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JASON ASBURY, MUSIC DIRECTOR · CHRIS URQUIAGA, ASSISTANT MUSIC DIRECTOR

Presents

HOLIDAY CELEBRATION 2023

George Frideric Handel's

MESSIAH

Part 1 & Hallelujah Chorus

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, 7 PM
Old First Reformed Church, 729 Carroll St., Park Slope
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 3 PM
St. Ann & the Holy Trinity Church, 157 Montague St., Brooklyn Heights

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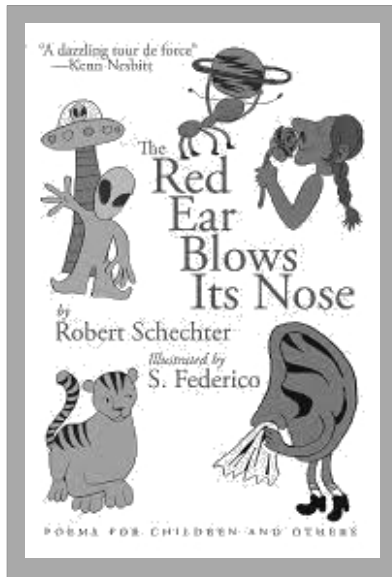
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★**Kirkus:** ...masterful command of metrics and rhyme, the poet launches observations both playful and reflective on topics from seasons to self.

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Chris Urquiaga, Assistant Music Director

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HOLIDAY CELEBRATION 2023

George Frideric Handel's

MESSIAH

Part 1 & Hallelujah Chorus

With

Megan Pachecano *SOPRANO*

Catherine Hedberg *MEZZO-SOPRANO*

Edward Washington II *TENOR*

Peter Kendall Clark *BARITONE*

There will be a reception following the performance.

Please join us!

The concert program is continued on page 5

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Messiah

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1: Sinfonia (Overture)

2: Recitative

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.
Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." —**ISAIAH 40:1-3**

3: Air

Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill made low, the crooked straight, and the rough places plain. —**ISAIAH 40:4**

EDWARD WASHINGTON II, TENOR

4: Chorus

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. —**ISAIAH 40:5**

5: Recitative

Thus saith the Lord of Hosts; yet once, a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations; and the Desire of All Nations shall come. The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom you delight in: behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. —**HAGGAI 2:6-7; MALACHI 3:1**

PETER KENDALL CLARK, BARITONE

6: Air

But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire. —**MALACHI 3:2**

CATHERINE HEDBERG, MEZZO-SOPRANO

7: Chorus

And He shall purify the sons of Levi, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. —**MALACHI 3:3**

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-LEO TOLSTOY

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8: Recitative

Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Emmanuel.
“God with us.” — **ISAIAH** 7:14; **MATTHEW** 1:23

9: Air and Chorus

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain. O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength: lift it up, be not afraid: say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. — **ISAIAH** 40:9; **ISAIAH** 60:1

CATHERINE HEDBERG, *MEZZO-SOPRANO*

10: Recitative

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee.
And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.
— **ISAIAH** 60:2–3

11: Air

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light, and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. — **ISAIAH** 9:2

PETER KENDALL CLARK, *BARITONE*

12: Chorus

For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. — **ISAIAH** 9:6

13: Pifa (Pastoral Symphony)

14a: Recitative

There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night.

14b: Recitative

And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. — **LUKE** 2:8–9

15: Recitative

And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. — **LUKE** 2:10–11

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16: Recitative

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host
praising God, and saying: — **LUKE 2:13**

MEGAN PACHECANO, SOPRANO

17: Chorus

Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good will towards men.

— **LUKE 2:14**

18: Air

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!

Behold, thy King cometh unto thee! He is the righteous Saviour,
and He shall speak peace unto the heathen. — **ZECHARIAH 9:9-10**

19: Recitative

Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped.
Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.

— **ISAIAH 35:5-6**

20: Air

He shall feed His flock like a shepherd, and He shall gather the lambs with
His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.

Come unto Him, all ye that labor, come unto Him ye that are heavy laden,
and He will give you rest. Take His yoke upon you, and learn of Him, for He is meek
and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

— **ISAIAH 40:11; MATTHEW 11:28-29**

MEGAN PACHECANO, SOPRANO

21: Chorus

His yoke is easy, and His burthen is light. — **MATTHEW 11:30**

44: Chorus

Hallelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord
and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever.

King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

— **REVELATION 19:6; 11:15; 19:16**

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From the Music Director

IT HAS BEEN MORE THAN 25 YEARS since the chorus has performed excerpts from Handel's *Messiah*. As I began to plan for this season a year ago, I chose to program Part I of the oratorio for a couple of reasons. The first is that over the past three years, I have found that people find comfort in revisiting works that are familiar. To those people, I hope this performance brings moments of joy and sparks warm memories of past performances. At the same time, I've been surprised to hear from so many people who have never heard nor performed the piece. To those, I say welcome to Handel's *Messiah*, a piece that has been performed continuously since it was premiered in 1742!

The second reason is connected to the Chorale's May 2018 performance of Rex Isenberg's *Messiabs: False and True*. The work explored the idea that in times of crisis, people naturally seek out charismatic individuals within their communities and elevate them to prominence in the hopes that they will lead them out of darkness. *Messiabs: False and True* examined this particular cultural phenomenon by tracing the trajectory of heroic and horrific leaders throughout history. The libretto combines texts in English of various authors (Isaiah, Barack Obama, Ronald Reagan, Jim Jones, Sabbatai Zevi, Søren Kierkegaard, and others), recited by a narrator. These texts are juxtaposed with passages from the Old and New Testaments. Much of the biblical text is borrowed from Handel's *Messiah*, but presented in the Latin Vulgate translation.

While Part I of Handel's oratorio is directly linked to the birth of Christ, it celebrates ancient, universal themes such as peace, goodwill, hope and redemption.

Messiah, composed in just 24 days in 1741 by George Frideric Handel, is a true classic oratorio; it premiered in Dublin, Ireland as a charitable performance for prisoners' debt relief. With lyrics in English that librettist Charles Jennens pulled from the King James Bible, *Messiah* tells the story of Christ's birth, death, and resurrection.

As fitting for the holiday season, Grace Chorale of Brooklyn will perform Part 1 of *Messiah*, which tells the Christmas story. The concert will conclude with the *Hallelujah* Chorus.

— Jason Asbury



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About the Artists

JASON ASBURY, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Jason Asbury is currently serving as the Associate Head of School at Saint Ann's School where he has taught music for twenty-five years. He has been active as an organist and conductor in the New York City metropolitan area since 1997 and served 17 years as Director of Music at Prospect Presbyterian Church in Maplewood, New Jersey. He has served as assistant conductor of the Summit Chorale at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey, accompanist for the Brooklyn Youth Chorus, conducted the Prospect Presbyterian Chancel Choir's concert tours in Scotland and Montreal, and has led the Saint Ann's High School Chorus on tours to Germany, Czech Republic, Spain and Iceland. In August 2017, he led a choir trip of 150 choristers to Scotland in honor of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation.

In 2017, Jason launched Communitiesinharmony.com, a blog that celebrates the power of community choruses to create change. The blog features a story about a choir from each of the 50 states.

CHRIS URQUIAGA, ASSISTANT MUSIC DIRECTOR

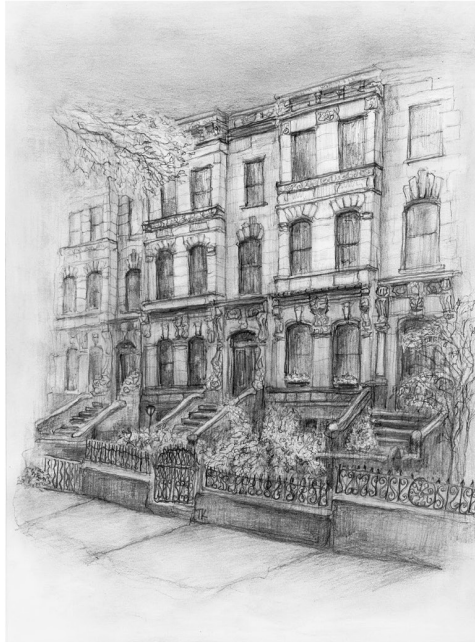
Singer-songwriter, pianist, and producer Chris Urquiaga is lauded for his exciting performance energy and smooth voice. Hailed as "...the next big thing" by *Metro Weekly* magazine, this Latin pop virtuoso is internationally recognized for his pop compositions laced with Latin, Afro, and Brazilian influences. His music is influenced by his Brazilian and Peruvian heritage and explores themes of gender fluidity and queer culture.

Performance highlights include appearing at the White House for President Barack Obama and the First Lady and as a headliner for Latin Music Night at 54 Below, as well as the 2022 ¡Presente! Latino Heritage Festival Concert at the new Smithsonian National Museum of the American Latino.

His music as urban Latin artist *JChris* has achieved over 2 million views on YouTube, over 500,000 streams on Spotify, international concert touring, and music video productions. His single "Caliente" featured chart-topping Latin music superstar Naldo Benny and was filmed in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Chris is proud to be the new assistant director of Grace Chorale of Brooklyn. Before his appointment, Chris worked with Grace Chorale as a featured vocalist, commissioned composer, and accompanist. Chris was artistic director of Congressional Chorus in Washington, D.C. 2020-2021 and has been a music teacher at Saint Ann's School in Brooklyn Heights since 2021.

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MEGAN PACHECANO, SOPRANO

Praised for her “lucid soprano” (*NY Times*), Megan Pachecano has performed roles in six Handel oratorios, including her Lincoln Center debut. She has sung solos in Mozart’s *Great Mass in C minor*, *Coronation Mass*, *Requiem*, and *Exsultate, jubilate*, Haydn’s *Lord Nelson Mass* and *Little Organ Mass*, Ravel’s *Shéhérazade*, Beethoven’s *Die Ruinen von Athen*, and Villa-Lobos’ *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5* with orchestras across the country.

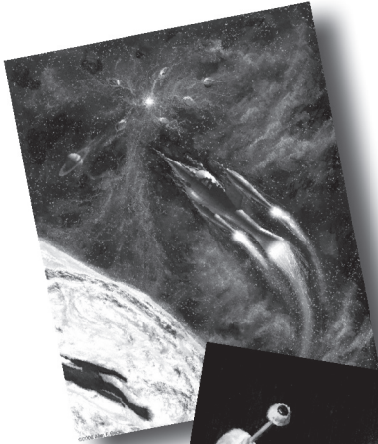
Ms. Pachecano brings a “shimmering lyric soprano” (*Opera News*) to roles such as Beatriz in Catán’s *La hija de Rappaccini* with Chicago Opera Theater and the title role in the World Premiere performance of Rosner’s *The Chronicle of Nine: The Tragedy of Queen Jane* with Odyssey Opera / Boston Modern Orchestra Project. Other engagements include a live broadcast performance on Radio Television Hong Kong as Valencienne in *The Merry Widow*, many productions with the Metropolitan Opera Chorus, and performances of Adina (*L’elisir d’amore*), Norina (*Don Pasquale*), Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*), and Cunegonde (*Candide*).

Ms. Pachecano holds a Master of Classical Voice (Manhattan School of Music) and a Bachelor of Voice Performance (University of Texas at Austin).

CATHERINE HEDBERG, MEZZO-SOPRANO

A versatile performer, mezzo-soprano Catherine Hedberg has a particular passion for early repertoire and new music. Recent performances include a recital of works by Nadia Boulanger and Irving Fine, a South Korean tour with the American Soloists Ensemble of National Chorus of Korea, Tyshawn Sorey’s *Monochromatic Light (Afterlife)* at the Park Avenue Armory, Dana Lyn’s *A Point on a Slow Curve* at Joe’s Pub, and Lewis Nielson’s *Cilice* with Wavefield Ensemble. She has been a frequent collaborator with the chamber ensemble Musicians of the Old Post Road, appearing on the ensemble’s recording of Christmas music from 18th century Central and South America, and regularly performs as both a soloist and ensemble musician. She has appeared as a soloist with the Handel and Haydn Society, True Concord, Boston Camerata, Central City Chorus, Exsultemus Period Ensemble, Newport Baroque Orchestra, and Victoria Bach Festival, among others.

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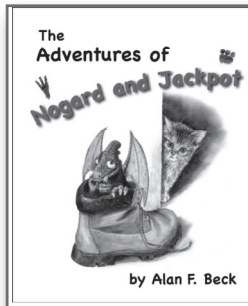


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EDWARD WASHINGTON II, TENOR

American Tenor Edward Washington II was born in England, raised in Saudi Arabia and currently lives in New York City. He's celebrated for his soaring high notes, fast melismas, engaging interpretations and generous stage presence. Armed with a BM from Stetson University and a Master's from Morgan State University, Edward has honed his craft through rigorous training and academic excellence in the United States and abroad.

Throughout his career, Edward has performed with prestigious opera companies including Opera Omaha, Detroit Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and the Metropolitan Opera. He's also performed with Wheeling Symphony, Orlando Philharmonic, Jacksonville Symphony, Ocala Symphony, Orchestra Amadeus and US Air Force String Ensemble. He's also performed in major concert Halls and music festivals showcasing his versatility as a vocal artist. His repertoire includes opera, oratorio, cantatas, art songs, musical theater, spirituals, and hymns.

Edward is a passionate advocate for music education and physical health. He actively engages in advancing music in America with his fraternity: Phi Mu Alpha, Sinfonia. He has premiered the works of five American composers including that of Robert Troeger, Mark Butler, Scott Joiner, Lester Green and Timothy Amukele.

PETER KENDALL CLARK, BARITONE

Peter Kendall Clark sang in the world premieres of Ricky Ian Gordon's *The Garden Of The Finzi-Continis* and Ted Rosenthal's *Dear Erich* (NYCO), and the NYC premiere of Tom Cipullo's *The Parting* (Chelsea Opera). Cast by Harold Prince in his valedictory production of *Candide*, he sang with NYCO last season in the US premiere of Lera Auerbach's "Vessels of Light" at Carnegie Hall. Regionally: Ashlawn Opera (*Annie Get Your Gun, Camelot*), Hawaii Opera Theatre (*Sweeney Todd*), Virginia Opera (*Street Scene, Camelot*), St. Petersburg Opera (*Putting It Together, The Music Man*), Anchorage Opera (*Candide*), Syracuse Opera (*Die Fledermaus, The Threepenny Opera*), Union Avenue Opera (*Glory Denied, Don Pasquale, A Little Night Music*). This season he debuted at Opera Roanoke and Opera Company of Middlebury as Older Thompson in *Glory Denied*. Beginning in May of 2020, his nightly stoop concerts in Brooklyn garnered global media attention ("the hottest ticket in town" - New York Post). As the "Brownstone Baritone" he continues to give Cabaret Concerts in Brooklyn Heights and around the country.



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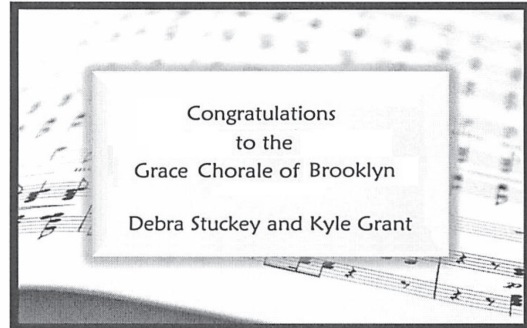
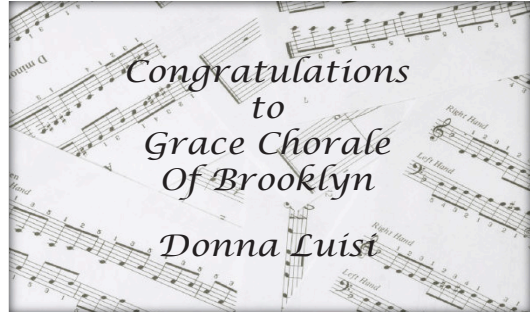




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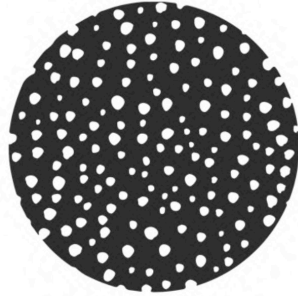
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Clyde Daley

Trumpet II

Jesdelson Vasquez

Timpani

Charles Kiger

Continuo

Chris Urquiaga

**Principal*

GRACE CHORALE OF BROOKLYN

Jason Asbury, Artistic Director

Christopher Urquiaga, Assistant Music Director

Sopranos

Laura Dalheim

Brenda DeCommer

Ariana Dimock

Allison Doerr

Jenna Doherty

Amy Fontaine

Diana Fortuna

Liz Gladoun

Sara Hardwick

Natasha Jarrett-DelRosso

Melissa Kelly

Laura Kolb

Sarah Lindberg

Ashley Mabbitt

Eileen McGivney

Maura McGrath

Ally Miller

Jeanne Nagle

Marta Nelson

Karen Ogle

Katie O'Sullivan

Louise Parks

Didi Rick

Faith Rivera

Renate Schwartz

Leeza Shirokova

Olivia Stockard

Stefanie Teitelbaum

Christine Walker

Miryam Wasserman

Carol Weinrod-Velez

Sonia Welch

Clara Yip

Altos

Sue Aaronson

Keri Bertino

Elizabeth Cunnick

Emily Davidson

Donna Epstein

Lisa Feiner

Deborah Gallagher

Elizabeth Harrington

Griselda Healy

Eliza Hicks

Sara Hobler

Naomi Jaffe

Ana Maria Jomolca

Jessica Johnson

Jean Kahler

Marlyn Klee

Jean Kleinpaste

Rachel Kueny

Margaret Lupardo

Danielle Malkin

Susan Martello

Anne Mazza

Erin McCabe

M Miller

Claudia Nelson

Nan O'Shea

Elizabeth Orfan

Michelle Panzer

Katrina Perito

Chelsea A. Peterson

Alex Reynolds

Bess Rosen

Susan Straub

Ellen Telzer

Debra Victoroff

Grace Vincent

Denise Worker

Deborah Wythe

Tenors

Alan Beck

Barrin Bonet

Janet Campano

Jessica Daly

Jaime Galindo

Brit Geiger

Akari Kubo

Brent Porter

Colin Proctor

Terry Quinn

Steve Shohl

Basses

David Behl

Chip Brenner

Scott Bromschwig

Matt Dellinger

Daniel Evans

Robert Frenzel-Berra

David Frutkoff

Eric Granwehr

Douglas Jensen

Bill Leavitt

Bob Lewis

Richard Mann

John O'Leary

Monte Peterson

Pablo Provencio

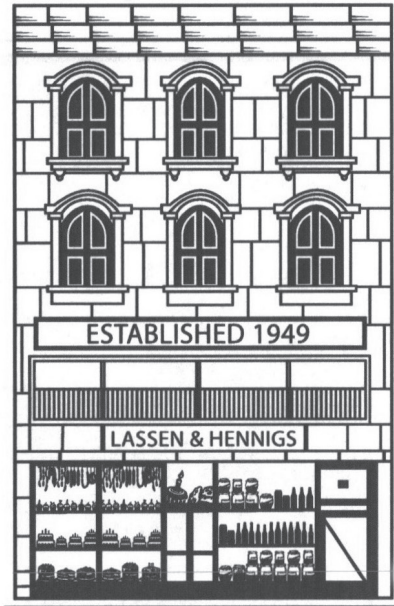
Gordon Reynolds

Patrick Scalise

Peter Wheelwright

Christopher Wu

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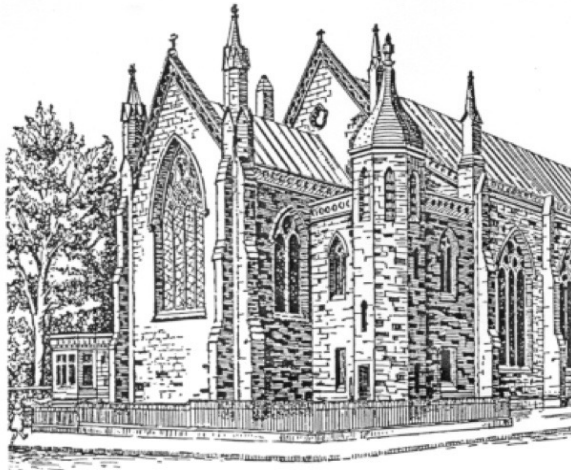
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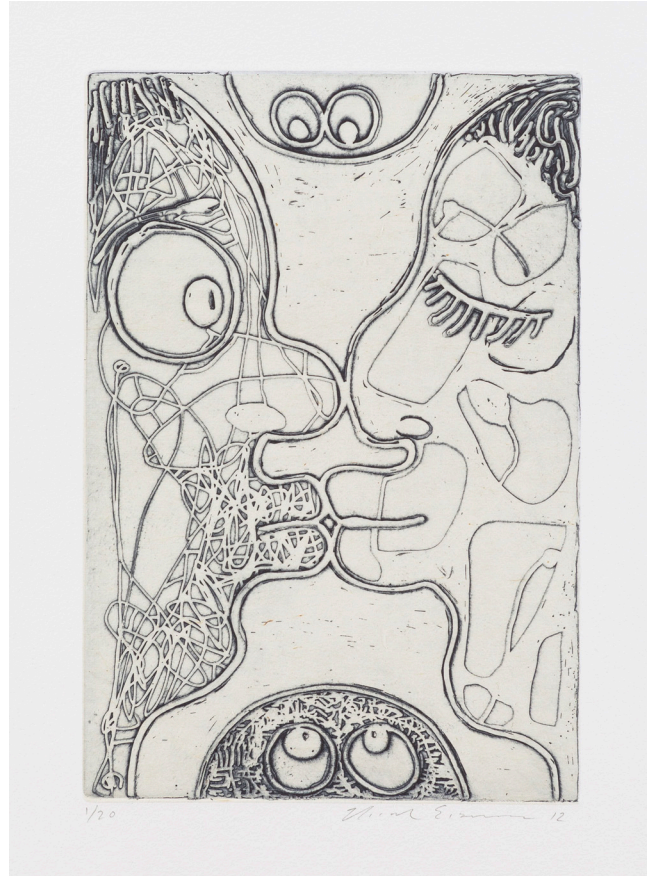
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