

Music at the Museum celebrates the life, feminism and legacy of artist Mina Loy

by Emma Butterfield

Orient Staff

As Mina Loy's works hang on the walls of the Bowdoin College Museum of Art (BCMA) for just a few more days, a captivated audience listened as the notes of a piano danced about the room, bringing the extraordinary artist back to life this past Tuesday at "Music at the Museum."

The performance featured Artist-in-Residence and Director of the Bowdoin Orchestra George Lopez alongside guest artists Katelyn Manfre and Gulimina Mahamuti, performing at noon and again at 4 p.m.

To commemorate the closing of the exhibition "Mina Loy: Strangeness is Inevitable," Lopez played seven piano pieces originating from areas and times where Loy lived. He was joined by Mahamuti, a renowned Chinese-American pianist who per-

forms with Lopez as "Duo Mundi: George & Guli." Between pieces and at times interrupting the music, actress Katelyn Manfre represented Loy's voice.

In addition to bringing together music and visual art, the show added a third dimension to the performance with Manfre's role as Loy. Although Music at the Museum has a long history at the BCMA, Tuesday marked the first time where acting was incorporated into the performance.

BCMA Co-Director Anne Goodyear added that the interdisciplinary performance highlighted an emphasis on cultural time and space.

"I love the idea that the performance broadcasts a connection that art can help us make between the present moment and some other distant moment that is apart from us and time and space," Goodyear said. "One of the things that makes the

study of the arts so powerful is that it can help us to have a sense of living beyond ourselves and being aware of other sorts of cultural and intellectual contexts."

Lopez said that he took inspiration from the vitality of Loy's work.

"I was so taken by Mina Loy ... as a model for freedom of thought and creativity and boldness," Lopez said. "It's just extraordinary. I just was blown away by the breadth of her energy and creativity. And so I thought it would be exciting to bring her to life—to actually bring her spirit into the museum."

Lopez added that Music at the Museum brings music and visual art together to create an interdisciplinary experience—one that allows people to experience both art forms in a new way.

Goodyear noted that the performance presented attendees with a holistic perspective on

Loy's life.

"Through the different movements of the concert, [Lopez] was also paying homage to key events in her life," Goodyear said.

A striking moment in Loy's life was the disappearance of her first husband, Arthur Cravan. An exchange quoting Loy's 1929 writings between Manfre, acting as Loy, and an audience member captured the gravity of Cravan's disappearance in Loy's life.

"What has been the happiest moment of your life?" asked the attendee.

"Every moment I spent with Arthur Cravan," Manfre—Loy—replied.

"The unhappiest?" the attendee queried.

"The rest of the time," the artist responded.

Goodyear added that Loy was a vulnerable figure, but her creativity and boldness made Loy recognizable as an artist ahead of

her time.

"[Loy] was a bit reckless and a bohemian and not the greatest advocate for her own work," Goodyear said. "At the time she was alive, it was the beginning

of a transition for women and women's rights and feminism. But those were the real tough Crusaders, people like her ... so it was a big deal to do what she did."



AMIRA OGUNTOYINBO, THE BOWDOIN ORIENT

MINA'S MELODIES: Beckwith Artist-in-Residence George Lopez performs in the Pavilion at the Bowdoin College Museum of Art. This fall's performance of "Music at the Museum" featured live acting for the first time in the event's history.