

JOAN is pleased to present Barnett Cohen's SOMETHINNNNGISALWAYSSSSWRONGGGG, a performance questioning the way language, affect, and embodiment are shaped by contemporary political realities. Over its two-night run, a cast of five performers will deliver Cohen's nonlinear script, which revolves around a central theme of complicity, as they move throughout the space, periodically emerging from and rejoining the spectators. Daniel Bruinooge will perform an original score on the production's only prop: a white, baby grand piano. Originating out of a daily practice of automatic writing, Cohen's scripts begin as stream of consciousness verse, and result in performances that test the limits of language and the ability to connect with others. The fits and starts, awkward pauses, long silences, and halting declarations that occur throughout this performance mirror our common search for meaning and understanding, not only of ourselves but of a world off its axis.

SOMETHINNNNGISALWAYSSSSWRONGGGG is created by Barnett Cohen in collaboration with performers Deja Bowen, Elisa Noemi, Danielle Swords, Bree Wernicke, and Roksana Zeinapur. The score is composed and performed by Daniel Bruinooge. Styling by Jenni Lee. Make up by Hayley Farrington. Technical Direction by McKenna Warde.

About the performance, Cohen has written the following statement:

Everything is broken and we all know it. Hope, that once shimmering vehicle, is now a banged up junker with busted brakes headed for an existential cliff. Change, the personal and the political and the collective, feels quaint. We could all stop eating animals or wasting single-use plastics or help the homeless or never board a plane again but if the end is nigh, the end is nigh motherfuckers. One less burger or flimsy shopping bag or donation to a well-meaning nonprofit will not blunt our impending apocalypse.

SOMETHINNNNGISALWAYSSSSWRONGGGG explores the link between the lack of meaningful policies that would effectively confront the myriad crises that we currently face and our feelings of despair and complicity. The causes are structural and the burden of change becomes a weight too heavy to shoulder. There is, however, no cavalry coming to save us. No perfect politician who, with the stroke of many pens, might spare us from our unfortunate inheritance of fear and greed and gluttony. Facing down the inevitable, SOMETHINNNNGISALWAYSSSSWRONGGGG posits that a radical conversation with our feelings, to better acquaint ourselves with why we do what we do, might be the first step toward revolutionary action. Self-understanding and self-compassion results in relief. That relief can translate into liberation, and that liberation can become the starting point for positive change. SOMETHINNNNGISALWAYSSSSWRONGGGG is therefore a performative act

of internal and external probing, of becoming more intimate with the self and holding the discoveries aloft for all to see.

Barnett Cohen lives and works in Los Angeles. He received formal theatrical training from the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts before pursuing an MFA at the California Institute of the Arts. He also holds a BA in English from Vassar College. He has exhibited work at numerous venues, including LAXART, Mast on Fig, The Neutra VDL House, 356 Mission, Human Resources, and Vox Populi, and was recently in-residence at the MacDowell Colony.

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