The Fabric Workshop and Museum

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Crossing and Artist Suzanne Bocanegra Present the World Premiere of *How to Survive*, a Multimedia Exploration of Climate, Disaster, and Human Resilience

The Installation at The Fabric Workshop and Museum brings together Grammy Award-winning voices, film, visual art, survival guidance and new music by composers Hildur Guðnadóttir, Shara Nova, Julia Wolfe and Ayanna Woods

Suzanne Bocanegra and The Crossing. *How to Survive*, 2026. Photo credit: Linda Johnson.

Philadelphia, PA, October 8, 2026—This fall, The Crossing, the four-time Grammy Award-winning professional chamber choir conducted by Donald Nally, joins forces with acclaimed interdisciplinary artist and writer Suzanne Bocanegra for ***How to Survive***, a groundbreaking multimedia installation that confronts questions about what it means to survive in a world where extreme weather is becoming increasingly familiar—and increasingly devastating. The world premiere will be on view November 20, 2026, through January 3, 2027, at The Fabric Workshop and Museum (FWM) in Philadelphia.

Conceived, written and designed by Bocanegra, *How to Survive* transforms The Crossing's singers into a life-size, visual and sonic experience. Four new songs—composed by Hildur Guðnadóttir, Shara Nova, Julia Wolfe and Ayanna Woods—form the backbone of the installation, with each movement responding to a different natural disaster: tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes and wildfires. The work combines choral music, film, sound installation, and costume to consider the increasingly urgent realities of climate change, environmental disruption and weather-related displacement.

Rather than treating climate disaster as an abstract or distant threat, *How to Survive* asks audiences to imagine themselves inside it. Practical survival instructions appear alongside music and moving images, creating an experience that is at once unsettling, darkly humorous, intimate, and deeply human. The installation considers not only how people physically survive disasters, but also how technology, community, memory, art and collective knowledge might help us navigate a rapidly changing world. The collaboration creates an immersive, instructional and at times droll—and terrifying—exploration of what it means to endure, with The Crossing providing the vocal force at its center.

"The disasters that shape *How to Survive* are no longer hypothetical," said Donald Nally, conductor of The Crossing. "They are part of the world we inhabit. This multimedia project gives us a way to think about that reality together—not through statistics or headlines alone, but through music, image, voice and the very human act of trying to understand what happens when the world changes beneath us."

For Bocanegra, the project grew from a fascination with the seemingly ordinary instructions that become vital in extraordinary circumstances: where to go, what to do, how to stay calm, and how to help others. In *How to Survive*, those instructions become the raw material for an unusual artistic environment in which the voices of The Crossing coexist with images of natural disasters and the physical space of the museum.

The result is a work about preparedness and vulnerability, fear and resilience, technology and humanity—and the increasingly complicated relationship between people and the natural world.

The project also reflects The Crossing's longstanding commitment to using new music to engage with urgent social and environmental questions. The ensemble has commissioned nearly 200 new works, many of which address social, environmental and political issues, and has released 41 albums, earning four Grammy Awards for Best Choral Performance.

"*How to Survive* sits at the intersection of everything we are asking ourselves right now," said Suzanne Bocanegra. "How do we live with uncertainty? How do we prepare for what we cannot predict? And how do we remain connected to one another when the forces around us seem beyond our control? The choir gives those questions a human voice. It's hard to know what to do in an emergency. I thought if I wrote instructions for how to react in these situations, having them sung would make the instructions easier to remember."

Bocanegra expands on these questions through her costume designs; the singers are dressed as if

necessity, comfort, and style were determined by entirely found objects, clothing, and fabric. Objects that have lost their pre-disaster use take on new meaning. Hats are fashioned from piles of patterned textiles. There is pride and resignation in their choices.

“We're thrilled to welcome Suzanne Bocanegra and The Crossing back to The Fabric Workshop and Museum—two creative forces with whom we have previously collaborated,” said Kelly Shindler, The Marion Boulton "Kippy" Stroud Executive and Artistic Director. “*How to Survive* arrives at a critical time when the perils of climate disaster are unfolding around us. This original work shakes us from complacency and imagines pathways for resilience."

The installation is part of The Crossing’s 2026–2027 season, *Sometimes I Worry*, a season devoted to exploring uncertainty, resilience and hope through new music and collaborations. The Crossing will release the four works of *How to Survive* as an album on Cantaloupe Records during the exhibition's run.

How to Survive
A world premiere multimedia installation by The Crossing and Suzanne Bocanegra

November 20, 2026–January 3, 2027
Wednesday–Friday, 12:00–6:00 pm
Saturday–Sunday, 12:00–5:00 pm

The Fabric Workshop and Museum
1214 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107

For more information and tickets:
The Crossing — *How to Survive*

Opening Celebration
Friday, December 4, 2026

Artist Talk with Suzanne Bocanegra
6:00–7:00 pm

Public Reception
7:00–8:00 pm

Free (suggested $10 donation)
Advance RSVP encouraged

Support

How to Survive is made possible through generous support by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, with additional support from Carol Westfall, The New England Foundation for Psychoanalysis, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Major support of FWM is provided by the Marion Boulton "Kippy" Stroud Foundation. Additional support is provided by Cynthia Stroud, the Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Joy of Giving Something, Katie Adams Schaeffer and Tony Schaeffer, Belinda and Ferrill Roll, John Alchin and C. Halford Marryatt, Sarah Jackson, the Locks Foundation, Nike, and the Board of Directors and Members of The Fabric Workshop and Museum.

About Suzanne Bocanegra

American, born 1957, lives in New York, NY.

A major show of Bocanegra's work titled *Poorly Watched Girls* was developed during her artist's residency at The Fabric Workshop and Museum and presented there in 2019. Her video installation *Valley* was exhibited at the Blanton Museum of Art and the Gund Gallery and will be exhibited at the Walker Art Center in 2027. *Cradled*, created with Frances McDormand, was exhibited at the Shaker Museum in Chatham, NY and at Hauser and Wirth Gallery in Los Angeles. Bocanegra's most recent performance *Honor, an Artist Lecture by Suzanne Bocanegra starring Lili Taylor* was commissioned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art and traveled to LA MoCA, ICA Boston, the Moody Center for the Arts, Texas Performing Arts, NYU Skirball Center, the Holland Festival and the Walker Art Center.

Upcoming performances of Honor will be at Theatre for a New Audience in New York and La Commune Theatre in Paris. Bocanegra's new performance *Motherhood*, performed by her son Judah Lang, premieres at Texas Performing Arts in November 2026 and travels to ICA Boston, the Walker Art Center and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Suzanne Bocanegra is the recipient of a Foundation for Contemporary Arts grant, a Guggenheim fellowship and a Rome prize. Her work is in numerous collections including the Museum of Modern Art, The Guggenheim Museum, The Walker Art Center and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

About The Crossing

The Crossing is a professional chamber choir conducted by Donald Nally that sings only new music, bringing together creative teams to imagine, present, and record new, substantial works for choir that look at the world and our place in it. Often using a journalistic approach to text curation, The Crossing commissions music that explores and expands ways of writing for choir, singing in choir, and listening to music for choir; many of its over 200 commissioned premieres address social, environmental, and political issues. With a commitment to recording, The Crossing has issued 41 albums, receiving four Grammy Awards for Best Choral Performance (2018, 2019, 2023, 2025), and eleven Grammy nominations in ten consecutive years. The Crossing, with Donald Nally, was Musical America's 2024 Ensemble of the Year, the American Composers Forum's 2017 Champion of New Music, and received the 2015 Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence from Chorus America.

The Crossing is represented by Alliance Artist Management and Luzi Media. The Crossing's recordings are made possible through the generosity of Carol Westfall.

Learn more at crossingchoir.org

About The Fabric Workshop and Museum

The Fabric Workshop and Museum (FWM) is an internationally acclaimed contemporary art museum devoted to the creation, presentation, and preservation of innovative works of art. Its mission—*Collaborating with artists, revealing new possibilities*—embodies a 49-year commitment to helping artists experiment with the expressive possibilities of a broad spectrum of new materials and techniques. Through its renowned Artist-in-Residence Program, FWM provides artists at all stages of their careers with the opportunity to collaborate with its studio staff and take their work in fresh and often unexpected directions. FWM presents large-scale exhibitions, installations, and performative work, utilizing innovative fiber and other media including sculpture, installation, video, painting, photography, ceramics, and architecture. Founded in 1977, FWM brings this spirit of creative investigation and discovery to an eager audience, broadening access to art and advancing its role as a catalyst for innovation and social connection.

Museum Entry: General admission is free (suggested donation of $10).
Hours: Visit us Wednesday–Friday, 12:00–6:00 pm; Saturday–Sunday, 12:00–5:00 pm. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays.

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Media Contacts

The Crossing and Suzanne Bocanegra:

Frank Luzi
Luzi Media
215.779.7614
frank@luzi.media

The Fabric Workshop and Museum:

Justin Rubich
FWM Communications
Tel: 321.422.9734
jrubich@fabricworkshopandmuseum.org