



For Immediate Release

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## ***Discord-Accord***

cabaret/music-theater

With music by Eric Salzman, William Schimmel and Osvaldo Pugliese  
Featuring Laila Salins, mezzo, and William Schimmel, accordion

Presented by **The Center for Contemporary Opera and the cell**  
directed by Eric Salzman

Wednesday, December 2, Thursday, December 3, and Friday, December 4 at  
**the cell**, 338 W. 23<sup>rd</sup> St., NYC, at 8:00pm

*New York, New York*- On **Wednesday, December 2**, *Discord-Accord*, a cabaret program of music for mezzo-soprano, accordion and strings will have its **world premiere** at **the cell**, 338 West 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, at **8:00pm**. Featuring **Laila Salins**, the renowned Latvian-American mezzo-soprano, and world-class accordionist **William Schimmel**, *Discord-Accord* will take the audience on a musical journey from Eastern Europe to North and South America.

A major focus of the evening is provided by the New York premiere of Salzman's *Brecht Suite*, taken from a French-language production of the Brecht *Good Person of Szechuan* (*La Bonne Ame de Sezuan*), originally commissioned and directed by Antoine Laprise. This suite, performed by Ms. Salins with Mr. Schimmel and a string trio, includes the devastating *Opium Song*, set to one of Brecht's greatest lyrics. Another highlight is *Accord*, a theatrical solo written by Salzman for Schimmel with an impact that turns into a musical and emotionally deconstructed climax – performer included.

The program begins with Schimmel's striking reinterpretation of the familiar *Poet & Peasant Overture*, complete with Latin and Latvian rhythms, a new and off-beat version of an old warhorse. This will be followed by a set of Latvian drinking songs, featuring poetry of some of Latvia's most beloved poets, among them Ms Salins' father Gunars Salins. Also included is music by the Latvian tanguero Oscar Strok whose dance music was a huge success all over Europe and the Far East in the 20s and 30s.

The program ends with instrumental and vocal tangos by Osvaldo Pugliese, one of the greatest and most original of the Argentine tango masters. The set is made up of several of Pugliese's creations including neglected masterpieces such as *La Yumba*, *Recien*, *Recuerdo* and *Una Vez*. Pugliese was the tanguero who re-created classic tango by taking it out of the dance hall, turning it into a contemporary art form featuring biting dissonance, heart-stopping rhythm and heart-breaking melody.

**Eric Salzman** received widespread acclaim for the Western Wind Vocal Ensemble's recent performances of his work *Jukebox in the Tavern of Love* – on a text by Valeria Vasilevski – at The Flea Theater and Bargemusic. According to the *New York Times*, this 'modern madrigal comedy' "...effectively blends elements of barbershop-quartet harmonizing, cabaret, Renaissance sacred music, polyphony, Tin Pan Alley and avant-garde effects". Salzman is Artistic Director of The Center for Contemporary Opera and his book on *The New Music Theater: Hearing the Body, Seeing the Voice* – with Thomas Desi – was recently published by Oxford University Press.

One of the pioneers of the new music theater, he has been working in the field since the 1960s.

successful New York premiere at Symphony Space's Wall-to-Wall Opera in 2007. Salzman has worked in France, Québec, The Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Norway and elsewhere. He became acquainted with the authentic Argentine tango years ago when he was artist-in-residence at the Instituto Torquato di Tella in Buenos Aires where he was teaching and performing his multi-media and music-theater works at the invitation of Alberto Ginastera. It was at this time that Salzman became acquainted with the works of Astor Piazzolla and Piazzolla's great predecessor Osvaldo Pugliese. On his return to the U.S., Salzman organized two organizations, both of them with William Schimmel as a founding member: Quog Music-Theater and The Tango Project paved the way for the development and revival of new music-theater and classic tango. Salzman's web site is [www.ericssalzman.com](http://www.ericssalzman.com).

**William Schimmel** is a virtuoso accordionist, author, philosopher and composer. He is one of the architects of the tango revival in America, the resurgence of the accordion and the philosophy of Musical Reality (composition with pre-existing music). He received his diploma from the Neupauer Conservatory of Music and his BM, MS and DMA degrees from Juilliard. He has performed with virtually every major symphony orchestra in America and has had a longstanding relationship with the Minnesota Orchestra as well as virtually every chamber music group in New York including Ensemble Sospeso and the Odeon Jazz Ensemble. Other colleagues include Sting and Tom Waits. Schimmel is a founder of the Tango Project. His film work includes *Scent of a Woman*, *True Lies*, *Kun Dun* and documentaries for the Nature Conservancy, which have won numerous prizes.

His own music ranges from the concert hall to Broadway and off-Broadway and he has written countless accordion pieces for himself and others, including a test piece for the Coupe Mondiale, the accordion's most prestigious world competition. His *Portrait No. 1 for orchestra* was conducted by Leopold Stokowski. He heads the Neupauer Conservatory Order of the Shield program, a private studies program for gifted graduate students.. He conducts a 3-day master class and concert series sponsored by the American Accordionists' Association where he is distinguished lecturer in residence. The Confederations International of Accordionists have awarded him a distinguished merit award for the AAA Master Class and Concert Series as well as his contribution to the international accordion scene. He received the American Accordionists' Association Distinguished Service Award for 50 years of activity and his work as Lecturer in Residence. Dr. Schimmel, and his wife, choreographer, director, filmmaker Micki Goodman, co-direct the Institute for Private Studies, a pluralistic think-tank. Their 27-year-old son, Michael, is an accordionist, visual artist and Special Olympics gold medal winner. Mr. Schimmel's web site is [www.billschimmel.com](http://www.billschimmel.com)

**Laila Salins, mezzo-soprano**, grew up just beyond the skyline of New York, immersed in the Latvian heritage of her parents who emigrated to the United States after WWII. She has enjoyed a richly diverse performing career on both the theater and concert stages, being praised by the NY Times for "captivating the crowd with her performance" and by the Neue Zuercher Zeitung as being "exceptional in her singing ability, feeling for style and performing intensity." She has performed with the Zurich Opera, the Latvian National Opera, Music Theater Group (NY), Opera Factory Zurich and Connecticut Grand Opera, among others. She is highly regarded as an interpreter of contemporary music, most recently as vocal soloist of the Ecliptica Ensemble. She was co-founder of Kolibri, a music ensemble that specialized in unique recreations of Latvian folk music. She has starred in the premieres of many new American and Latvian operatic and music theater works, and has given recitals in Germany, England, Sweden, Australia, Canada and the U.S. She is the creator of *InSomnia/InSexton*, a music theater work for which she composed the music and adapted the text, based on the poetry and life of Anne Sexton, produced by the HERE Arts Center in NYC. She received her B.A. from New England Conservatory and her M.A. from SUNY at Stonybrook. Ms. Salins recently completed a recording of Latvian ballads and drinking songs (*Saskandinot*; iwith the American Latvian Cultural Foundation). Her website is: [www.lailasalins.com](http://www.lailasalins.com).

The program also features three of New York's top string players: **Machiko Ozawa** and **Marc Levine**, violins, and **Leo Grinhauz**, cello.

**Advance tickets through Brown Paper Tickets, 800 838-3006 or <[brownpapertickets.com](http://brownpapertickets.com)>**  
**For Reservations call ??? ???-???? (tickets may be available at the door but seating is limited)**  
**For Press Tickets: Laura Malick 917 339.7183 [lmalick@cohndutcher.co](mailto:lmalick@cohndutcher.co)**