

HOW TO USE THIS CATALOG

Operas in this catalog are organized alphabetically by the composers' names. The Table of Contents is divided into the five following categories: Full Length Operas, One Act and Chamber Operas, Church Operas, Operas for Children (performed by adults), and Children's Operas (performed by children).

Performance materials, orchestral scores and parts are available from the ECS Publishing Performance Department. In determining fees, the Performance Department representative will need to know the type of performance group, how long the materials are needed, the number of performances, the admission charge, if any, and the size of the auditorium.

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Reading the Instrumentation

This catalog follows the standard designation of instruments by number and abbreviation in the following order:

Winds Brass Percussion Harp and Keyboard Strings

Thus, the following instrumentation would be read as follows:

2/2/2/2 4/3/3/1 T P(2) H Pno Str

2 Flutes, 2 Oboes, 2 Clarinets, 2 Bassoons, 4 Horns,
3 Trumpets, 3 Trombones, 1 Tuba, Timpani,
Percussion (2 players), Harp, Piano and Strings

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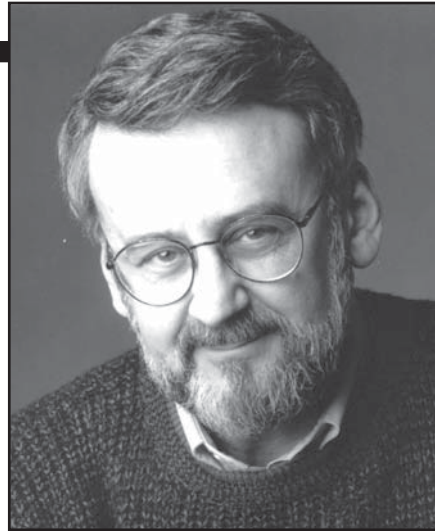
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Jan Bach

The Student from Salamanca

Operatic Farce in 1 Act

Libretto by Jan Bach
Based on an intermezzo by
Miguel de Cervantes



Voices:

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, 2 Tenors, Bass, Bass-Baritone

Instrumentation:

1(pic)/2/3(BCl)/2 3/3/3/1 P Pno(Cel) H Strings

Length:

60 minutes

The maid, Cristina, helps old Craccio pack for a trip. No sooner is he gone than Cristina's plans for a party are revealed to Craccio's young wife, Marianna. The pre-arranged visit of Nicolas and Gonzalo (the old man's barber and apothecary) is interrupted by the sudden appearance of a handsome student, Stephano, to whom Cristina takes an instant liking. Their lover's tryst in the kitchen is interrupted by the unexpected return of Craccio. Stephano, in the guise of a magician, tries to allay the old man's suspicions by "materializing" two demons who bear a striking resemblance to Gonzalo and Nicolas. Craccio begs Stephano to stay, since such magic could be put to good use. Stephano agrees only on condition that his two "demons" are allowed to remain. All express their delight — except Gonzalo and Nicolas, who agree that they have now been placed in a situation from which they may never be able to escape.

WINNER OF THE NEW YORK CITY OPERA COMPETITION, 1980

Bach... wrote his own libretto, from Cervantes, and his hour-long opera buffa is a genuine delight, mostly in rhyming couplets, with bubbling humor and a few double entendres.

—Mary Campbell, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 7.0470 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Jan Bach

The System

An Opera in One Act

Libretto by Jan Bach

Based on a story by Edgar Allen Poe

Voices:

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, 2 Tenors (or High Baritone), Bass-Baritone, Bass, Mute, Offstage
Male Voices

Instrumentation:

2(pic)/2/3(BCl)/2 3/3/3/1 P Pno(Cel) H Strings

Length:

50 minutes

The libretto is freely adapted from Edgar Allan Poe's *The System of Doctor Tarr and Professor Fether*. A young American poet, Edgar Allen (!), lost in the English countryside during a storm, comes to a large dilapidated country house to ask for dinner and a night's lodging. The poet soon finds this is no ordinary house, rather an asylum run by Warden McCoy; Mrs. Henry, the head nurse; Madame Chauvenet, an elderly dietician; Brayer, an orderly; and a Doctor Green. The Warden describes his "system" for curing the patients, which is to allow them to act out their fantasies. To a woman who imagined she was a chicken, the staff fed her corn and gravel for a week. A man who imagined he was a frog was encouraged to crouch knee-deep in a tub of water and croak. But a revolution by the inmates to subdue the staff caused a reversal of the "system" and harsh measures were imposed: locking up the inmates in the cellar and tar-and-feathering the offenders. At the opera's end, the inmates break out of the cellar to overthrow the staff again, but gradually the poet becomes aware that staff and inmates are, in fact, interchangeable.

This "*guignol*" black comedy allows great possibilities for staging and design. An unusual feature is that each of the main characters has his own singing tempo throughout the 50-minute work.

WINNER OF THE MANNES COLLEGE OPERA COMPETITION, 1974

The System... is both jolly and ghoulish in its depiction of an isolated Gothic-mansion madhouse where the patients lock up the keepers and carry on with scandalous indulgence.

—OPERA NEWS

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 7.0473 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Seymour Barab

Fortune's Favorites

Voices:

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Bass

Instrumentation:

1/1/1/1 Hrn Strings

Length:

45 minutes

Opera in 1 Act

Libretto by Seymour Barab

Emily and Richard, lovers in their youth, meet accidentally after not having seen each other for many years. Being avid believers in omens and auguries, they are convinced that Providence has reunited them in order to rekindle their love. A more careful examination of the portents, however, reveals that disaster awaits should they marry. They resign themselves to the dictum of Fate that they must part once again when, unexpectedly, Fortune smiles and Love is granted a happy reprieve.

Piano/Vocal score Catalog No. 1.2953 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

William Bergsma

The Murder of Comrade Sharik

Opera in 2 Acts

Libretto by William Bergsma

Based on a story by Mikhail Bulgakov

Voices:

3 Sopranos, Mezzo-Soprano, 2 Tenors, Baritone, 2 Bases

Instrumentation:

1(pic)/1(EH)/1(BCI)/1 1/0/0/0 Pno(Elect.Org.) P String Quintet

Length:

85 minutes

This opera is based on a sardonic story by the dissident Soviet writer Mikhail Bulgakov, originally called *Heart of a Dog*. It is set in Moscow during the 1920's, when the rejuvenative monkey transplant operation was in vogue in the USSR.

A brilliant Soviet doctor transforms a Moscow alley mutt into a human, but the man who emerges, named Comrade Sharik, is a foul swearing, lecherous lout who mortifies the aesthetic doctor. There are counter-intrigues involving a trio of political stooges who try to sabotage the high-living doctor, a sentimental cook who falls in love with Sharik, a jaded aristocratic couple trying to get some last flings out of the doctor's rejuvenation operation, and even a telephone aria with Joseph Stalin. In the end, the offending Sharik is put on the operating table and transformed back into a dog.

This opera is a highly effective satire with great design and staging potential for workshop or professional presentation.

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 1.3338 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

William Bergsma

The Wife of Martin Guerre

Opera in 3 Acts
Libretto by Janet Lewis

Voices:

2 Sopranos, 2 Mezzo-Sopranos, Coloratura Soprano, 3 Tenors, 4 Baritones, Bass-Baritone,
5 Basses, Boy Soprano, Chorus

Instrumentation:

2(pic)/1/1(BCl)/1 0/1/1/0 P H String Sextet

Length:

2 hours, 15 minutes

Set in the sixteenth century in the French Pyrenees, *The Wife of Martin Guerre* deals with the question of false identity.

Martin Guerre has left home because of an argument with his father and has taken service as a soldier. As the years pass, the memory of Martin becomes dim in his wife's mind. Finally, a man claiming to be Martin Guerre returns home and is accepted by his family and friends, even though doubts remain in the mind of his wife, Bertrande.

Three years after his return, Bertrande takes legal action and formally accuses the new Martin of being an imposter. The case comes to trial and the man is condemned to be hanged. An appeal is granted and it is gradually revealed, with chilling force, who is the real Martin Guerre.

A full-length lyric opera of dramatic tension in a colorful French provincial setting.

Various scenes from *The Wife of Martin Guerre* were recorded on LP by Composers Recordings, Inc., CRI 105.

The libretto, entitled *The Wife*, is published by John Daniel & Company, Publishers, Santa Barbara, California.

Bergsma possesses what is possibly the rarest thing in American Music: a genuine lyrical gift of the utmost refinement. The sensitiveness of his line is extraordinary, as is the delicacy and clarity of his contrapuntal texture. He uses in his opera a small orchestra, skillfully manipulated to preserve a perfect clarity of line and color; yet the opera itself is not on a small scale. Bergsma ranges from unaffected gentleness to intense passion without descending to the commonplace or straining for "big" effects... [He] has style, intelligence, and imagination, and, in the way that only very good composers can, exploits his own strengths, which a cultivated and sophisticated critical mind has evidently enabled him to perceive...

— Richard Franko Goldman, MUSICAL QUARTERLY

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 1.3335 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

David Conte

America Tropical

Opera in 1 Act

Libretto by Oliver Mayer

Voices:

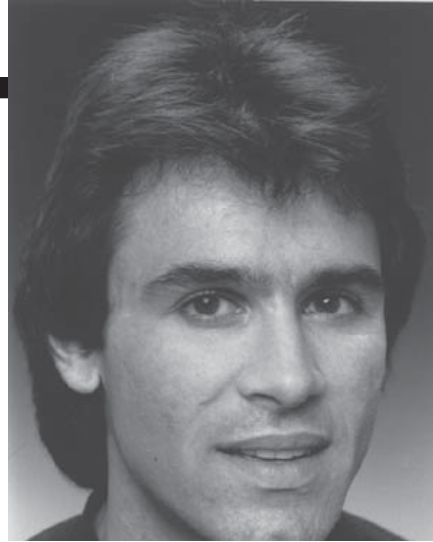
2 Sopranos, 2 Baritones, 2 Bass-Baritones, 2 Tenors

Instrumentation:

Flute, B-flat Clarinet (doubling A Clarinet & Bass Clarinet), Violin, Violoncello, Double Bass & Piano

Length:

1 hour



Commissioned by the San Francisco theater company *Thick Description* and premiered at Thick House on April 27, 2007.

In an act of creation that is both galvanizing and dangerous, the Mexican artist Siqueiros creates a mural for the 1932 Olympics that places a mirror up to the city of Los Angeles, reflecting both its past and future -- from its founding in 1781 by a band of Pobladores from Mexico, to its near self-destruction in the riots of 1992. Through the interconnected stories of original city founder Moreno and George Holliday, who witnessed the savage beating of Rodney King (just as Siqueiros is witness with his paint brush), we see and feel the crises of a city continually caught between its lofty goals and coarse realities. Whitewashed in 1932, Siqueiros' painted mural image of the Crucified India refuses to stay erased and ghosts through, descending from the cross to offer redemption and blessings to Angelinos across the centuries. The India exists alongside the Queen of the Angels (namesake of the City) as a witness to injustice, and as a totem of the hopes and dreams of its people -- signifying more than Siqueiros could have dreamed possible.

"Conte (whose beautiful, ghostly desert opera "Firebird Motel" was commissioned and produced by Thick Description) has fashioned a score featuring serrated melody lines and lush choral harmonies to augment the work's three centuries, succinctly blended in Mayer's libretto. The music moves determinedly forward through alternately agitated, wistful, angelic, and angry passages..."

—Robert Avila, THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA GUARDIAN

"Conte's score, with its hints of George Gershwin, Kurt Weill, and the chamber music of Dmitri Shostakovich, is as colorful as anything painted by Siqueiros. The composer's use of glittering flute scales... (enthalls) the listener with its beauty..."

—Chloe Veltman, SAN FRANCISCO WEEKLY

Libretto Catalog No. 7163 available for sale
Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 7160 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

David Conte

The Dreamers

Opera in 4 Scenes
Libretto by Philip Littell

Voices:

3 Sopranos, 2 Mezzo-Sopranos, 4 Tenors,
3 Baritones, Bass-Baritone, Boy Soprano,
Girl Soprano, Men's Ensemble,
Women's Ensemble

Instrumentation:

1/0/2/1 1/1/1/0 0/1/0/1 3 Strings Synthesizer

Length:

2 hours

Commissioned by the Sonoma City Opera, Sonoma, California

Subtitled "the first part of a history of California," *The Dreamers* is a highly accessible opera about the dreams of American life, using as a springboard the dreams of one man, General Mariano Vallejo. Set primarily on two hot August days in 1848 in Sonoma, California— two years after the infamous Bear Flag Revolt that wrested control of the Sonoma Valley from the Mexican government, created the California republic, and led quickly in turn to its absorption by the United States— *The Dreamers* depicts California as the place where people come to fulfill their dreams, and the dreams are as varied as those who dream them. The raising of the bear flag lingers as a nightmare in Vallejo's mind, while his daughter's fancy turns toward one of the handsome American soldiers. California seems big enough to hold the dreams of a lonely Indian woman, the last of her tribe; a black man who is trying to earn enough money as a gambler to buy his wife out of slavery, and a gay soldier's dream to find acceptance and understanding.

Conte and Littell have captured this formative moment in American history in a compelling drama where characters are separated by their sexual, cultural, and racial differences, and brought together by their dreams. *The Dreamers* is our nation's tragedy and comedy: the never-ending story of how we became "American."

The Dreamers confounded skeptics and left audiences cheering at each of seven soldout performances... he [Conte] has written much vocal and choral music and his expertise is reflected in The Dreamers most powerful, soaring moments, especially the big ensembles in the second half of the three-hour opus.

—Byron Belt, OPERA NEWS

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 5219 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

David Conte

Famous

Opera in 2 Acts

Libretto by John Stirling Walker

based on the book *Famous for Fifteen Minutes: My Years with Andy Warhol*
by Ultra Violet

Voices:

Instrumentation:

Piano

Length:

1 hour, 22 minutes

Famous presents a series of impression from the life of Isabelle Dufresne ("UltraViolet" in Andy Warhol's Factory), in eight scenes that are intended to convey something of the spirit of her development from her childhood in France through her encounters with Salvador Dali, Andy Warhol, and Edie Sedgwick in America, to her return to her family, where she has a transformative encounter with her own past and with the Old Testament prophet Isaiah.

Famous is in two short acts of four scenes each, the first act preceded by a prologue; in the prologue we see Isabelle alone at her desk, beginning to tell her story; in the first scene, we see Isabelle and Andy on the night of the Moon landing in 1969. Andy withdraws from the public event, referring to his fear of being in public after having been shot. A liaison between Isabelle and a Rock Star coincides with the excitement of the crowd in Central Park at man's first step on the Moon.

In the second scene, a "flashback," we meet Edie Sedgwick, the vulnerable young beauty who moves Isabelle with her life story and asks about her encounter with Dali. This scene segues into scene three, a further "flashback" to Dali's and Isabelle's first meeting, where they paint together a model, Dali rendering her as a Madonna, Isabelle as a nun in the throes of sexual passion; the scene concludes with her introduction by Dali to Warhol, and with another segue, to a surrealistic first act finale with Warhol and his entourage in the Factory.

The second act's first scene is a ballet depicting Isabelle's youth in a convent, where she witnesses a sexual encounter between the Mother Superior and a priest disguised as a nun, and then suffers an exorcism, with her parents standing by. Its second scene has Isabelle, after the Warhol years, at home trying to reconcile her mother, who is distant and conservative. In the third scene of the second act, Isabelle confronts the way in which her acts of adultery have harmed the wives of her sexual partners. In the final scene, then, she experiences redemption in an encounter with Isaiah and with the spirit of Edie Sedgwick, the former singing of "sins as red as scarlet being made as white as snow," the latter of the history of the exploitation of youth. The opera ends in a touching scene of reconciliation, at last, between mother and daughter in the spirit of their homeland.

Libretto Catalog No. 7304 available for sale

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 7305 available for sale

David Conte

Firebird Motel

Opera in 1 Act
Libretto by David Yezzi

Voices:

2 Sopranos, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor, Bass-baritone, Offstage Chorus

Instrumentation:

Clarinet, Violin, Violoncello, Double Bass, Piano

Length:

60 minutes

Commissioned by the San Francisco theater company *Thick Description* and premiered at Thick House on November 17, 2003.

Firebird Motel tells the story of an eventful night among the hopeless down-and-out denizens of a seedy semi-residential motel in the Mojave Desert. The motel is both a haven of last resort and a death trap for hapless young women. The motel is haunted by the ghost of Julie, a beloved resident who recently disappeared in the desert - and by a predatory cop, Trooper, whom everyone believes is responsible for her disappearance. Ivan, a chronically depressed night clerk, watches helplessly as Trooper demands sexual favors from his next victim, Corina. Julie makes a ghostly visit, warning Ivan of Trooper's intentions; Ivan transfers his romantic intent from dead Julie to Corina, and he and Nova, an earth-mother type, and long-time resident of the motel, attempt to save Corina. The climax comes in a fatal shoot-out in the dark. Ivan confesses that he shot Trooper with Julie's gun. Julie's voice is heard, as Corina and Ivan plan to escape together as the sun rises.

"...Firebird Motel weaves a hypnotic spell. Conte's sinuously suggestive melodies create a paradoxically lush impression and build gently, almost pensively, but inexorably toward the climax. Plaintive solos alternate with vibrant duets and lustrous trios, punctuated by Conte's lovely Christmas chorales, in an almost seamless creation...Conte's 'Firebird' takes flight on the wings of it's music."

Robert Hurtwitt, San Francisco Chronicle, November 19, 2003

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 6269 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

David Conte

The Gift of the Magi

Opera in 4 Scenes

Libretto by Nicholas Giardini

after the short story by O. Henry

Voices:

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Baritone, Bass-Baritone,
Off-stage trio (Tenor, Baritone and Bass)

Instrumentation:

Flute (doubling Piccolo), Oboe, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet (doubling B-flat Clarinet),
Bassoon, Horn, Trumpet, Harp, Piano and String Quintet

Length:

65 minutes

Nicholas Giardini's libretto captures the essence of the operatic drama contained in the classic O. Henry short story. Della (Soprano) and Jim (Baritone) are a young couple in love, entirely devoted to each other. They share a cold-water flat, being very poor.

The action takes place late in the afternoon on Christmas Eve. After having pledged not to exchange Christmas gifts, both decide to sell their own most precious possession in order to buy what each thinks will make the other most happy. Even though Jim adores her long, flowing tresses, Della sells her hair to wig makers so she can buy Jim a chain for his pocket watch. When Jim buys Della an exquisitely elaborate comb for her hair, the only way he can raise the money is to sell his heirloom watch. In separate scenes, both lovers have confidants who try to dissuade them of their plans, each without success. In the final scene, after the couple has exchanged their gifts, Jim and Della reaffirm their love for one another, which they now realize is the greatest gift of all.

With its warm sentimentality and easily absorbed archetypal themes, the O. Henry story line lends itself to operatic treatment...We might have expected a sparse and almost folklike musical treatment, designed to convey the familiar moral themes about love and selflessness during the holidays. Conte instead has lavished music of grand romantic feelings upon the proceedings, providing this simple tale with a lush spectacle of extravagant lyricism...Aided by the clarity of Giardini's articulate libretto, Conte exercised particular skillful[ness] in intergrating specific events, acts, and even the characters' gestures into his orchestration. The work was also framed by striking a cappella ensemble numbers, sung off-stage and evoking the guiding spirit of the three Magi.

— Ching Chang, SAN FRANCISCO CLASSICAL VOICE

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 5248 available for sale
2-Piano and Orchestral versions (Score & parts) on rental only

John David Earnest

A Desperate Waltz

Opera in One Act (14 Scenes)

Libretto by Mervyn Goldstein

Voices:

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor, Baritone

Instrumentation:

Clarinet, Cello, Piano

Length:

50 minutes

Composed in 1992, a commission from Golden Fleece, Ltd., the Composers Chamber Theater in New York City, Lou Rodgers, Producing Artistic Director; and premiered in October of 1992 at the Sanford Meisner Theater in New York City.

Told in many brief but not always realistic scenes, the action is precipitated when a wealthy woman, Cynthia, begins an affair with a younger married man, Fred. The matter is complicated by the fact that Fred works for her husband, Scott. Cynthia gradually realizes that she is repeating a pattern of exercising her talents through men. Fred's wife, Rosemary, in trying to find ways out of an intolerable marriage, realizes she has no viable options. Because the two husbands, in differing ways, are caught up in their own needs, the lives of the women, one rich, one with no means, end tragically.

Score & parts on rental only

Audio and video tapes available for perusal

John David Earnest

Gallows Songs

A Musical Work for the Theater

Poems by Christian Morgenstern

Voices:

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor, Baritone, Male & Female Narrators, Small Mixed Chorus (8-12 singers), Dancers and Acrobats

Instrumentation:

Flute, Clarinet, Trumpet, Horn, 1 Percussion, String Quartet, Piano, Conductor

Length:

Approx. 90 minutes

Using the magical imagery of the fantasist poet, Christian Morgenstern (d. 1914), this work presents a musical, poetic, and theatrical view of a world in which reality and illusion are laced together in a bond of the bizarre, the child-like, the surreal, the comical, the ghastly, and the unexpected.

Though there have been several concert performances of the work in much smaller and shorter versions, there is no premiere of the full-length theatrical version to date.

Score & parts on rental only

Audio and video tapes available for perusal

John David Earnest

Howard

Opera in One Act (4 Scenes)

Libretto by Tray Christopher

Voices:

2 Sopranos, Mezzo-Soprano,
Tenor, 2 Baritones, Bass,
Narrator (Male)

Instrumentation:

Clarinet, Cello, Piano

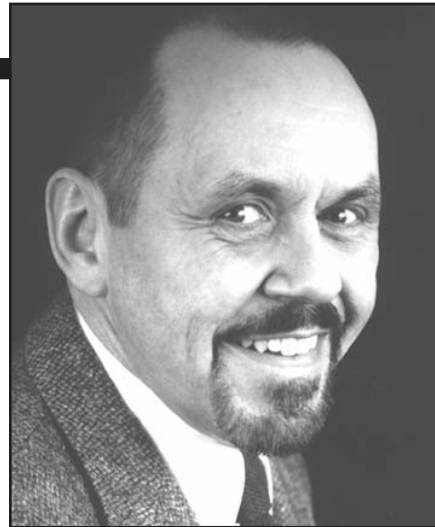
Length:

Approx. 30 minutes

Composed in 1979, the work was chosen as a finalist in the New York City Opera American Opera Competition in 1980; it was revised and expanded in 1987 and premiered in March 1987 at the TOMI Theater in New York City by the Golden Fleece, Ltd., the Composers Chamber Theater, Lou Rodgers, Producing Artistic Director.

Howard is an eerily surreal fantasy about the last days of a dying tycoon, loosely based on the figure of Howard Hughes.

Score & parts on rental only
Audio and video tapes available for perusal



John David Earnest

Opera of the Worms

A Miniature Garden Fantasy
Text by Rene Ricard

Voices:

Soprano, 2 to 4 Dancers or Mimes

Instrumentation:

Flute, Clarinet, Cello, Vibraphone, Piano

Length:

Approx. 15 minutes

A chamber work for the theater composed in 1981 revised and expanded in 1983, *Opera of the Worms* explores the joys, agonies, and follies of love among the fantastical creatures (flowers, plants, insects) of a country garden, all captured in Rene Ricard's evocative verse. The work offers extraordinary opportunities for imaginative staging and effects, complete with 2, 3, or 4 dancer-mimes.

The premiere performances of the work took place in March, 1987 at the TOMI Theater in New York City, produced by Golden Fleece, Ltd., the Composers Chamber Theater, Lou Rodgers, Producing Artistic Director.

Score & parts on rental only
Audio and video tapes are available for perusal

John David Earnest

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow

An Opera in 1 Act for Young Audiences

Libretto by Mervyn Goldstein

Based on the story by Washington Irving

Voices:

2 Sopranos, Mezzo-Soprano,
Tenor, 2 Baritones, Bass,
Narrator (Male)

Instrumentation:

Piano only

Length:

45 minutes

Commissioned by the Virginia Opera and premiered on September 8, 1997 before beginning an extensive tour of public schools throughout Virginia and neighboring states.

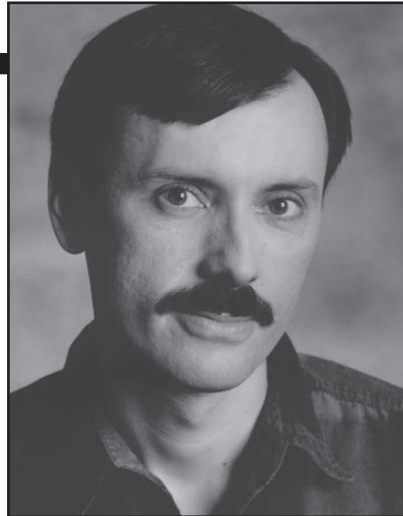
Based on the story by Washington Irving, THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW focuses on the plight of the country schoolteacher, Ichabod Crane, who also gives singing lessons to young women in the Dutch community of Tarrytown, New York during the early 19th century. Ichabod is a figure of fun and has little in common with the townsfolk, except for their belief in ghosts and spirits - especially the fearful Headless Horseman, who threatens travelers at night in a nearby glen, Sleepy Hollow.

Poor Ichabod, meanwhile, courts Katrina, the daughter of a rich farmer. This sparks jealousy of the town mischief maker, Brom Bones. One night, Ichabod is chased by the Headless Horseman and disappears. Brom Bones marries Katrina while the townsfolk continue to debate Ichabod's fate - was he taken off by spirits or scared away by more logical causes, perhaps even by Brom Bones?

Frank Ferko

The Hill

Symbolist Opera in 1 Act
Libretto by Sally M. Gall



Voices:

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Lyric Baritone, Boy Soprano, SATB Chorus (SSAA divisi)

Instruments:

1(Pic)/1(EHn)/1(BCl)/1 1/2/1/0 0/1/1/1 Strings

Length:

1 hour

The Hill, in part a consolatory work for an era when youth is cut off in its prime, takes place in a mythological setting. Young people are waiting on a hill distinguished by a somewhat incomprehensible Musician and a Manor into which their leader has vanished.

Despite the Musician's cryptic warnings, the young leader's best friend (the Youth) follows a mysterious young woman (the Apprentice) into the Manor. There he discovers from the Mistress that his friend has indeed died. Frantic with grief, he begs for death also. After some argument his wish is granted.

However, because of the love all of the young people bear one another, the souls of the departed are placed on the Musician's harp and blaze forth eternally.

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 5234 available for sale
 Full score & parts on rental only



Daron Aric Hagen

Shining Brow

Opera in 2 Acts

Libretto by Paul Muldoon

Voices:

2 Sopranos, Mezzo-Soprano, High Lyric Baritone, Tenor, Bass (Principals); 2 Sopranos, Mezzo-Soprano, 2 Altos, 2 Tenors, Baritone or Tenor, Baritone or Mezzo, 2 Baritones, Bass, 2 Speaking Roles, Chorus of 40, Barbershop Quartet from above

Instrumentation:

2(pic)/2(EH)/2/2 2/2/2/1 1/3/1/1 Strings, Onstage Vln/Vla/Pno

Length:

3 hours

Shining Brow centers around the eleven tumultuous years, from 1903 to 1914, in the young career of the American architect Frank Lloyd Wright. The episodes include the Cliff Dwellers Club in Chicago with Louis Sullivan (Wright's former mentor), a construction site in Oak Park, Illinois, Berlin, Germany, and finally to Taliesin where many of the most tragic events of Wright's life are played out.

Shining Brow was commissioned by Madison Opera, a division of the Madison Civic Music Association Inc., Madison, Wisconsin, who had permission from the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation to produce an opera based on Mr. Wright's life. It was premiered in the spring of 1993 in Madison.

Shining Brow was a daring adventure on the part of several bright young talents. Paul Muldoon, a noted Irish poet, wrote the libretto. Stephen Wadsworth, who collaborated with Leonard Bernstein on *A Quiet Place* and headed the Skylight Theater in Milwaukee from 1984 to 1991, directed. ... The entire enterprise exuded intelligence. ... overall, the work is effective and stimulating. Mr. Hagen has a gift for the big tune, and he serves up some beauties in the choruses, evoking the blues and a Colonial Hymn.

— James R. Oestreich, THE NEW YORK TIMES

Shining Brow offered further evidence that the salvation of new American opera will come not necessarily from the big East Coast companies, but from enterprising regional theaters like Madison's. ... It is an opera any major opera company could present with pride.

— John von Rhein, CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 4689 available for sale

Full score & parts on rental only

Libretto, published in book form, available only from Faber & Faber Publishers, London

Libby Larsen

Clair de Lune

Voices:

2 Sopranos, Tenor, Bass

A Romantic Fantasy in 2 Acts

Libretto by Patricia Hampf

Instrumentation:

1(pic)/1/1(BCI)/1 1/1/0/0 P Pno H String Quintet

Length:

1 hour, 45 minutes

Clair is a former aviatrix, now in her 40's and far removed from Paris, the scene of her flying. Henri, her long-estranged and wealthy husband, visits her in Kansas City after a 20-year absence. He informs her that a museum is interested in their airplane, "Clair de Lune." The opera addresses serious themes: love, aging, and the irreconcilable demands of independence and security of its unconventional heroine.

Larsen has composed a splendid first-act aria for Clair and a lovely second-act duet for Clair and Kathleen ... musical quotations abound, from Debussy's "Clair de Lune," to Elvis Presley's "Blue Moon."

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 4133 available for sale
Score & parts on rental only

—MUSICAL AMERICA

Libby Larsen

Frankenstein, the Modern Prometheus

A Musical Drama

Libretto by Libby Larsen, based on the book by Mary Shelley

Voices:

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, 2 Tenors, 2 Baritones, Boy Soprano

Instrumentation:

1(pic)/1(EH)/1(BCI)/1(CBsn)/ 1/1/0/0 3P 2 Synthesizers Pno String Quintet

Length:

1 hour, 25 minutes

Conventional opera combined with video and mixed sound production recreate the tale of the arrogant young medical student who, despite the concern of his family, creates a super-human being— only to reject it. *Frankenstein* eloquently explores the challenge of our times: that humankind must overcome the promethean drive that is at the heart of modern society's notion of progress.

The libretto is adapted from the book by Mary Shelley. Libby Larsen's new opera Frankenstein uses high technology to warn against the dangers of high technology. Its music is always powerful, sometimes beautiful, never used for purely musical value but for theatrical effectiveness.

—Joseph McLellan, WASHINGTON POST

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 4743 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only



Libby Larsen

Mrs. Dalloway

An Opera in Two Acts

Libretto by Bonnie Grice

Based upon the novel by Virginia Woolf

Voices:

2 Sopranos, Mezzo-Soprano, 2 Tenors, Baritone, Bass-Baritone

Instrumentation:

1/0/1/0 2 Perc. Keyboard Strings Electronic Tape

Length:

2 hours

Joyce Kessler of Kent State University gives the following reflection on Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*:

While she was writing Mrs. Dalloway, Virginia Woolf hoped to keep "the quality of a sketch in a finished and composed work." Certainly, the dynamism of a sketch approximates the feeling of the forceful current underlying this supremely contrived novel. Clarissa Dalloway and her opposite counterpart Septimus Warren Smith, provide its basis in motion, her joyous character always evolving toward triumphant endurance against his despairing one, which devolves inevitably toward death. Woolf overlays the organic counterpoint between these two figures, who never meet, with the formal orchestration of a day-long narrative of events and an array of other characters whose various perspectives on Clarissa and Septimus help to create the final harmony this work achieves. Discord has its fulfillment in Septimus' suicide. But it is Clarissa's great and only talent to assemble, all of the competing themes and chords of the day into a lasting resolution. That evening, Mrs. Dalloway gives her party, and like her creator, brings together "a most complicated, spirited and solid piece."

Larsen wrote for an ensemble of ten players. A half dozen or so times during the two-act work she achieved stretches of luminous beauty as voices and solo instruments roamed freely over a bed of sustained tonal harmony.

— Robert Finn, AMERICAN RECORD GUIDE

Larsen writes naturally for voices, attaining poetic heights and revealing character in writing that is meticulously crafted. ... Libby Larsen and librettist Bonnie Grice have taken a richly textured piece of literature and devised a strange and riveting piece of music theater.

— Donald Rosenberg, CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 5032 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Libby Larsen

The Silver Fox

An Opera for Young People
Libretto by John Olive

Voices:

2 Sopranos, Mezzo-Soprano, 2 Tenors, Bass-Baritone

Instrumentation:

Flute, Violin, Piano/Celesta/Harpsichord (one player)

Length:

43 minutes

Based on the bayou legend of a young girl who transforms into a silver fox to use her magical powers. The tale is about the coming of personal strength and courage during the change from childhood. Larsen's music weaves Cajun folk tunes into a lyrical, lilting fable.

... The Silver Fox is sufficiently rich in allusion and emotional suggestion to hold the attention of... younger children... and adults alike.

—Kathy Grandchamp, THE SAINT PAUL DISPATCH & PIONEER PRESS

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 3092 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Libby Larsen

Tom Twist

A Musical Narrative for Small Orchestra, Narrator & Mime
Libretto by William Alan Butler

Voices:

Narrator, Mime

Instrumentation:

1(pic)/1/1(BCl & Alto Sax)/2 1/1/0/0 2P Pno H Strings (Version for Large Orchestra & Chamber Ensemble also available)

Length:

10 minutes

This travelogue poem takes Tom, a young adventurous boy, a-tumbling through sea adventures, where he has run-ins with cannibal tribes on a fantastic flight on the back of a condor to the Great Court of China. Tom eventually becomes homesick and returns home to his amazed mother, but then, restless Tom tumbles out the window, somersaulting off into eternity.

... replete with energy, rhythmic drive, astonishing effects, and imagery with well-defined direction and a no-nonsense attention to organization.

—THE PHOENIX SUN

Score & parts on rental only

Libby Larsen

A Wrinkle in Time

Opera in 1 Act (7 Scenes)

Libretto by Libby Larsen

Based on the book by Madeleine L'Engle

Voices:

3 or 4 Sopranos, Mezzo-Soprano, Boy Soprano, 1 or 2 Tenors, Baritone, Bass

Instrumentation:

3 Flutes (Piccolo), Oboe, 2 Clarinets (Bass Clarinet), Bassoon, Horn in F, Trumpet, Trombone, Tuba, Percussion (2), Timpani, Synthesizer, Strings

Length:

Approx. 1 hour

An atomic physicist (Dr. Murry) disappears on a secret mission. His 12-year-old daughter (Meg), her 5-year-old brother (Charles Wallace), and teen-aged friend (Calvin) set out on a bizarre search for him. Those whimsical characters Mrs. Whatsit, Mrs. Who, and Mrs. Which lead the children on an inter-planetary journey in which they manage by "tessering" or wrinkling, to span time and space. They reach the planet Camzotz where Dr. Murry is imprisoned and confront the horrible, over-sized brain ("It") that hypnotizes people into having one mind. After Meg frees Dr. Murry, Charles Wallace succumbs to the power of "It," and it is up to Meg to save her brother. Relying on her own strength and courage, and on her profound love for Charles Wallace, Meg breaks the evil spell and proves that love is the most powerful force in the universe.

A Wrinkle in Time is an opera for children, with less daunting challenges that Larsen solved with ease. The music is fluent, evocative, sometimes quite witty and notable for its use of sounds that are at once weird and appropriate for the story... It sometimes called "Star Trek" to mind and sometimes "The Magic Flute," which it resembles because it is about a quest, because it inculcates moral values and particularly because it features three eccentric women... who guide the main character to a cosmic encounter and final victory... A Wrinkle in Time is not only about an interplanetary search and struggle between good and evil; it is, most powerfully, about adolescence, particularly the agonies of awkward feminine adolescence.

—Joseph McLellan, THE WASHINGTON POST

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 4780 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Henry Mollicone

Coyote Tales

Opera in 2 Acts

Libretto by Sheldon Harnick

Voices:

3 Sopranos, 2 Mezzo-Sopranos, Alto, 2 Tenors, Bass-Baritone, Chorus (minimum of 24 singers, including 2 Tenors, Baritone and Bass soli)

Instrumentation:

2 (Pic)/2(EH)/2 (BCI)/2 3/2/3/0 P (3)
Pno/Cel/Synth (1) H Str

Length:

Approx. 2 ½ hours



Commissioned by the Lyric Opera of Kansas City

The libretto, by Sheldon Harnick (*Fiddler on the Roof*), is based on *Coyote and Pavayoykyasi* (taken from *Hopi Coyote Tales*). The five tales told in the opera are based respectively on legends from the Crow, Okanagon, Karok, Klamath and Hopi tribes. The music is not intended to resemble Native American songs and traditions; its style is pure Henry Mollicone.

Each of the tribe's tale is told in a separate scene. The Coyote figure is featured prominently in each, representing the embodiment of the entirety of our human nature. The five tales are *Old Man Coyote Makes the World*, *Coyote Keeps his Name*, *How Coyote Brought Fire to the People*, *Coyote in Love with a Star* and *Coyote and Pavayoykyasi*. The five scenes are held together by the character called "The Storyteller," who at the end of the opera addresses Coyote: "As you behave, we shall too. Old Man Coyote, we are you."

"Coyote Tales presents an operatic treatment of human adventures in the American Plains, based on five Native American tales. Our work takes a brief look at the human drama—how we behave and react to life's continuum of challenges and ongoing events. Lonely or gregarious, kind or cruel, friendly or deceiving, Coyote continues to be reborn and to seek fulfillment, as he chooses from the range of good and evil solutions available to mankind. Inspired by Sheldon Harnick's libretto, I have tried to compose a melodic and dramatic score which expresses the full range of human emotions."

—Henry Mollicone

"In writing the libretto for Coyote Tales, I have had one primary aim. I wanted the joy and privilege of helping to bring some of the uniquely enthralling, culturally complex and sophisticated Native American tales into the world of opera, a world in which they naturally belong by virtue of their larger-than-life, mythic quality."

—Sheldon Harnick

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 5400 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Henry Mollicone

Emperor Norton

Opera in 1 Act
Libretto by John S. Bowman

Voices:

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor, Baritone

Instrumentation:

Piano, Violin, Cello

Length:

Approx. 1 hour

Commissioned by the San Francisco Opera Company and the Kurt Herbert Adler Award Fund for "Brown Bag Opera."

Diana and Michael arrive at a theatre to audition for a play about Emperor Norton, and are soon interrupted by the arrival of Marla, the playwright. She is astonished that they have been invited to audition, since the play is unfinished, but decides she can use their talents to work out the more difficult scenes of the play. A man emerges from the wings dressed as a nineteenth-century emperor, protesting that the scene bears little resemblance to Norton's actual death. He also challenges their perceptions of other episodes in the play. Marla, Diana and Michael begin to see how the threads of the mystery come together. Marla, won over, demands that they restage the scenes, and she joins her destiny with his; Empress to his Emperor, in the realm of fantasy, spirit, art, and love.

Henry Mollicone's operas— at least those that have been produced in the Washington area— have the virtues of succinctness, distinctive melody and a strongly developed sense of style that matches the composer's eclectic tastes. His most popular work so far... seems to be "The Face on the Barroom Floor," produced a few years ago by Opera Southwest, but Emperor Norton, as performed by the same company, is an even more effective work of art... "Norton" is more recent than "Barroom" and seems to show substantial growth in Mollicone's mastery of the difficult form of one-act opera. Its emotions, ranging from near-slapstick comedy to pathos, are good raw material for his eclectic, easily accessible style...

—Joseph McLellan, THE WASHINGTON POST

While the plot device is complicated for a short work, Mollicone manages, by his expert, assured craftsmanship, to produce coherence and several touching scenes... the two big set pieces— 'He was an Emperor'... and the canon quartet finale, in which 'He was an Emperor' returns, are powerfully worked out in a Straussian vein of soaring lyricism. Two other fine moments are the Chinese girl's lament and a humorous tarantella that accompanies Lola Montez' 'spider dance.'

—Stephanie Von Buchau, OPERA NEWS

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 4717 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Henry Mollicone

Gabriel's Daughter

An Opera in 2 Acts

Libretto by William Luce

Voices:

2 Sopranos, 2 Mezzo-Sopranos, 2 Tenors, Baritone, Bass-Baritone (constructed so that only 8 singers are needed; each person may play up to 3 parts)

Instrumentation:

2 (Pic)/1 (Eng. Horn)/2 (Bs Clar.)/ 1 2/2/2/0 1/2/1/1 Strings

Length:

Approx. 2 hours

Commissioned by Central City Opera and premiered on July 12, 2003 in Central City, Colorado.

The opera tells the story of a remarkable woman who was an ex-slave, and who spent most of her life in bondage in frontier Kentucky. During these years she had lost contact with her husband and children when they were sold to different owners. She obtained her freedom after the death of her owner in 1857 and traveled west in search of her missing family.

Clara arrived in Central City, CO, around 1860, already some 60 years old. She opened her own laundry business and with hard work and successful investments, Clara became wealthy, owning scores of properties and mining claims throughout Central City, Georgetown and Denver. She used her money to help dozens of beleaguered freedmen come to Colorado to start new lives. Surviving fires, flood and frauds, Clara continued her good works throughout the 1870's, however, she searched in vain for her long-lost family.

In her later years, her health failing and impoverished from a lifetime of unflagging generosity, Clara moved to Denver and had to depend upon her many friends and admirers to provide for her. In a truly operatic denouement, the faith that sustained her through her entire life was finally, and gloriously, rewarded by a miraculous reunion with her daughter Eliza Jane.

Information taken from an article by Roger Baker who is the author of the book entitled *Clara: An Ex-Slave in Gold Rush Colorado*, recently published by Black Hawk Publishing.

Mollicone mixes operatic grandness, Broadway-musical energy and movie-soundtrack sweep to create a likable score that brims with memorable tunes...Luce has crafted an elegant libretto...

-Rocky Mountain News

Libretto Catalog No. 6803 available for sale
Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 6165 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Henry Mollicone

Hotel Eden

An Opera in 3 Acts
Libretto by Judith Fein

Voices:

2 Sopranos, 2 Mezzo-Sopranos, 2 Tenors, Baritone, Bass-Baritone (constructed so that only 8 singers are needed; each person may play up to 3 parts)

Instrumentation:

Flute(Pic), Clarinet, Horn, Violin, Violoncello, Contrabass, Electric Bass, Piano (Synthesizer), Percussion

Length:

Approx. 2 hours

Each act of the work is a complete story within itself and can be performed alone, as desired.
Act One: Adam and Eve's adventures in Hotel Eden, which involve Adam's "first wife," Lilith.

Act Two: Admiral and Mrs. Noah come to Hotel Eden on New Year's Eve. Admiral Noah is retired from the sea and is a recovering alcoholic.

Act Three: Sarah and Abraham have been coming to Hotel Eden for 41 years. Sarah, feeling old and sad that she has never been able to have children suddenly finds herself pregnant.

Not so much an opera as a glitzy, hip, sometimes tender, often tuneful piece of musical theatre... a feminist reading of three stories from the Old Testament. Its three acts, which seem to take place in the lobby and a bedroom of the Miami Airport Hilton, are "Lilith," focusing on a confrontation among Adam, his Talmudic pre-Eve wife, Lilith, and Eve; "Mrs. Noah"; and "Sarah," dealing with the Sarah-Hagar-Abraham triangle. Issues include male domination, women's liberation, women spurned, substance addiction, late-in-life babies and surrogate motherhood.. The music [ranges] from rock to jazz to Menotti, Bernstein and "Goodbye, Old Paint."

—William Ratliff, OPERA NEWS

*... A lark of an opera... Judith Fein has gone back to Genesis for her characters... The treatment they get from Fein & Mollicone recalls such romps as *Angelique* by Jacques Ibert and *Les Mamelles de Tiresias* by Francis Poulenc, but a thoughtful note at the end, when two characters appear dressed as a Jew and an Arab, reminds us poignantly that today's implacable Middle Eastern antagonists spring from common progenitors.*

—Paul Moor, MUSICAL AMERICA

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 4413 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Henry Mollicone

Starbird

Opera in 1 Act

Libretto by Kate Pogue

Voices:

Lyric Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, 2 Tenors, Baritone, Bass-Baritone

Instrumentation:

Flute(Pic), Clarinet, Horn, Violin, Cello, String Bass, Piano, Percussion (2 players)

Length:

46 minutes

The scene is a summer evening in New York City. A dog, a cat, and a donkey each thrown out of home and work, meet by chance in Central Park, criticizing one another — the cat for her sly agility, the dog for his craven dependence, the donkey for his dull-witted strength — each determined to go away on his own to find a new life.

As night falls, however, they sleep. They are awakened by the landing of a space ship. Despite the warnings of the Starbird, the animals board the ship, hoping it will take them to their new lives. Two robots appear and entrap the animals. The Starbird tells them of the horrors of outer space and the animals beg her to help them escape. She rescues them by utilizing their disparaged qualities — the dog's attractiveness, the donkey's strength, the cat's agility. Persuading them to see each other's faults as virtues, the Starbird takes the animals home. They go off together to a new life on earth as the Starbird disappears into endless space.

Starbird is a fetching space-age children's fable that tells how three quarreling animals are taught by an alien starbird to appreciate each other... The children in the audience loved Starbird, and so did the adults. Mollicone should go far; he can't seem to write a note that doesn't sing.

— Annalyn Swan, NEWSWEEK

... I found myself consistently involved with proper admiration for the whole piece's three levels: the Pogue libretto which delivers the points with nimble economy; Mollicone's accessible score; and the ingenious setting come costumes which are realized without fuss or muss... Mollicone's music is a happy blend with a sneaky little melodies reaching out from a base that is contemporary.

— James C. Stratton, STILLWATER (OK) NEWS-PRESS

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 5211 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Douglas Moore

Carry Nation

An Opera in Two Acts (Prologue, Seven Scenes, Epilogue)
 Libretto by William North Jayme

Voices:

2 Sopranos, Mezzo-Soprano, 5 Baritones, Bass-Baritone, Boy Soprano, Dancer, Chorus,
 Corps de Ballet

Instrumentation:

2/2(EH)/2/2 3/2/3/0 T P H Strings

Length:

2 hours

At the turn of the century Carry Nation began a crusade against the evils of alcohol which eventually brought about Prohibition. A prologue set in 1901 shows Carry and her supporters in action smashing up a barroom. From that point the rest of the opera recounts the events that led Carry to her prohibitionist stance.

Act One opens in the impoverished home of Carry's parents just after the Civil War in 1865. Charles, a physician trying to forget the war with drink, is reluctantly accepted as a boarder. After a courtship with Carry, and against her father's wishes, Carry and Charles announce their engagement at a rousing hoe-down.

Two years pass and in another Missouri town, the couple's fortunes have steadily deteriorated. Charles drinks too much to care for patients, and Carry, soon to give birth, is forced to write home for money. Her father, seeing his chance, visits Carry and persuades her to return home with him. Winter passes and a telegram arrives for Carry announcing the death of Charles. First blaming herself for Charles' death, then angrily calling on God to give her a reason to go on living, Carry prefigures the crusader of the prologue who styled herself "Your Loving Home Defender."

There are pages and pages of beautiful music, skillfully written for the voice.

— Winthrop Sargent, THE NEW YORKER

100% American Opera on a homespun subject, with dramatic music, haunting love duets, spirited and comic small ensembles, rollicking catchy choruses and a book that fits the music hand-in-glove. Small wonder that its premiere received ovation after ovation. Carry and her hatchet made a smash hit.

— Joseph Wilkins, TOPEKA DAILY CAPITAL

Carry Nation was recorded on LP by Desto, DC 6463/65

Libretto Catalog No. 1.2723 available for sale

Vocal Score Catalog No. 1.2427 available for sale

Full score & parts on rental only

Douglas Moore

The Headless Horseman

Opera in 1 Act

Libretto by Stephen Vincent Benét

Based on *A Legend of Sleepy Hollow* by Washington Irving

Voices:

Soprano, Tenor, Baritone, Bass-Baritone, Chorus of Children (SSA/TTB) - Changed Voices,
SA - Unchanged Voices

Instrumentation:

2/0/2/1 1/2/1/0 1/1/0/1 Strings

Length:

1 hour, 30 minutes

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 610 available for sale
Score & parts on rental only

Jacques Offenbach

The Blind Beggars

An Operetta in 1 Act

Libretto by Jules Moineaux

English Translation by H. B. Farnie

Voices:

Tenor, Baritone, Mute, Off-stage voice

Instrumentation:

1/1/2/1 2/2/1/0 T P Pno Strings

Length:

30 minutes

Two artful beggars, Zacharia and Buffles, are both assumed to be blind. Zacharia carries a trombone upon which he plays an occasional isolated note. After musing on the joys that can be purchased with a little money and lamenting their respective fates, Buffles presses Zacharia for the origin of his blindness. He replies that he went blind while hunting bison in America. Buffles proffers that his blindness "happened through my studying too hard at college." They pledge, immediately, to become partners.

After singing *The Song of Scrumptious Mary*, they enter into a friendly game of cards. Both, in turn, cheat in the most obvious manner — each believing the other to be without sight. They catch each other in this deception and argue until alerted by a police whistle, heard offstage. To the challenge of the policeman, they both assume their feigned blindness; there is a reprise of the song, *Scrumptious Mary*; and, as the curtain falls, they hold out their hats in a begging gesture.

This 30-minute one-act farce, an amusing work for musical theatre, is vaudevillian in style. It combines dialogue and song and can be performed by either professional singers or actors of musical comedy.

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 1.3341 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only



Alice Parker

The Martyr's Mirror

A Church Opera

Voices:

Soprano, Alto, Tenor, 2 Baritones, 2 Boy Sopranos, 3 Male Speaking Roles, Chorus

Instrumentation:

2 Recorders, Oboe, Bassoon, Trumpet, 3 Trombones, Harmonium, Percussion

Length:

1 hour, 15 minutes

The work is designed as a church opera and best performed in a church. The events of this story, characters, documents and many of the hymn texts are taken from the book *The Martyr's Mirror*, first published in Amsterdam in the 17th century. The characters are actual or composite portraits of some of the first Anabaptists to be executed in the Reformation. The time is 1520-1535, the setting is Switzerland (or Austria, or the low countries).

"I remember with fondness," [Mrs. Parker] says, "a set of performances on the Iowa prairie, almost always with people who had never sung or moved at the same time. A singer asked a member of her family at intermission why there wasn't more applause. 'It's hard to applaud when you're clutching a damp Kleenex in your hand' was the reply." In producing her first opera, Alice Parker said that she was strongly influenced by Noye's Fludde of Benjamin Britten, as well as by The Play of Daniel and The Play of Herod as presented by the New York Pro Musica. "Both ideas [continues Mrs. Parker]— those of the 12th and 20th centuries— use the church as theatre with its own atmosphere, space, acoustics, decorations and myriad associations as a basic part of design. Another crucial factor is that of the relationship of the audience to the performer— involved in and surrounded by the action, rather than passively waiting for entertainment. ... To a generation used to the passivity of television, this is heady stuff indeed."

—Dr. Lee Hastings Bristol, Jr., ARIA

Score & parts on rental only

Richard Peaslee

The Persecution and Assassination of Jean-Paul Marat as performed by the inmates of the Asylum of Charenton under the direction of the Marquis de Sade

Play by Peter Weiss

English Version by Geoffrey Skelton

Verse Adaptation and Lyrics by Adrian Mitchell

Voices:

Solo Quartet or Chorus of Singing Actors (members of the cast).

Instrumentation:

Flute, Trumpet, Tuba, Percussion, Harmonium & Guitar

Length:

2 hours, 30 minutes

Peaslee composed original music for the original production by Peter Brook of the famous play known affectionately as "Marat/Sade." It includes 21 numbers — solos, quartets and choruses, and instrumental numbers — which add greatly to the color and vitality of the play. The singers need not be professional; in fact, a certain amateur quality is desirable as the singers are the inmates in the play.

Between 1797 and 1811, the director of the Charenton Asylum near Paris established regular theatrical entertainments in his clinic as part of the therapeutic treatment of his patients. The Marquis de Sade, an inmate of Charenton from 1803 until his death in 1814, wrote and directed many of these entertainments; and it became fashionable in Paris to visit the asylum, as much to watch the antics of the lunatics as to watch their performances. The opera is precisely what the full title implies — a drama derived from the actual killing by Charlotte Corday of the extremist leader of the French Revolution, Jean-Paul Marat, told as though performed as a play in the Charenton Asylum.

A Spanish libretto is available.

Vocal Score Catalog No. 7.0043 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only



Ronald Perera

S.

An Opera in Two Acts (11 Scenes)

Music by Ronald Perera

Libretto by Constance Congdon,

based on the novel by John Updike

Original conception and artistic collaboration
by Mark Harrison

Voices:

4 Sopranos, 2 Mezzo-Sopranos, 2 Tenors, Baritone, Bass-Baritone, Bass, Sprechstimme Role, Speaking (French) Role, Chorus (min. 24)

Instrumentation:

Chamber Version: 2 Pianos (Synth.), 2 Percussion, opt. Sitar, opt Tambura

Full Version: 2/2/2/2 2/2/2/0 0/2/1/0 opt. Sitar, opt. Tambura Strings

Length:

2 ½ hours

S. is Sara Worth, a Bostonian matron who jettisons her doctor husband, daughter and comfortable life-style to join the Arizona ashram of a Hindu religious leader known as the Arhat. In a stream of written and taped communications to her family and friends back east, Sara relates the story of her rise to prominence at the ashram and of her surprising discovery about its founder. A hilarious romp through 80's American culture. The action takes place in Boston and Boston's North Shore, Florida, England and Holland, at an ashram in Arizona, and on an island in the Bahamas.

In S. he [Perera] takes...[a] bold step, setting to music Updike's epistolary portrait of a vastly...interesting person: Sarah is intelligent, strong, witty, passionate and cunning. Entirely without malice, she knows what she wants and gets it... Perera's music, memorable mainly for its texture and style, does beautifully in setting mood, defining character, underlining humor, and distinguishing the sounds of two worlds.

— THE VALLEY ADVOCATE

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 5751 available for sale
Full score & parts for both versions on rental only

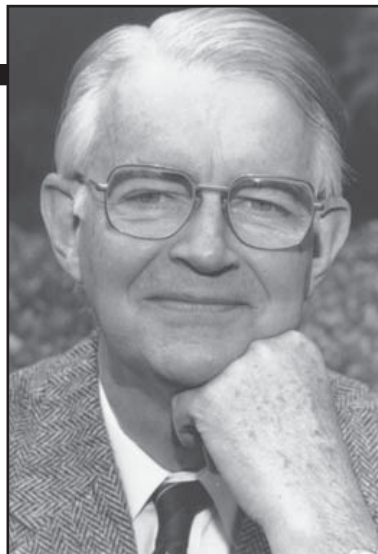
Daniel Pinkham

The Cask of Amontillado

Opera in 1 Act

Music and Libretto by Daniel Pinkham

based on the short story by Edgar Allan Poe



Voices:

Tenor, Baritone, Chorus of Revellers (SATB)

Instrumentation:

Clarinet, Horn, Viola, String Bass, Piano, Percussion (1 player)

Length:

35 minutes

Commissioned by The Boston Academy of Music and Boston Modern Orchestra Project and first performed on June 6, 2003.

The classic Poe story is brought to life by Pinkham's music and libretto. The dark tale begins in Montresor's palazzo. Montresor reveals that his friend, Fortunato, has insulted him and therefore he has carefully plotted his revenge. Knowing that wine is Fortunato's weakness, he uses this knowledge to trap Fortunato. At a carnival in the town square, Montresor pretends to be happy to see his friend and tells him of a recent purchase of a cask of Amontillado. Fortunato insists on going to the palazzo to sample the wine.

In the following scene, inside Montresor's family catacombs, they arrive at a niche in the dank and narrow passageway where, to Fortunato's surprise, he is chained up by Montresor. Unable to escape, Fortunato watches in horror as Montresor constructs a wall with building stones and mortar, and he realizes that this will be his tomb. Montresor takes up his torch and departs in silence.

Full/Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 5878 available for sale

Parts Catalog No. 5878A available for sale

Choral Part Catalog No. 5878B available for sale

Daniel Pinkham

Daniel in the Lion's Den

Theatre Piece for Stage or Church

Libretto by Daniel Pinkham

Voices:

Tenor, Baritone, Bass-Baritone, Narrator, Mixed Chorus

Instrumentation:

2 Pianos, Percussion, Electronic Tape

Length:

24 minutes

The libretto is drawn from Daniel 6 (the Bible), the Apocryphal Book of Bel and the Snake, Psalm 116, and a hymn by John Newton. It may be performed as a concert work, or with staging including projections, scenery, dancers, etc.

The intensity of the dramatic line mounts rapidly with climactic realistic sound effects augmenting the drama of the story. The score makes arresting use of instrumental color and rhythmic excitement...

— Willard Hyatt, MUSIC JOURNAL

Choral Score Catalog No. 2946 available for sale
Electronic Media Catalog No. 2946B available for sale
Full Score Catalog No. 2946A available for sale

Daniel Pinkham

The Descent into Hell

Theatre Piece for Stage or Church
Libretto by Daniel Pinkham

Voices:

Soprano, Tenor, Bass-Baritone, Mixed Chorus and Semi-Chorus; singing actors and a small "marching band" required

Instrumentation:

2 Horns, 3 Trumpets, 3 Trombones, Percussion, Organ, Electronic Tape

Length:

20 minutes

Commissioned by West Virginia Wesleyan College on the occasion of its ninetieth birthday.

The libretto as arranged and amplified by the composer is based on a Greek narrative describing the Harrowing of Hell as found in *The Apocryphal New Testament*, translated by M. R. James. (Harrow is an Old English word meaning "to rob.") This is an event in the afterlife of Christ which has no basis in the Gospels. Interwoven into the story is the legend that the wood from Eden's apple tree later became the wood of the cross.

Vocal Score Catalog No. 3084 available for sale
Electronic Media Catalog No. 3084A available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Daniel Pinkham

The Dreadful Dining Car

A Comic Melodrama in 1 Act
Libretto by Daniel Pinkham

Voices:

Mezzo-Soprano, 19 Characters, Mixed Chorus

Instrumentation:

Flute, Clarinet, Trumpet, Contrabass, Piano, Percussion, Guitar

Length:

1 hour

The libretto is based *Cannibalism in the Cars*, a short story by Mark Twain; and the poems *Sing for Baby* and *Moon Carol* by Norma Farber.

Mark Twain is joined on a railroad trip in the Midwest by a mysterious stranger, who recounts a similar trip many years before in which a sudden snow storm strands the train. There is enough fuel, but the food has run out and there is no possible rescue. By following Roberts Rules the passengers choose a committee to determine which of the passengers will be elected to be dinner. The chorus sings a cheerful song about the respective merits of red or white wine with the meal. Ultimately it is revealed that the stranger's dreadful tale is entirely manufactured and that he revels in telling it at the least provocation to the unwary listener.

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 3126 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Daniel Pinkham

The Garden of Artemis

(or Apollo's Revels)

A Tableau Chantant in the Antique Manner

Libretto by Robert Hillyer

Voices:

Soprano, Alto, Baritone, SA Chorus

Instrumentation:

Flute, Clarinet, Violin, Viola, Cello

Length:

28 minutes

Pulitzer Prize winner Robert Hillyer wrote the libretto for this neo-classic *scena* which evokes gods and goddesses of classical mythology. Clorinda, a virgin shepherdess fearful for her virtue, is pursued by the god Apollo. She prays to the goddess Artemis, patroness of virgins, to help her. Artemis thwarts Apollo's advances by turning Clorinda into a rose. The chorus concludes "The leaf and flower have had their hour. We sang in the sun and our song is done."

Mr. Pinkham's setting... stands out as one of the most refreshing essays ever to come out of the Piston-Longy circle. Happily enough, not only has the composer... a capacity for melody, but no sense of embarrassment at all about using it. The result was music of exceptional freshness, charm, grace, and wit... The instrumental part ... was exquisite in its texture.

—Rudolph Elie, THE BOSTON HERALD

Daniel Pinkham

Garden Party

A Comic Opera based on an irreverent view of the Garden of Eden
 Libretto by Daniel Pinkham

Voices:

Soprano, Baritone, Actor with low-pitched voice, Actor with high-pitched voice, Barbershop Quartet, Mixed Chorus

Instrumentation:

Clarinet, Viola, Contrabass, 2 or 3 Keyboards (1 Player), Percussion, Electronic Tape

Length:

45 minutes

The libretto is based on Genesis 2 and 3 from the Bible, poems by Norma Farber, Mrs. M. A. Kidder, and the composer.

A screwball version of the Garden of Eden. Adam, alone, plays solitaire but has not yet achieved knowledge so he doesn't know who is winning. Gabriel gives him a picture book of animals and he is asked to name them. To give him companionship, Gabriel, now in doctor's costume, removes a rib which becomes Eve. Snake tries to get Eve to eat an apple from the Tree of Knowledge. Gabriel also encourages her taking the apple so that the empty pages of his "Future Book" can be completed. The couple, expelled from Eden but having gained knowledge by tasting the forbidden fruit, reflect on their loss but now, as a trade-off, "have knowledge to learn to enjoy sin."

The real reason for celebration yesterday was the premiere of Daniel Pinkham's Garden Party; one of those minor, sporting works that makes the world a "more" diverting place to be in... There are some positively slinky harmonic progressions in the best art-trashy French manner; an irresistible gospel song led off by a barbershop quartet; a lovely, sensuous duet of regret; and strong choral settings of Ms. Farber's poems...

—Richard Dyer, THE BOSTON GLOBE

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 693 available for sale
 Full score & parts on rental only

Daniel Pinkham

The Left-Behind Beasts

A Play with Music for Children

Music and Libretto by Daniel Pinkham

Voices:

Unison Chorus of Treble Voices, Actors

Instrumentation:

Six orchestral players, Children's percussion ensemble

Length:

25 minutes

The libretto is freely adapted from a story by Norma Farber entitled *How the Left-Behind Beasts Built Ararat.*"

At Noah's Day School for Animals Mrs. Noah is complaining to her husband; it has been raining for a month and she is depressed. She reminds him that when they were first married, and before he had started the School, he had taken her on trips. He proposes that for vacation week they sail the Ark south to the sunny islands and take the two most diligent of each kind of their animal students to help with the sailing.

The Ark is boarded in a jolly march. The Left-Behind Beasts sing a chorus wishing them a happy journey. As soon as the Ark is out of sight they come to recognize their predicament. It continues to rain and the water continues to rise. With the exception of a haddock and a cod, who fail to understand the "commotion because of more ocean," they become terrified and turn to Owl for advice. He advises them to build a mountain and asks each in turn what he can contribute.

The storm strikes with full fury as the animals set about their appointed tasks. The completed mountain becomes their safe haven.

The rain stops. The sun comes out. The Ark returns from its southern cruise and they all have a celebration.

Like all his music, Pinkham's score is both practical and challenging, pitched to the capacities of American school children today, but not condescending to them. The tunes are catchy and full of artful dodges; the plot advances through rhythmic speech... the orchestral writing suggests a less cynical Kurt Weill — and the kids get to play along with the percussion. The piece is both delightful and touching.

—Richard Dyer, THE BOSTON GLOBE

Choral Score Catalog No. 4068 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Daniel Pinkham

A Mast for the Unicorn

A Children's Operetta
Music and Libretto by Daniel Pinkham

Voices:

3 Sopranos, 3 Baritones, Unison Chorus of Treble Voices, Actors

Instrumentation:

Chamber Orchestra (6 solo players: Clarinet in B-flat, Trumpet in C, Double Bass, 2 Percussion Players, Piano), Children's Ensemble

Length:

20 minutes

The libretto is based on an historical event which took place on the island of Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, during the American Revolutionary War.

During a fierce storm the British warship, Unicorn, loses its mainmast and limps into harbor on Martha's Vineyard. The captain knows a tall tree is there, dear to the American patriots and known as the "Liberty Tree." It would prove to be an ideal replacement mast for the damaged ship. Three young patriot girls, learning of the British plan, secretly steal gunpowder and blow up the beloved tree, rather than have it fall into enemy hands. The British now cannot leave the island and are captured by the islanders. The girls are celebrated as heroes.

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 4092 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Daniel Pinkham

The Passion of Judas

A Cantata with an Opera in the Middle — Chancel Drama
Music and Libretto by Daniel Pinkham

Voices:

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor, Baritone, Bass-Baritone, 4 Narrators, Mixed Chorus

Instrumentation:

B-Flat Clarinet, Harp, Viola, Contrabass, Chamber Organ,

Length:

30 minutes

Both in sound and structure, *The Passion of Judas* shows the composer's interest in mystery plays of the medieval church and in the two extant Bach Passion settings. The text has been taken from the Bible, poems by Norma Farber, James Wright, and a television play by R. C. Norris. Three choral psalm-settings frame the work; the first (Psalm 1) pointing out the path of virtue, the second (Psalm 15) warning of deceit, and the third (Psalm 51) praying for forgiveness.

Amid these psalms, there are prose readings about Judas from the New Testament, two solo arias that set modern poems about Judas, and a brief opera that depicts how the parents of Judas bought his life from one of the infant-slaughtering captains of Herod.

While I would never expect to be disappointed by one of Mr. Pinkham's compositions, I was nevertheless not prepared for the impact a hearing of this work makes. To my mind ... I predict that this will be judged a major contribution to 20th-century choral literature. Based on an alternation of Biblical texts and three modern texts, the work makes a powerful dramatization of the words by using the same time levels employed in the Bach Passions. The sounds, however, are from the present, and reflect... much the same style used by French masters as Lili Boulanger, Poulenc, and Honegger.

— Arthur Lawrence, THE DIAPASON

In a tradition traceable from the medieval liturgical Easter dramas, through Bach's Passion settings, Pinkham has treated the tragedy of Judas on several levels... [in the opera section, he] has used a familiar contemporary recitative idiom... but has endowed them with rather more than usual lyricism. The choruses, simple but effective settings of pertinent psalms, reflect on the drama.

— Joan Reinthaler, THE WASHINGTON POST

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 3032 available for sale
 Full score & parts on rental only

Vittorio Rieti

The Clock

An Opera in 2 Acts
Libretto by Claire Nicolas

Voices:

Soprano, 4 Mezzo-Sopranos, Contralto, Tenor, Baritone, Bass

Instrumentation:

2(pic)/2/2/2 2/2/2/0 T P Cel H Strings

Length:

1 hour

Richard and his aging mother share a large country estate. His mother, Mathilda, has befriended a young man caught stealing fruit from their orchard. Every day they meet to play cards and eat ice cream despite the dismay expressed by her ever-would-be meddling family. Fast paced events unfold revealing the truth: Richard is the boy's father who stole his mother's diamonds to send to the woman he loved—the woman Mathilda never accepted—to raise his child. The title comes from a centerpiece of the set: the clock in which the diamonds are “re-discovered.” Even though this opera is set at the end of the Eisenhower era in America, its themes speak to all times.

Score & parts on rental only

Vittorio Rieti

Maryam the Harlot

A Sainly Story — Opera in 2 Scenes and an Epilogue
Libretto by Claire Nicolas

Voices:

Soprano, Tenor, Baritone, Bass-Baritone

Instrumentation:

2(pic)/2/2/2 2/2/1/0/ T P Celesta, Pno Strings

Length:

1 hour

Maryam and her uncle, Apraham, are hermits; they live in the desert in two tiny adjoining cells. Here they take turns praying for all the world in twelve hour watches. After being seduced and raped by a monk, Maryam becomes the village harlot at the local inn. Apraham has a series of prophetic dreams in which he rescues a white-clad damsel from the belly of a dragon. When he comes to understand the meaning of his visions, he goes to the inn disguised as an aging knight. Under the ruse of wanting to buy her services, he gains Maryam's trust. After she leads him to her room he reveals his true identity and convinces her to repent and return to her life of prayer and contemplation.

The epilogue returns them to their hermitage. Together they come out of their cells and address the audience: "Fear not—repent, your night shall end, and you shall bless the light and bless the day! Amen!"

Score & parts on rental only

Vittorio Rieti

The Pet Shop

A Musical Farce in 1 Act

Libretto by Claire Nicolas

Voices:

Soprano, Contralto, Tenor, Puppets, Dogs

Instrumentation:

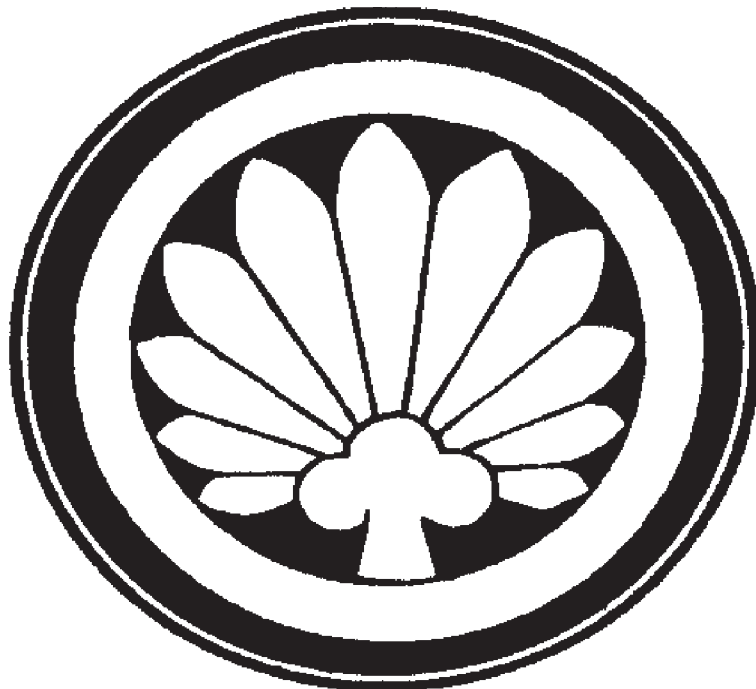
1/1/1/0 1/1/1/0 2P Pno Strings

Length:

25 minutes

A New York Society Matron is comically blackmailed: she must either consent to the marriage of her daughter to the owner of the pet shop, or else . . . no dog to match her gown!

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 1.8132 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only



Elena Ruehr

Toussaint Before the Spirits

A Chamber Opera in 1 Act

Libretto by Madison Smartt Bell, Elizabeth Spires and Elena Ruehr

Voices:

Soprano, 2 Tenors, Baritone

Instrumentation:

Oboe, Timpani (4 drums; doubles on bongo), 2 Percussion, Harpsichord, Strings

Length:

50 minutes

Commissioned by the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, the Boston Academy of Music and the American Composers Forum. It was premiered by Opera Unlimited on February 7, 2003.

Caffarelli descends to the French dungeon in which Toussaint is imprisoned, determined to take down his story. Toussaint laments his captivity, the trick that robbed him of his power in the revolt against the French. He learns that there is to be no trial, and even Caffarelli will not come to see him again.

He summons the Lwa, the spirits of his people (the role is sung by a soprano, who represents six different spirits, each standing for a different aspect of the spirit world.) Legba, the spirit of change, appears and warns Toussaint of his risk. He insists that his spirit is clear. Legba assures him that all of the spirits will speak to him in her voice.

She ushers Moyses, Toussaint's godson (also a spirit from the dead), to him. The two men argue over Toussaint's rule and its outcome, Toussaint insisting that he taught Moyses the ways of his new world, while Moyses rejoins that he learned only slavish service to the white man. Moyses accuses Toussaint of betraying his people into another slavery. Toussaint defends his decisions, saying that the people had to work to build the economy of the land.

Moyse evokes Ghede, the spirit of death, sex, and appetite. She cries, "How richly you fed me with death." Toussaint insists that he sought freedom, serving the spirit of harmony. Moyses evokes Ezili Fréda, the spirit of harmonious love. She agrees with Toussaint that he carried her in his head and heart, though she regrets that so many nonetheless had to die.

"Her eyes are red from weeping," says Moyses, and he summons her more violent aspect Ezili Dantor, a spirit of revolution, a spirit that asks for fire and blood. Though briefly caught up in it himself, Toussaint insists, "This blood rage is strong in you, Moyses."

It was this spirit that caused Moyses to raise a revolt against Toussaint, and who, in Toussaint's eyes, is the real betrayer of their freedom. Moyses denies it, asking "What spirit will support you in your claim?"

Toussaint summons Gran Bwa, the spirit of the forest and of healing. Through her, both Moyses and Toussaint realize that the Tree of Liberty cannot be destroyed and that all three embody the tree, whose "branches reach to heaven."

"... had the audience on its feet, cheering, whistling, and applauding...combines a lyrical outpouring energized by motor rhythms that never become mechanical...compelling, emotional, theatrical....takes us back to the beginnings of the art, and to one of the first great operas, Gluck's "Orfeo."

—Richard Dyer, BOSTON GLOBE

"This impressive chamber opera is an illuminating historical musical fantasy..."

—Joshua Rosenblum, OPERA NEWS

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 6640 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Conrad Susa

Black River

A Wisconsin Idyll

Grand Opera in 3 Acts and a Prologue

Libretto by Richard Street & Conrad Susa



Voices:

2 Sopranos, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor, Bass-Baritone, Baritone, Chorus

Instrumentation:

2/2/2/2 4/2/2/0 3P 2 Keyboard H Strings

Length:

3 hours, 30 minutes

Commissioned by the Minnesota Opera

The libretto is loosely inspired by Michael Lesy's book *Wisconsin Death Trip*, a grim study of death-obsessed life in Black River Falls, Wisconsin at the turn of the century. Lesy compiled a scrap-book of suicides, arsons, epidemics, murders, and insanity.

Heavy ideological baggage for opera, surely. But the conveyance — Susa's remarkable score — carries it smoothly. Susa has written, surely, one of the most American of operas, a work as American in its musical idioms (period ballads, prohibition songs, church music, et al.) as it is American in literary theme: loneliness, isolation, the individual vs. the crowd. From the deft orchestration... to the wealth of lovely choral writing... to the set pieces, the arias, and ensembles, Susa has written a score that is not only dramatic but that captures in its very sound a hauntingly lonely quality that is so often mentioned in regard to the work of Aaron Copland — but it's not Copland. It's Susa.

—Michael Anthony, THE MINNEAPOLIS TRIBUNE

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 4206 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Conrad Susa

The Dangerous Liaisons

An Opera in Two Acts

Libretto by Philip Littell

Based on the novel by Pierre Choderlos de Laclos

Voices:

7 Sopranos, 3 Mezzo-Sopranos, 4 Tenors, 4 Baritones

Instrumentation:

3/3/3/3 4/3/3/1 1/3/1/1 Strings

Length:

2 hours, 45 minutes

Commissioned by San Francisco Opera and premiered in September of 1994

The salon of Mme. Rosemonde's chateau outside Paris, France, is the setting for the tangled web of intrigue and love relationships between Chevalier of Danceny and Cecile de Volanges; Valmont (Rosemonde's nephew) and Madame de Merteuil (among his other female conquests, Madame de Tourvel, Emilie, a whore, and finally even Cecile). The relationships are made and changed by a series of letters which each writes to the other, shadowed by the overriding relationship between Valmont and Madame de Merteuil. Merteuil, in the end, emerges from the tumult to tell of her public humiliation and her subsequent misfortunes, including smallpox and bankruptcy. She cannot avoid betraying the regret of her true feeling for Valmont. She has lost everything, yet, defiantly, she survives.

Mr. Littell's distillation lends the characters a certain depth and concreteness. The history and thus the motivations of the manipulative Marquises de Merteuil are deftly limned. And the Vicomte de Valmont, while philandering with a vengeance... maintains a modicum of humanity, which makes his ultimate breakdown not only believable but, on some minimal level, touching. Mr. Susa's music, in its perfumed decadence, was also an honest mirror, grateful for the singing voice...

— James R. Oestreich, THE NEW YORK TIMES

For those who consider contemporary opera something to be dreaded and feared, Conrad Susa's new operatic version of The Dangerous Liaisons (★★★'s out of four)... seems too ingratiating to be true... it's too pretty to be dangerous. Following the superb overture of complimentary melodies playing a gentle game of tag, the piece settles into a well-upholstered but emotionally circumscribed style that suggests a laid-back Richard Strauss. This approach conveys the ornate veneer coating 18th century French society. And the alternatively interlocking and unraveling woodwind melodies suggest [the] behind-the-scenes intrigues...

— David Patrick Stearns, USA TODAY

Libretto Catalog No. 4974 available for sale

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 4975 available for sale

Full score & parts on rental only

Conrad Susa

The Love of Don Perlimplín

Opera in 1 Act

Libretto by Richard Street and Conrad Susa

Based on the play by Federico Garcia Lorca

Voices:

2 Sopranos, Mezzo-Soprano, Baritone, Chorus of 6, Dancers

Instrumentation:

1(Pic)/1(EH)/2(BCI)/1(CBsn) 1/1(FlgIhrn)/1/0 3P 2Kybd (Harpsichord, Electric Piano, Piano, Celesta) H Mandolin Strings

Length:

1 hour, 10 minutes

Commissioned by the San Francisco Opera and the Pepsico Summer Fare

A wealthy, bookish old bachelor is persuaded by his housekeeper to take a wife. The matching of old age to a young, lusty wife is disastrous and Perlimplin realises that Belisa will take lovers and he is filled with despair. But at the same time he has experienced love and learned to use his imagination. He devises a plan by which, disguised as a young man in a red cape, he woos and wins Belisa. Honor, however, demands that the husband kill the wife's lover. Since they are one in the same, Perlimplin makes a love sacrifice and kills himself. Belisa, who has truly experienced love for the first time, is transformed from a wanton, thoughtless girl into a woman capable of loving someone other than herself. Through this tragic act he gives her real life. Theirs is now a perfect union: Perlimplin reaches the only plateau he could have inhabited once his love for Belisa was enkindled, and she attains a stature she could never have reached alone.

Mr. Susa... adapted his own libretto from Lorca's play, and has attempted to retain its delicate balance of comedy and tragedy, eroticism and propriety. He is an unabashed conservative, yet one with a distinctly original musical language. Mr. Susa has a gift for arching, immediately accessible melodies, and his scoring is expertly deft, utilizing an unusual grouping of instruments, including the harpsichord, which gives the sound a bright neo-classical patina. Some yearning orchestral interludes contain passages of shimmering beauty. In addition, Mr. Susa keeps the viewer interested in the opera — in its action, and in the characters whom he has endowed with such vivid life.

—Tim Page, THE NEW YORK TIMES

Libretto Catalog No. 7491 available for sale
Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. 4148 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Conrad Susa

Transformations

An Entertainment in 2 Acts

Texts by Anne Sexton

Voices:

2 Sopranos, Mezzo-Soprano, 3 Tenors, High Baritone, Bass-Baritone

Instrumentation:

Clarinet, Saxophone, Trumpet, Trombone, Contrabass, Electric Harpsichord, Electric Piano, Electric Celeste, Electric Organ, Percussion (2 players)

Length:

Approx. 2 hours

Commissioned by the Minnesota Opera

Transformations was originally published as a book of poems by Anne Sexton in 1971. Her story-poems recreate with wit and unsettling humor seventeen familiar tales (from the Brothers Grimm) and, with relentless honesty, uncover her own personal demons. With the author's cooperation, nine of these poems were taken verbatim and set as a contemporary opera by Conrad Susa.

Susa's score is economical, intelligent, witty, alert: a cunning theatre piece, sure in its proportions and its varied gaits, always engaging and inventive. Each of Sexton's tales has an introduction; in her fables the moral is stated first, then comes the exemplification. This gives the composer a chance to practice his own kind of transformations . . . There are happy allusions to the styles of specific performers — Bing Crosby, the Andrews Sisters. The instrumentalists are also asked to be inventively imitative, to recall now Ethel Smith, now Perez Prado. I like the opera even better than the book of poems; fresh winds from the world blow into it. It inhabits the terrain of Stravinsky's Reynard and Soldier's Tale, Kurt Weill's... Mahagonny and Seven Deadly Sins — not as an imitation of any of those works but in being a 1970's successor in scale, texture, and tunefulness, and in being delightful entertainment that is not trivial.

— Andrew Porter, THE NEW YORKER

Vocal Score Catalog No. 660 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Conrad Susa

The Wise Women

(A Christmas Mystery Fable)

Church Opera in 1 Act

Libretto by Philip Littell

Voices:

6 Sopranos, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor, Baritone, Bass-Baritone, SATB Large Chorus, Small Chorus of 9 Solo Voices (SSA,AAT,TBB or SSS,ATT,BBB), Congregation (selected Hymns)

Instrumentation:

Flute (Pic), Classical Guitar, Harp, Percussion, Harpsichord or Piano, Portative Organ, Grand Organ, Handbells

Length:

45 to 55 minutes, depending on handling of aleatoric passages.

The Wise Women was commissioned by the American Guild of Organists for the Biennial Convention, Dallas, Texas, 1994

Led by a tri-partite star, the Wise Men (Youth, Husband, Old Man), followed by the women (Maiden, Goodwife, Crone), rest at an oasis. Discussion of their trip causes disagreement between the men, who insist they seek an adult king, and the women, who are certain the monarch will be a baby. Deciding to leave the women behind, the men proceed with their entourage following the impatient star. Disappointed, angry and confused, the women lament their fates and retire. As the women sleep, the Holy Mother and Child appear to them in a vision, allowing them to see the baby before the men do. As the shepherds descend on Bethlehem to worship the Child, the Wise Men arrive and question the regality of the Child. A host of unusual angels addresses these doubts in a unique version of the angels' message. During the singing of the *Gloria*, the Wise Men offer their gifts and retire; the shepherds return telling others the good news and the Holy Family is transported to the oasis of the Wise Women. The star invites "children" of all ages to come to the oasis to see the baby. These children and the women fall asleep as the Holy Family leaves. The disappointed and confused Wise Men return. In riddle, the women help the men to understand that the best gift for this King is one which recognizes divinity in every child — Love. Satisfied, they all return to their homeland following the star.

Its means are simple, its rewards are great... [Susa has] fashioned shapely, plaintive melodies.

— John Ardoin, THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS

... an inventive, charming 'Christmas mystery fable' capable of enchanting child and adult alike.

— Scott Cantrell, THE AMERICAN ORGANIST

Designed for children young and old, The Wise Women is kind of a modern mystery play, leavened with humor. And Susa's music is sheer magic, Debussian in its deft twining of vocal and instrumental line and shimmering harmonies; the "Gloria" becomes an ecstatic welter, rich and strange.

— Joe Henderson, THE KANSAS CITY STAR

Full Vocal Score Catalog No. 5059 available for sale

Choral Score Catalog No. 5060 available for sale

Audience parts (pack of 50) Catalog No. 6548 available for sale

Instrumental parts on rental only

Randall Thompson

The Nativity According to Saint Luke

A Musical Drama in Seven Scenes
Text from the Gospel according to St. Luke

Voices:

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Contralto, 2 Tenors, 3 Baritones, 2 Basses, 2 Boys (SA), Chorus

Instrumentation:

1/1/1/1 1/1/0/0 1/0/0/1 Strings

Length:

1 hour, 30 minutes

An ideal work for those wishing to present a staged (or semi-staged) musical work at Christmas time. It is easy to perform and provides many opportunities for both adults and children to participate as soloists or choir members or in non-singing roles. Suitable for performance in a church or theater. A stage guide is available. The story follows the biblical text; the setting is the Holy Land in the age of Augustus. It was written for the 200th Anniversary of the Dedication of Christ Church, Cambridge.

A drama in the great tradition of the medieval rappresentazione, Professor Thompson's Nativity was moving and magnificent beyond the praise of layman or critic... a flawless blend of choral music and religious experience.

—David McCord, THE HARVARD ALUMNI BULLETIN

Thompson is the master of the most polished sort of choral writing. This score, as others of his, is conservative yet fresh and expressive, plain yet rich, unadorned but most suitably and powerfully dramatic. It is worthy of widespread hearing.

—Cyrus Durgin, THE BOSTON GLOBE

The essential quality which shone through was the profound intelligence which created it. If we are honest, we must recognize that the Nativity story has become so cluttered with stock figures and stock scenes that it has lost the power to touch our imaginations. Mr. Thompson took a fresh look at the story and recreated the wonder of Christmas.

—Dorothy Ream Packard, THE EVANSTON REVIEW

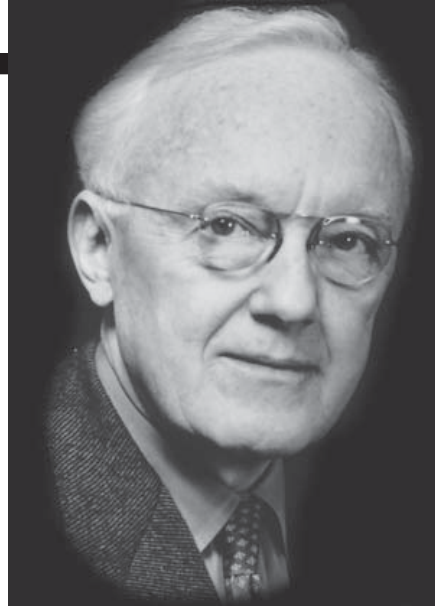
Vocal Score Catalog No. 622 available for sale
Choral Score Catalog No. 622A available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Randall Thompson

Solomon and Balkis ("The Butterfly That Stamped")

Opera in 1 Act

Libretto by Randall Thompson



Voices:

2 Sopranos, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor, Baritone, Women's Chorus

Instrumentation:

1/1/1/1 2/2/0/0 Timpani, 2P Strings

Length:

43 minutes

The work is based on the *Just So Stories* by Rudyard Kipling, and was originally conceived for radio performance. Kipling's fable relates how King Solomon's loving wife, Balkis the Most Beautiful, saved her lord from the vexatious quarreling of his 999 other wives. As Solomon strolls in his garden he overhears a butterfly quarreling with his wife. The butterfly threatens that if he stamps his foot the palace and garden will vanish in a thunderclap. Solomon, amused, calls up his Djinn, enables the butterfly to make good on his threat. In the end Solomon is surprised to discover that clever Queen Balkis engineered the whole thing, to silence the 999 quarreling wives.

The charm of the opera lies in the humor with which the composer has invested in the score... the audience loved it... [a] gay and brief entertaining piece...

—Alexander Williams, THE BOSTON HERALD

Mr. Thompson is an expert composer for the concert hall, one of our most accomplished. He possesses... a pretty wit. The musical treatment, or lack of treatment, of the Butterfly's devastating stamp is a masterpiece of humor.

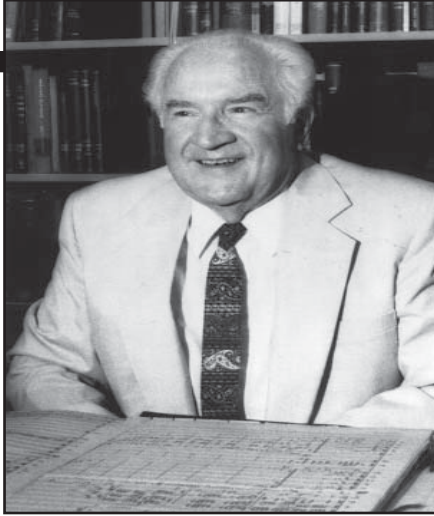
—Warren Storey Smith, THE BOSTON POST

Randall Thompson's... charming one act opera, Solomon and Balkis, was written for radio in the early 1940's. ... since its premiere, time has neither withered its wry charm nor its gently astringent message.

—Clark Larrabee, THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

Vocal Score Catalog No. 2031 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Robert Ward



Abelard and Heloise

A Music Drama in 3 Acts

Libretto by Jan Hartman

Voices:

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Contralto, 3 Tenors, Baritone, 2 Bass-Baritones, 2 Basses,
Chorus

Instrumentation:

2/2/2/2 2/1/1/0 P H Strings

Length:

2 hours, 15 minutes

This is the classic twelfth-century love story between Abelard, cleric, scholar and poet-philosopher, and his young and beautiful student, Heloise. The opera opens on the doorstep of Notre Dame in Paris, where Abelard's popularity as a liberal cleric is brought to the fore as he settles a dispute between a group of students. However, Abelard's free thinking ideas are considered heretical by powerful persons in the church, particularly Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux, and Fulbert, Canon of Notre Dame. It is Fulbert who has brought Abelard to his house to tutor Heloise, his niece.

As the idyllic summer progresses, Abelard and Heloise fall passionately in love. When the news comes out that Heloise has become pregnant by Abelard, a violent succession of events ensues. Fulbert, in a state of rage, hires thugs to overpower Abelard and castrate him. Meanwhile, Heloise has been spirited away to a convent in Argenteuil.

Abelard accepts his fate as God's will, and even finds solace in his condition as allowing him to return to undivided service to God. In the last act, Abelard is brought before the bishops at Sens and condemned for heresy. The opera ends as it began, with the burial of Abelard at the vault in Paraclete as Heloise reads aloud his last letter to her and the nuns are heard singing the *Veni Creator Spiritus*.

The score blends rich orchestration and melodious vocal writing to good effect... Ward sets up a parade of solos and duets that cover the musical gamut... The score spills chants, ballads, tightly harmonized choruses and complex jazz rhythms.

—LaFleur Paysour, NORTH CAROLINA OBSERVER

Libretto Catalog No. 7.0277 available for sale
Vocal Score Catalog No. 7.0278 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Robert Ward

Claudia Legare

Opera in 4 Acts

Libretto by Bernard Stambler

Based on a play by Henrik Ibsen

Voices:

3 Sopranos, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor, Baritone, Bass-Baritone

Instrumentation:

2(Pic)/2(EH)/2(BCI)/2 4/3/2/0 T P H Strings

Length:

2 hours, 10 minutes

The libretto is based on Henrik Ibsen's play, *Hedda Gabler*, and the story is transposed to the setting of post-Civil War Charleston. It is the story of a domineering and obsessed woman, Claudia Legare, who drastically affects the lives of everyone around her, ultimately destroying the person she admires most, Orlando, and ending with her own suicide.

As the opera opens, Claudia and George Lowndes, recently married, have returned to war-torn Charleston to live in the once elegant Lowndes house. Claudia soon becomes restive in this provincial family setting. Her well-meaning but ineffectual husband, George, hopes to interest a powerful business group with a conventional plan to rebuild the ravaged South. Claudia's former lover, Orlando Beaumont, a wild alcoholic visionary, has also drafted a plan, but a daring revolutionary one. The business group is to meet late one night to choose between these two rival plans.

At the fateful meeting, Orlando outlines his plan brilliantly and impresses everyone, even his rival, George; but afterwards he becomes drunk, wanders off and loses his only copy of the plan. Luckily, George finds the packet and entrusts it to Claudia, who in a fit of conflicting passions — envy, jealousy and unrequited love — burns Orlando's manuscript. When Orlando, in hopeless despair, arrives later, still believing his manuscript lost, Claudia gives him her pistol and urges him on to a "glorious end." The next day, word comes back that Orlando has killed himself with Claudia's pistol — not gloriously though, but accidentally in a brothel brawl. At news of this sordid end, Claudia goes into the adjoining study and takes her life.

His style is unabashedly romantic and he resists all urges to write "modern" music. Claudia Legare is meant to sing, to feel, to animate its characters with hot blood, not cultivate stultified romance.

— Frank Hruby, THE CLEVELAND PRESS

Libretto Catalog No. 7.0240 available for sale
Vocal Score Catalog No. VP0018 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Robert Ward

The Crucible

Opera in 4 Acts

Libretto by Bernard Stambler

Based on the play by Arthur Miller

Voices:

4 Sopranos, 2 Mezzo-Sopranos, 2 Contraltos, 4 Tenors, 2 Baritones, 2 Bass-Baritones, Chorus of Girls, Mixed chorus ad lib

Instrumentation:

2/2/2/2 4/2/2/0 T P H Strings

or reduced orchestration: 2(Pic)/1(EH)/2/1 2/2/1/0 P H Strings

Length:

2 hours

WINNER, PULITZER PRIZE, 1961

WINNER, NEW YORK CRITICS CIRCLE CITATION, 1962

The story is Arthur Miller's impassioned parable of witchcraft and intrigue in colonial Salem; a story of good and evil, in which bigoted men and women used the cry of "witch" to destroy those they hated or envied. The town of Salem has been seized by a wave of hysteria. The slave, Tituba, is accused by the wily and pretty Abigail, who uses the situation to destroy the community. When the witch trial begins under the administration of the terrifying zealot, Judge Danforth, Abigail accuses Elizabeth, the wife of John Proctor, of witchcraft. Abigail hopes thereby to get Elizabeth out of the way and regain John's affection. John remains loyal to his wife, however, even admitting in court to his adultery with Abigail in order to expose her fraud. He is not believed, however, and is himself arrested and, along with Tituba and other innocents, condemned to the gallows. In a blaze of courage at the opera's end, John refuses to sign the false confession that would free him.

Premiered in 1961, *The Crucible* won both the Pulitzer Prize and the New York Critics Circle Citation the following year. Performed several hundred times since its premiere, *The Crucible* is one of the few contemporary American operas to have entered the repertory.

At last week's performance... I was able to get a clearer idea of this opera, which is, of course, a study of the human conscience based on Arthur Miller's play about the Salem witch trails. Again, the beauty, nobility, skill, power, and utter sincerity of Mr. Ward's music bowled me over. If a finer opera has been written since the days of Strauss and Puccini, I have not heard it. ... The Crucible is comparable to the great masterworks of the classical repertory, and I like to think of it also as an example of the true music of the future. It is, in short, music of the most inspired sort, written by a master of his craft.

— Winthrop Sargeant, THE NEW YORKER

Libretto Catalog No. 7.0147 available for sale

Vocal Score Catalog No. 7.0028 available for sale

Full score & parts on rental only

Robert Ward

He Who Gets Slapped – Pantaloon

Opera in 3 Acts

Libretto by Bernard Stambler

Based on a melodrama by Andreyev

Voices:

2 Sopranos, 2 Tenors, Baritone, 2 Bass-Baritones, 2 Mutes, Chorus

Instrumentation:

2(Pic)/1(EH)/2/2 4/3/3/0 T P H Strings

Length:

2 hours

An operatic realization of Andreyev's psychological melodrama, set in a Parisian circus at the turn of the century, *Pantaloon* offers enormous color and dramatic action with its constant movement of circus characters: lion tamer, bareback rider, barkers, clowns, acrobats, dancers, etc.

In the opening scene, Tilly and Polly, clowns in Briquet's Continental Circus, are rehearsing their act when Briquet and Count Mancini enter arguing. A stranger of aristocratic bearing arrives and asks to become a clown in the circus. With misgivings, Briquet hires him as Pantaloon — "He Who Gets Slapped."

As the opera progresses, Pantaloon, with clever acts and touches of gentle philosophizing, is able to show audiences how to laugh at their own misfortunes, while backstage he exposes the shabby marriage arrangement that Count Mancini has tried to effect between his daughter, Consuelo, the bareback rider, and the rich Baron Regnard. Against this intrigue is the triangle of passion between Consuelo, Bezano, the bareback rider, and Zinida, the female lion tamer.

In the final act, Mancini confesses his frauds and Pantaloon, rebuffed in his love for Consuelo, takes off his clown's costume and quietly departs by the street door through which he entered.

He Who Gets Slapped is a complicated play, with many symbolic allusions and play-within-plays. Former Clevelander Robert Ward has fashioned a logical piece of music for it, with an underlying gift for lyric expression... The opera, curiously enough, seems to be two works, acts one and two having their own quality or character, generally in line with modern American opera. The third act, which... came alive with great style and effect, is much more lyrical and theatrical, and one which played on one's emotions during every note, every moment... Ward's music does not particularly belong to any school. He sets the words to music so that they are, first of all understandable. Then he makes sure that they follow a musical path that is attractive and appropriate.

— Frank Hruby, THE CLEVELAND PRESS

Libretto Catalog No. 7.0146 available for sale

Vocal Score Catalog No. 7.0023 available for sale

Full score & parts on rental only

Robert Ward

Images of God

A Sacred Service Including a Mystery Play
 Libretto by Susan Chapek & Stuart C. Henry

Voices:

Minister, Choir, Soloists, Players (Soprano, Baritone Solos, Spoken Parts)

Instrumentation:

Organ

Length:

1 hour

More than thirty years upon reading the entire Bible, I was struck by the very different images of God as seen by Moses and the early Israelites, by David the king and his people, and by Jesus and his followers. Similar differences occurred to me again when observing the mosaics and stained glass windows of the new Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth. Contributed by congregations from all over the world these art works depicted God as envisioned by groups of Christians from very different racial backgrounds. Here God was seen as Black, Oriental, Polynesian or Caucasian depending on the race of the particular congregation. Genesis 1:27 says that "God created man in his own image." I recalled these experiences as I searched for an image of God reflecting our time and our increasingly international, interracial, and technological culture with its profound problems. In conceiving a sacred service embracing these thoughts I needed a metaphor to simplify the understanding of my message, and this was supplied by my wife, Mary, when she reminded me of the story of Noah. From these ingredients Images of God was created and, with the generous help of those listed, was first presented in the Duke University Chapel on February 19, 1989.

— Robert Ward

Robert Ward

Lady Kate

An Opera in 2 Acts

Libretto by Bernard Stambler

Based on the novel by Homer Croy

Voices:

4 Sopranos, Mezzo-Soprano, Contralto, 2 Tenors, 2 Baritones, Bass-Baritone, Bass,
Chorus, Corps de Ballet

Instrumentation:

2(Pic)/1/2/1 2/2/2/0 T P H Pno Strings

Length:

Approx. 2 hours, 30 minutes

Lady Kate is a 1993 revision of Ward's earlier opera, *The Lady from Colorado*. *Lady Kate* is set in Elkhorn, Colorado, in the late nineteenth century. It is the story of Katie Lauder, an Irish immigrant who moved to Colorado to be her own boss, and Cecil Moon, an expatriate English gentleman. Not long after they court and marry, Cecil's grandfather dies and the couple, now Lord and Lady Moon, return to England. Once there, Katie finds she cannot fit in with the British aristocracy and persuades her husband to return to Elkhorn to take up ranching. Upon returning they find former outlaw and gun-slinger, Jack Spaniard, running for election as Colorado's first Senator. Despite plans to lead a quiet life, Cecil Moon is convinced by his friends to be the opposing candidate. With the special help of his gambling English butler, Rutledge Blunt, Cecil wins the election.

Lady Kate is a rousing and picaresque opera with elements of Broadway musical theater and excellent opportunities for colorful staging and direction.

Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. VP0011 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Robert Ward

Minutes Till Midnight

An Opera in 3 Acts

Libretto by Daniel Lang

Voices:

Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Tenor, Baritone, Bass-Baritone; minor roles combine to form a Mixed Chorus; Dancers

Instrumentation:

2(Pic)/2(EH)/2(BCl)/2(CBsn) 4/2/2/0 T P H Strings

Length:

1 hour, 45 minutes

A modern morality story in which the conscience of a nuclear physicist is put to the extreme test. Emil Roszak and his young protege, Chris Jessup, are struggling to complete the formula which will harness cosmic energy. With the taming of such enormous power, they imagine a future of flowering deserts, the total conquest of disease, and the dawn of a new era of unlimited space exploration.

Against this Utopian background, an old friend, Amory Dexter, now the Secretary of Science, visits Roszak and his wife, Margo, bearing an invitation from the President of the United States to come to Washington. There, at a meeting of the National Security Council, Roszak is asked to head a crash program utilizing his formula to develop a cosmic bomb and thus gain for the military great advantage over the "enemy." Fired by patriotic considerations, Roszak returns to his university laboratory to complete the formula for this purpose. But a series of events — a heart attack, the death of Chris in a violent anti-war demonstration, and recurring visions of the bomb's holocaust — arouse Roszak's conscience. He sends the formula to an international science journal, allowing the world to decide its fate.

Libretto Catalog No. 7.0276 available for sale
Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. VP0021 available for sale
Full score & parts on rental only

Robert Ward

Roman Fever

An Opera in One Act

Libretto by Roger Brunyate

Based on the story by Edith Wharton

Voices:

Soprano, Lyric Soprano, 2 Mezzo Sopranos, Baritone

Instrumentation:

1/1/1/1 1/1/0/0 1P, Synthesizer Strings

Length:

Approx. 1 hour

Audiences gave standing ovations and critics acclaimed the premiere performance of *Roman Fever*, a new one-act opera based on Edith Wharton's story.

The story, laid in 1927, is set in a terrace restaurant overlooking the Roman Forum where two widows and their daughters have met by chance. In the course of the opera, the full story of the widow's meeting in the same place twenty years earlier is revealed.

In writing the opera, the librettist and composer were particularly mindful of the repertory needs of conservatory and university opera groups.

Roman Fever melds music with drama in a manner reminiscent of the finest verismo operas, sports an extraordinary quartet for four female voices that must surely rank among Ward's most moving moments...

—John Lambert, THE SPECTATOR

Musically, this opera is beautiful beyond description. The rich flow of melody — following the text with hardly a break — is a delight to the ear and soul. Ward has a lyrical gift not often encountered in this day of crassness. And a sense of humor too. The writing for the small chamber orchestra is beyond belief, catching as it does the tender lyricism so evoked by the story. And the scoring makes for both vocal and instrumental richness and sonority. When the girls tell of their rendezvous with the Italian men, the music becomes jazzy and accompanies them in a typical 1920's dance. Early in the opera, Ward provides a magnificent duet... and a long soliloquy... but the musical highlight comes just as the girls are leaving to meet their dates. Beginning with a solo entrance by Barbara, the music grows in turn, each woman's voice enters until it blossoms into a superbly scored quartet, whose ending leaves one breathless...

—Alwin Tonkonogy, DURHAM HERALD-SUN

Libretto Catalog No. VP0014 available for sale
 Piano/Vocal Score Catalog No. VP0008 available for sale
 Full Score Catalog No. VP0008FS available for sale
 Full score & parts on rental only

Richard Wienhorst

The Runaway Cowboy

An Opera in One Act for Children to Perform
Libretto by Sylvia Pick

Voices:

Four Children

Instrumentation:

Piano & 1 Percussion (whip, horse's hoofs, creak-creak of porch swing, the sound of waves, thunder, ship's bell on stage), 3 tom-toms, glockenspiel, 2 triangles, 2 wood blocks, tam-tam, guiro.

Length:

Approx. 1 hour

The Runaway Cowboy was commissioned by The Children's Chorus of Victoria, Texas and was first performed by a cast of children between the ages of 8 and 14. The work may be performed entirely by children or almost any combination of adults and children. Thus the work may be performed entirely by children's choirs, college opera workshops, professional opera groups which include ventures into the domain of opera for children, or any combination of these alternatives.

Scene one opens with a family gathering on the Fourth of July. As they all reminisce, the children gather around Grandpa Jack and convince him to tell a story. His story unfolds in scene two, and centers on Billy, who ran away from her Texas ranch to become a cabin-boy on a clipper ship. Billy and her cabin-mates compare Texas with life at sea, singing of their homesickness for Texas. As they approach Galveston harbor, Billy tells the captain to "come along with me." Scene three returns to the Grandparents home. Grandpa Jack continues his story, and reveals that he had been the captain of the ship and Billy was Grandma. She had left home for sea because she felt that girls didn't have the same chances for adventure that boys had. Grandpa couldn't forget that "sailor boy," and so he returned to ask her to marry him. As the children grow skeptical of this story, Grandma Kate confirms its truth, and the fireworks celebration ensues. The scene closes with a loving grandmother holding one of the small children and singing a lullaby while many others fall asleep to visions of cowboys and sailors.

Full Score, Piano and Percussion Part Catalog No. 4657 available for sale
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