

ELAINE MITCHENER

Featuring an unplugged improvised vocal set by Elaine Mitchener

August 2, 2025—Doors at 8pm

Torpedo Theater, Amsterdam

playbill

ACT XIII

XIV

XV

XVI

Elaine Mitchener is a British Afro-Caribbean vocalist, movement artist and composer working between contemporary/experimental new music, free improvisation and visual art. Amongst a wealth of accolades, she is currently a Wigmore Hall Associate Artist as well as an Artist Associate with Ensemble Klang and a Need-Company Fellow. Prior to this, in 2022 Mitchener was a DAAD Artist-in-Berlin Fellow and, that same year, she was honoured as a Member of the Order of the British Empire for Services to Music.

Over the years, Mitchener has collaborated with many artists and composers, including George E. Lewis, Jennifer Walshe, Tansy Davies, Rolf Hind, Laure M Hiendl, Matana Roberts, Sonia Boyce, Christian Marclay and The Otolith Group. She is also the founder of the collective electroacoustic unit The Rolling Calf, whose performances combine texts by revolutionary African-Diasporic thinkers with collective electroacoustic improvisation.

For ACT XIII, Michener will travel from London and continue with this referential spirit to present an unplugged improvised vocal set that departs from her first solo LP *Solo Throat*, released in 2024 on OTOROKU, the in-house label for London's Cafe OTO. The album itself came from a period of improvising and composing wherein the written word was used as source material. In particular, her 2021 performance of Umbra poet N.H. Pritchard's text *FR/OG* was considered revelatory in its solo vocal recasting of the powerful visual-material form that Pritchard uses to disrupt semantic 'sense'.

Building on this performance, *Solo Throat* takes the work of Pritchard alongside poets Edward Kamau Brathwaite, Aimé Césaire and Una Marson as its source material. Its compositions are a loose translation, a carrying from text to voice which holds multiplicity and celebrates the transformative power of literary possibility. For this occasion, Mitchener will again draw on N. H. Pritchard, Edward Kamau Brathwaite and Una Marson as well as Jeanne Lee, Moor Mother, Jay Bernard, Nhã Thuyên and Sun Ra to disrupt semantic sense, play with the margins of lyrical translation and give rise to new voicings.

In addition to this very special live set by Mitchener, and in building on the digital launch of our Annual Report 2023–2024 from the last act, the printed copies of this latest playbill publication will be waiting for you on the bar, available for pick up free of charge.

COLOPHON Torpedo Theater is a long-running, thirty-seat theatre in the heart of Amsterdam's city centre. Originally founded by *Het Parool*, a Dutch national newspaper, the theatre has been committed to the spoken, written and performed word from the beginning. playbill is an event-based project invested in the presentation of experimental language and text-based artistic works on the (small) stage. It is curated by Martha Jager and Isabelle Sully, designed by Maud Vervenne and documented by Silvia Ulloa. playbill: ACT XIII has been made possible thanks to Amsterdams Fonds voor de Kunst and Mondriaan Fonds. This playbill has been printed by Terry Bleu, Amsterdam.



PROGRAMME

8pm
Introduction to Elaine Mitchener

8.10pm
Unplugged set

8.50pm
Drinks

IMAGE

A scan of 5–13, a painting by Elaine Mitchener from the *GuidedHandSeries*, 2023. © Elaine Mitchener. All rights reserved, DACS 2025