November 5, 2019 at 7pm

Memorial Chapel, 221 High Street

A moderated conversation with Taylor Mac collaborator and artist **Machine Dazzle**.

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Reading Room:

Subjective Histories of Taylor Mac’s “Radical Faerie Realness Ritual: ” <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/670584/pdf>

Taylor Mac UnMaking/Remaking American History:

https://www.wesleyan.edu/cfa/documents/2019/Edgecomb_Taylor_Mac_Essay.pdf

The Ridiculous Performance of Taylor Mac: <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/494445/pdf>

Taylor Mac Wants Theater to Make You Uncomfortable (*The New York Times*):

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/02/magazine/taylor-mac-gary-broadway.html>

Machine Dazzle Embodies a New Kind of Surrealism (*The New Yorker*):

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/10/08/machine-dazzle-embodies-a-new-kind-of-surrealism>

Viewing Room:

Taylor Mac turns U.S. history inside out in epic, 24-hour show (PBS):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SGXOsHnRP-A>

Taylor Mac sings “Amazing Grace” through the streets of San Francisco:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JHSaoMVqta4>

Machine Dazzle—“I don’t know how to do conventional costumes” (*PBS NewsHour*):

<https://www.facebook.com/newshour/videos/costume-designer-machine-dazzle-on-creating-looks-for-a-24-hour-show/10156238277518675/>

Machine Dazzle—“Sacred Objects:”

<https://vimeo.com/23265334>

Creating Work and Artistic Homes—A conversation with Taylor Mac, Kristine Marting and Machine Dazzle:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qxuwwApcyuM>