

# RACHEL J. PETERS | Composer/Librettist

## ARTIST STATEMENT

305 7<sup>th</sup> Street #3R  
Brooklyn, NY 11215

917-653-7765  
[rachel@racheljpeters.com](mailto:rachel@racheljpeters.com)

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### WHAT I DO: THE STUFF OF MY STUFF

I write exclusively for voices and for the stage because the realm of text-based music is where I can ask most creatively: are you seeing what I'm seeing here? I am stylistically omnivorous, and as such, my work lives along the highly permeable boundary between opera and musical theatre; my operas sound like musicals and my musicals sound like operas. Without reinforcing artificial distinctions between highbrow and lowbrow, I write for those genuinely curious about how their fellow humans (and other creatures) puzzle out what it means to be human.

Another question gnawing at me is, "Where are the women?" I strive to restore women's stories (true and/or fanciful) to their rightful place: front and center. Furthermore, I wonder a lot about Americans' fixations on women being terrible to each other and (simultaneously or separately) madwomen self-destructing.

Finally, to me, light and dark are not mutually exclusive; silly and harrowing often happen in the same breath. To that end, I utilize comedy as a deceptively palatable articulation of what is actually not funny at all. In an artistic medium that takes itself extremely seriously, you may not take me or what I'm saying seriously...at first. Ultimately, truth is simply stranger to me than everything, and I have receipts.

### WHAT WE CAN DO TOGETHER

- I am honored and always game to be a frequent first for visionary musical organizations and individuals eager to try something outside their regular offerings, such as:
- Introducing audiences and performers of all ages to their very first opera
- Providing university and conservatory students their first contact and collaboration with a living composer/librettist, introducing new avenues to explore their artistic capabilities
- Dreaming up and realizing alternatives and/or companion pieces to standard repertoire for adventurous opera companies of all sizes
- Creating new opportunities for non-operatic music groups (choruses, chamber ensembles, orchestras) to venture out from behind their music stands
- Tailoring premieres for singers beyond Fach/typecasting expectations: my first question is always "What would you like to do that you never get to do?"
- Bringing local history to life, gathering communities to celebrate their own unsung hometown heroes finally getting, well, sung.
- Writing sneaky rhymes, weird jokes, and emotionally charged arias is what I do, but building these bridges is why I do it in the first place. In addition to a varied creative palette, over a decade of classical music publishing experience in my back pocket has prepared me well to navigate the practicalities of getting new work in front of the footlights (or outdoors or online or wherever!). Even if I'm not writing for you, I'm happy to speak about what that entails.