

# RACHEL J. PETERS | Composer/Librettist

305 7<sup>th</sup> Street #3R, Brooklyn, NY 11215 | 917-653-7765 | [rachel@racheljpeters.com](mailto:rachel@racheljpeters.com) | [racheljpeters.com](http://racheljpeters.com)

---

## **OPERAS**

### **AS COMPOSER AND LIBRETTIST**

**SKETCHBOOK FOR OLLIE** (2022) (adapted from the story by Bill Folman) Children's opera for four singers and piano

- World Premiere tour, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Kansas City, MO 2022
- Second tour, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Kansas City, MO 2024

**LESSON PLAN** English translation, adaptation, and expansion of the cantata *Der Schulmeister* by Telemann, for two singers, five instrumentalists, and a participatory audience chorus

- Virtual World Premiere, On Site Opera, 2022
- Live Production, Caramoor Festival, Katonah, NY, 2022

**ROOTABAGA COUNTRY** (2017) (adapted from the book *Rootabaga Stories* by Carl Sandburg) One-act opera for tenor, bass-baritone, children's ensemble, and chamber orchestra

- Upcoming: Seattle Opera, Seattle, WA 2024
- Production, Vivace Youth Chorus, San Jose, CA 2018
- World Premiere Production, Sarasota Opera, Sarasota, FL 2017

**COMPANIONSHIP** (adapted from the short story by Arthur Phillips) Opera in nine scenes for seven principals, children's chorus, and chamber orchestra

- World Premiere Production with Orchestra, Virginia Arts Festival, Norfolk, VA 2022
- World Premiere Piano/Vocal Production, Fort Worth Opera, Fort Worth, TX, 2019
- Concert excerpts, Fort Worth Opera Frontiers Festival, Fort Worth, TX 2018
- Concert reading, John Duffy Composers Institute/Virginia Arts Festival Norfolk, VA 2015
- Concert excerpts with orchestra, John Duffy Composers Institute/Virginia Arts Norfolk, VA 2014
- Staged excerpts, Manhattan School of Music/American Opera Projects, New York, NY 2014
- Concert Excerpts, American Opera Projects, Brooklyn, NY, 2011 and 2012

**STEVE** (adapted from the play by Liz Bartucci) Short opera for soprano, tenor, and chamber ensemble

- Staged Production, New Opera West, Los Angeles, CA 2019
- Staged Performance, Fort Worth Opera Gala, Fort Worth, TX 2019
- World Premiere Production, Boston Opera Collaborative, Boston, MA 2018

**MONKEY DO** (music/libretto) One-minute opera for piano, soprano, mezzo, and baritone

- Production, Rhymes With Opera, Brooklyn, NY and Baltimore, MD 2013

### **AS COMPOSER**

**MANOR OF SPEAKING: Blythely Oratonio's Glam-Operetta Reenactment of Oscar Wilde's 1882 Tour Across the Barely United States** (in development) (music with libretto by Kevin Townley) operetta for Stephanie Blythe's drag alter ego, Blythely Oratonio

- Upcoming: Reading, New York, NY Fall 2023
- Workshop, Cincinnati Opera/CCM Opera Fusion, Cincinnati, OH 2024

**THREE AMPUTATORS** (in development) (music with libretto by Royce Vavrek) Opera for seven principals and chamber orchestra

- Upcoming: Concert performance, Arctic Chamber Music Festival, 2024

- Concert excerpts, Voksenåsen Summer Academy, Oslo Chamber Music Festival, Oslo, Norway, 2023

**EVERYTHING COMES TO A HEAD** (music with libretto by Margi Preus and Jean Sramek) Short live action/animated video opera for four singers, piano, and violin

- Virtual World Premiere, Lyric Opera of the North/Decameron Opera Coalition 2020
- Live Premiere Production, Fargo-Moorhead Opera, 2023

**THE WILD BEAST OF THE BUNGALOW** (music with libretto by Royce Vavrek; Adapted from and further inspired by the short story *Mermaid in the Jar* by Sheila Heti) Operatic triptych for nine principals and chamber orchestra

- Upcoming: Production (Part I only), Mannes Opera, New York, NY 2023
- World Premiere Production, Oberlin Conservatory, Oberlin, OH 2020
- Semi-staged concert reading, Center for Contemporary Opera, New York, NY 2016
- Production (Part I only), Hartford Opera Theater, Hartford, CT 2013

### **AS LIBRETTIST**

**WELCOME TO THE MADNESS** (libretto with music by Leanna Kirchoff) site-specific chamber opera

- Upcoming: World Premiere Production, Opera Steamboat, Steamboat Springs, CO, 2024

**MEN I'M NOT MARRIED TO** (music by Lisa DeSpain; adapted from the story by Dorothy Parker) Short opera for three female singers and jazz ensemble

- Live Premiere, Brigham Young University, 2023
- World Premiere Virtual Production, Cleveland Opera Theater/Baldwin Wallace Conservatory/On Site Opera, 2022

**STAGGERWING** (music by Lisa DeSpain) Opera for five principals and jazz ensemble

- Upcoming: Production of Revised Version at Vanderbilt University and publication by E.C. Schirmer, 2024
- Scenes in concert at Brigham Young University, 2023
- World Premiere Production, Opera Kansas, Wichita, KS 2021

**NO LADIES IN THE LADY'S BOOK** (music by Lisa DeSpain) Short opera for four singers and chamber ensemble

- World Premiere Production, Utah Opera, 2019-20
- Additional university productions nationwide, 2020-2022
- Publication by E.C. Schirmer, 2020

**FRIDAY AFTER FRIDAY** (music by Leanna Kirchoff) Opera for female singers and chamber ensemble

- Semi-staged Workshop, Bank Street Theatre, New York, NY 2019
- Concert excerpts, Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA, 2019

**PIE, PITH, AND PALETTE** (music by Marvin J. Carlton) Short opera for piano, baritone, tenor, and two female voices

- Winner, The Atlanta Opera 24-Hour Project, Atlanta, GA 2016

### **MUSICALS**

**GOOD SHABBOS** (music with libretto by Danielle Durchslag) short musical film for mezzo-soprano, piano, clarinet, and cello

- Upcoming: Reading, New York, NY 2023

**PUBLIC ACCESS: THE OUTRAGEOUS TRUE STORY OF MADAME MARI LYN LYN** (in progress) (opera-adjacent music theatre work; co-librettist with Jonathan West and Arlene Hutton, music by Evan Mack)

- Collaborative developmental residency at Millay Arts, 2022

**OCTOPUS HEART** (music/libretto) short musical for piano and eight singers

- Production, NYU Steinhardt School of Music 4@15, 2014

**TOMATO RED** (music/libretto) short musical for piano and eight singers

- Production, UC Irvine 4@15; New York, NY and Irvine, CA, 2013

**WRITE LEFT** (music with libretto by John Walch) short musical for piano and three singers

- Production, Playwrights Horizons Theatre School, 2012
- Staged Reading, New Georges Trunk Show, New York, NY, 2011
- Reading, New Dramatists, New York, NY 2010

**ONLY CHILDREN** (music with libretto by Michael R. Jackson) full-length musical for a large group of people and five instruments

- Production, Tisch School of the Arts Mainstage, New York, NY 2008
- Concert reading, Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood Summit, Boston, MA, 2008
- Semi-staged workshop, Lincoln Center Directors Lab, New York, NY 2007
- Reading, NYU Tisch School of the Arts, New York, NY 2007
- Reading, Dixon Place's Warning: Not for Broadway! Festival, New York, NY 2005

**TINY FEATS OF COWARDICE** (music with libretto by Susan Bernfield) full-length musical for one woman and jazz trio

- Production, HERE Arts Center, New York, NY 2014
- Production, New York Fringe Festival, New York, NY 2008

**APIS MELLIFERA** (libretto with music by Doug Yetter) for three singers and piano

- Reading, NYU Tisch School of the Arts, New York, NY 2003

**F2M** (music with libretto by Michelle Elliott) for three singers and piano

- Reading, NYU Tisch School of the Arts, New York, NY 2004

**PUBLIC DOMAIN** (music/libretto)

- Staged reading, NOMTI Birth of a Musical Festival, Boston, MA, 2003

## **CONCERT MUSIC**

**FOR JANANI**, (song cycle, poems by Joshua McGuire and Reese Leyva) for soprano Janani Sridhar,

- World Premiere, Centenary College of Louisiana, 2023

**IF YOU CAN PROVE THAT I SHOULD SET YOU FREE** (mini-oratorio for soprano, mezzo-soprano, up to five narrators, and chamber orchestra; texts by Alice Duer Miller and Frances Ellen Watkins Harper)

- World Premiere: Albany Symphony's Dogs of Desire, Troy, NY 2019
- Selections performed at Mannes Sounds Festival, New York, NY 2020

**ETHEL SMYTH PLAYS GOLF IN LIMBO** (concert mini-monodrama for mezzo-soprano and piano)

- Semperoper Dresden, Dresden, Germany 2017; performances nationwide including Resonance Works Pittsburgh
- World premiere, Albatross Duo, FETA Foundation Acoustica21 series, Miami, FL 2016

**FRONDS: THE WISDOM OF FANNY FERN** (mini-song cycle for dramatic soprano, texts by Fanny Fern)

- Commissioned and premiered by The Walt Whitman Project, New York, NY 2013

**AND THEN** (SSA choral setting of Judy Chicago's "Merger Poem")

- Commissioned and premiered by BayPath College, Longmeadow, MA 2013

**CANON I** (dramatic cantata for soprano, piano, electric guitar, and photocopier)

- Blue Room Arts Collective, New York, NY 2011
- World Premiere: Two Sides Sounding, Tenri Cultural Institute, New York, NY, 2011

**JACK'S VOCABULARY** (song cycle, text by Jack Kelly)

- Make Music NY, Brooklyn, NY 2011
- World Premiere: SPASM, The Hartt School of Music, Hartford, CT 2011

**I LIVE HERE** (for eight singers, piano, and recorded interviews)

- World Premiere: Galapagos Art Space, Brooklyn, NY 2010

**VARIOUS CABARET AND ART SONGS** (music/lyrics)

- Concerts at Lincoln Center Performing Arts Library, Second Stage, 54 Below, National Opera Center, Ars Nova, Symphony Space, Sparks and Wiry Cries, and many others nationwide
- The AIDS Quilt Songbook@22, New York, NY, 2014 and 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert 2017

## **MUSIC FOR PLAYS**

**TANIA IN THE GETAWAY VAN** by Susan Bernfield

- Production, Flea Theater, New York, NY 2017
- Reading, Female Protagonist series, New York, NY, 2016
- Staged reading, Huntington Theatre, Boston, MA, 2014

**TRANSATLANTIC** by John Walch

- Reading, Midtown Direct Rep, South Orange, NJ 2015
- Reading, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, 2015
- Readings, Arkansas New Play Festival, Little Rock and Fayetteville, AR, 2014 and 2017

**STRETCH (a fantasia)** by Susan Bernfield

- Production, The Living Theatre/New Georges, New York, NY 2008
- Staged excerpts, The Ohio Theatre Ice Factory, New York, NY 2006
- Published by Playscripts, Inc.

**THE TALE OF THE GOOD WHISTLEBLOWER OF CHAILLOT'S CAUCASIAN MOTHER AND HER OTHER CHILDREN OF A LESSER MARRIAGE CHALK CIRCLE** by Stan Richardson

- Production, Theatre Askew/The Brick Theater, Brooklyn, NY 2009

**THE BACCHAE** by Euripides

- Production, Asolo Repertory Theatre Conservatory, Sarasota, FL 2007
- Winner, Sarasota Curtain Call Award, 2007

**UNREQUITED** (Shakespeare scenes)

- Production, Public Theater Shakespeare Lab, New York, NY 2007

## **MUSIC FOR DANCE**

## **HOOR ASCENDING** (choreography by Jeramy Zimmerman and Kaoru Ikeda)

- Production, NYU Tisch School of the Arts Graduate Dance Department, New York, NY 2004

## **EDUCATION AND HONORS**

M.F.A. in Musical Theatre Writing, New York University Tisch School of the Arts, 2005

Double B.A. in Music and Theatre Arts, Brandeis University, summa cum laude, 1999

- Grants:
  - OPERA America Female Composers Discovery Grant for *Manor of Speaking*, 2022
  - OPERA America Female Composers Discovery Grant to collaborator Leanna Kirchoff for *Friday After Friday*, 2018
  - National Endowment of the Arts and OPERA America Female Composers Commissioning Grants to Sarasota Opera for *Rootabaga Country*, 2017
- Residencies: Millay Arts 2022; Soaring Gardens 2021; Yaddo 2018; Brush Creek Arts 2018; Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts 2017
- Fellowships:
  - John Duffy Institute for New Opera, 2013, 2014, 2015, and 2019; American Opera Projects Composers and the Voice, 2011-2012; New Dramatists Composer-Librettist Studio 2010
- Multiple ASCAPus Awards; 2014 MAC John Wallowitch Award finalist; 2009 Anna Sosenko Assist Trust Award
- Speaking Engagements, Panels, and Masterclasses:
  - Repertoire Development for Young Singers, OPERA America Conference 2018
  - Cleveland Opera Theater NOW Festival 2020
  - Instructor, “Words for Opera” Fort Worth Opera 2019; Panelist, 2020 FWO Frontiers Libretto Workshop
  - Guest instructor/mentorship, Centenary College, Lamont School of Music, University of Nebraska-Omaha, Vanderbilt University, Voksenåsen Summer Academy, Randolph College
  - Podcasts: Indie Opera Podcast 2017; Scene to Song 2020; Lost Music: Exploring Literary Opera, 2020; Fort Worth Opera Green Room 2021; Words First 2021
- Member of ASCAP and Dramatists Guild (Opera Committee)
- Top 25 Songs, Directory of Contemporary Musical Theatre 2012
- New Georges Affiliated Artist, 2008-Present

## **DISCOGRAPHY**

“Pinocchio’s Lament” featured on Zachary James, *CALL OUT* Virtual Video and Audio Album, 2020

“Swim with Sharks” featured on Michael R. Jackson, *Good Clean Music/Dirty Laundry*, 2018

String quartet arrangement for “The Tale of Bear and Otter” on Shaina Taub’s *What Otters Do*, Funky Butter Productions, 2011

## **PUBLICATIONS**

NO LADIES IN THE LADY’S BOOK, a short opera libretto with music by Lisa DeSpain. Published by E.C. Schirmer. <https://www.morningstarmusic.com/no-ladies-in-the-ladys-book-despain.html>

Blog articles for New Music Box, published 2015, all accessible here:

<https://nmbx.newmusicusa.org/author/rachel-peters/>

“Your Career: When Music Meets Movement”, Dance Magazine, January 2015.

<https://www.dancemagazine.com/your-career-when-music-meets-movement-2306952551.html>

Chapter in *Insights and Essays on the Music Performance Library* edited by Russ Girsberger and Laurie Lake

<http://www.meredithmusic.com/insights-and-essays-on-the-music-performance-library>