

# JONATHAN HOWARD KATZ

## COMPOSER/PIANIST

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### PROPOSED COMPOSITION PROJECTS (OCTOBER 2020)

At any given time I may have multiple projects in a planning or discussion stage, awaiting funding or other parameters to fall into place. In most cases, the major barrier is the composer commission, which is the primary source of my income and, with the scarcity of foundation grants, is increasingly dependent on individual support.

The following pages offer an outline of projects that I'm eager to set in motion, some of which have been in planning stages for years.

For each project I provide the following information, as it currently stands:

- Project title (not necessarily the title of the finished work)
- Instrumentation, duration, and other basic stats
- Description of the project
- Confirmed collaborators
- Unconfirmed elements (i.e.—additional collaborators to secure or matters to resolve before composition). Note that it's not necessary for all elements to be confirmed prior to funding—very often it's a confirmed funding source that acts as catalyst for the final pieces to snap together.
- Composer fee (based on the [standard guide](#) published by Meet the Composer). “All-inclusive” means that there would be no additional fees for copying, which is traditionally treated as a separate matter from the composition.
- Estimated additional costs to realize the project
- Links to relevant works of mine

My [commissioning packet](#) offers more information about my work, biography, benefits of commissioning, etc. As the packet explains, composer fees are generally paid half up front and half when the score is delivered, though a payment schedule may be negotiated for each project (very small projects are likely to be paid all at once; and very large projects may be broken up further). In most cases, ranges are given as starting points for discussion.

Projects in this packet are arranged generally from smallest to largest composer fee. It's my intent to offer at least one smaller project with a relatively low financial barrier to participation. Some works may also be supported and produced through my non-profit organization [Periapsis Music and Dance](#). My music is currently stocked by the two largest distributors for music libraries, and new works automatically get purchased by some major libraries, ensuring a potential for wide and immediate distribution.

I'm also very open to new proposals from commissioning parties. If you have a favorite performer or instrument or ensemble for whom you would like to see new repertoire created, please let me know!

# CONTENTS

3	MUSIC FOR DANCE
4	COLLECTED ART SONGS
5	WORLD'S FAIR
6	BERCEUSE
7	TRICHORD PRELUDES BOOK II
8	VOICE, CELLO, DANCE
10	THE ROPE AND THE SEA
11	FALLING FOR IT: CHAMBER OPERA
12	FLUTE CONCERTO
13	PIANO ETUDES
14	DIVERS SCHEDULES OF MY BEAUTY
15	VIOLIN CONCERTO
17	DANCE OPERA

## MUSIC FOR DANCE

For solo piano; various lengths

The current pandemic has been devastating for the dance community, and so I thought of what I might be able to offer to my friends and colleagues, something that would be of use to them artistically during the crisis and once it's over. It's turned into a rather large, ongoing project of which I'm especially proud.

I put out a call to choreographers, offering to write short, new piano works for them at no charge. These will be custom works specifically for each choreographer, but they will also be published (as the collection *Ipseities*) and made available after the fact for additional choreographers to use, with grand rights fees waived in most cases. They'd all be solo piano works so that I can offer to perform and/or record the work for each choreographer (also at no cost to them), though of course they'd be free to use a different pianist if they like.

I know choreographers at all professional levels, from established veterans to recent students, and I've been fortunate to include all levels in this project. For some choreographers, this has been their first chance to work with a composer.

Most of these pieces are 3-6 minutes, though a few have turned out a bit longer, depending on the particular artistic intent for the work. With a couple exceptions, these works have tended to be a bit less dense, and stylistically broader, than much of my music so that they can appeal more immediately to dancers and allow for greater use over the long term. So this is also a chance for me to add quality, well-constructed works to the general repertoire of "dance music."

Confirmed collaborators to date: Kyla Barkin and Aaron Selissen, Davonna Batt, Carmen Caceres, Ashley Carter, Jenna Charko, Alison Cook Beatty, Ask la Cour, Cayleen Del Rosario, Da' Von Doane, Anne Goldberg-Baldwin, Caitlin McManus, Audrey Rachele, Marlaina Riegelsberger, Celia Torrey, Tanya Trombly, Nicole Truzzi, Rebecca Walden, Hannah Weber, Asya Zlatina (projects in various stages)

Unconfirmed elements: Still reaching out to a few more people.

Composer fee: Commissioning credit is available for \$250-\$750 per piece, with some quantity discounts available. Six of the works have already been sponsored.

Estimated additional costs: None. Again, I'd offer to perform or record each of the pieces for the choreographers so that they would be able to avoid performer fees.

Work samples: A few of these works have already been presented in some form, and the piece for Asya Zlatina may be seen [here](#). Of my older piano music for dance, [Encaged](#) (2018) is also a good one to include, though these pieces have turned out to have a very wide stylistic variety.

## COLLECTED ART SONGS

For voice(s) and piano. Various vocal ranges and texts.

This ongoing project will give me the opportunity to build an extensive collection of art songs, one (or a few) at a time, which would be published in cycles and sets as they accumulate.

My first professional successes as a composer came from my early song cycles, where I discovered a natural affinity for writing for voice, for setting texts, and for creating emotional worlds in miniature. I've been eager to return to this genre and have been building connections within the vocal and opera communities in preparation.

The modular nature of this project has many advantages: Commissioning an individual song or two is relatively inexpensive, allowing more people to take part. I can explore a wide range of texts, both old and new, and not necessarily all in English. And most importantly, I can explore collaborations with many vocalists around the world, offering an exponential expansion of my music's reach.

Confirmed collaborators: New cycles have been written for soprano [Catherine Kelly](#), mezzo-soprano [Emily Hughes](#), and tenor [Nils Neubert](#). (Poetry by [Andrea Cohen](#) and [Ben Purkert](#).)

Unconfirmed elements: I'm continuing to connect to more collaborators for these works.

Composer fee: \$350 for one song; \$665 for two; \$975 for three; \$300 per song for four or more. Note that these fees refer to songs of "normal" art song length, about 1-4 minutes each. Prospective longer works should be negotiated individually.

Estimated additional costs: Possible licensing fees for some texts.

Work samples: My existing voice/piano song cycles are [Talking of Michelangelo](#) (2009, for tenor), [Meacham Songs](#) (2012, for soprano), and [Chalices from My Hands](#) (2008, for baritone). These are all older works, but some previews of the new cycles are available [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

# 13 songs in 3 cycles funded

# WORLD'S FAIR

For solo soprano voice; 8-15 minutes

This was a very recent addition to this packet, an idea that came to me a few weeks ago while watching one of Stephanie Lamprea's videos of herself practicing a piece that involved a steady stream of unconventional vocal techniques. Generally, vocal writing like this is used to dramatize extremes of emotion, but a very different image came to mind.

I saw a discarded animatronic robot power on after decades of neglect, warming up, and attempting to recite its programmed performance before finally breaking down and shutting off. We associate machines like this with antiquated notions of idealized technological futures, a sort-of Disney World mentality. So I thought that this robot would sing the praises of an old World's Fair, settling eventually on the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. This was a notable historical crossroads, a time of great enthusiasm for humanity's forward progress, though with some major blind spots of awareness. I've assembled a libretto from a variety of texts: several "official" fair guides (some with period advertisements), the gushing writings of a particular enthusiast of the Exposition, and a more sober assessment from people who saw more clearly the shortfalls of the time.

This would present considerable vocal and acting challenges, and I thought it could be most interesting to develop this with a consortium of sopranos, who could each offer their own "bag of tricks" and contribute to developing the language of this work. Stephanie has tremendous experience with these sorts of challenges and signed on immediately, and so I've been speaking with other sopranos who have a similar (coloratura) range. Everybody's been tremendously enthusiastic about the concept and the challenge, and I think this work can break new ground with its vocal and theatrical features.

Confirmed collaborators: Sopranos [Stephanie Lamprea](#), [Zen Wu](#), and [Catherine Kelly](#), [Sophie Delphis](#) (technically a mezzo with an extended range), and [Emily Solo](#) are on board.

Unconfirmed elements: N/A

Composer fee: \$2,000-\$3,000 (all-inclusive)

Estimated additional costs: N/A

Work samples: Same as for the Collected Art Songs on the previous page, though stylistically this would be very different from any of my previous vocal writing.

# BERCEUSE

For violin and piano; 8-10 minutes

The initial idea came as a disembodied theme in search of a piece, an unusual process for me. It's a slow lullaby, tender but with a distant well of emotion, and eventually I sensed that an ideal instrumentation would be violin and piano.

The theme remained close by in my mind as I'd hear about friends' life events, both joyful and sorrowful, and I began to pick up on a more complex emotional web that could be brought into play. The scope of the work increased a bit as well, from something that was basically a single idea playing itself out to a more nuanced and varied structure.

This piece may offer an immediate emotional connection for a wider audience than other works of mine, and it has at least one memorable, singable theme. For these reasons, plus its lighter technical demands (relative to most of my other work), I think it could become a popular recital piece.

Confirmed collaborators: A couple violinists are interested in being part of the project, but are unable to provide their own funding. Confirmed funding would let me confirm their participation.

Unconfirmed elements: N/A

Composer fee: \$2,500-\$4,000 (all-inclusive)

Estimated additional costs: None

Work samples: Rather than violin works *per se*, I'd like to offer some examples of my work that are somewhat along these lines emotionally and stylistically. The theme and early piano variations from [Epoch](#) (2018) are lyrical and expressive. [Encaged](#) (2018), though less harmonically stable, is similarly approachable. My earlier work [Romance on D and A](#) (2011) was written for a friend's wedding.

## TRICHORD PRELUDES, BOOK II

For solo piano; 6 pieces totaling about 15 minutes

Early in my compositional career I embarked on a series of short pieces for solo piano, each strictly based upon a particular type of 3-note harmony. These *trichords* form the basis of contemporary harmony for many composers, and when they are distilled to their most fundamental elements there are twelve different varieties.

I completed the first six in 2009, and these were crucial in my early explorations of harmonic language, piano texture, and structure. For each piece I developed a different character, a different form, and a different approach to the harmonic limitation I imposed on myself. There is a resemblance, in a way, to past composers like Chopin and Shostakovich writing a prelude in each key, and to Bach's *Well-Tempered Klavier*.

I always intended to return to the genre, and now that I'm at a very different stage of my career and my artistic fluency, it feels like the right time to complete the set. Like the first six, each piece would present its challenges, but in general they would be accessible to a wide range of pianists and not as technically formidable as some of my other works. And given that they can be programmed separately and in subsets, they could become flexible recital pieces.

Confirmed collaborators: Pianists [David Kalhous](#) and [Idith Korman](#) are both confirmed, though given the pandemic disrupting so many funding sources I'll need to re-confirm. At least one additional pianist is interested pending funding.

Unconfirmed elements: I'm continuing to speak with more pianists and sponsors.

Composer fee: \$3,000-\$4,500 (all-inclusive)

Estimated additional costs: None

Work samples: The first six *Trichord Preludes* may be found [here](#) performed by Aaron Likness, and I recorded the final and most emotionally deep one [here](#). Some of my shorter piano works since then include [Trace](#) (2013) and [Novelette](#) (2012). For an example of my most challenging and rigorous piano writing, I'd recommend [Europa](#) (2015).

# Partially funded

## VOICE, CELLO, DANCE

For soprano or mezzo-soprano voice and cello, with dancer; 15-20 minutes.  
Text (and possible title) is “Live Girls,” by Andrea Cohen.

All of my works for dance have been specific collaborations with individual choreographers. Regardless of the particulars of the process—and each process has been different—it’s been a meeting of minds over a joint vision, from starting point to stage. This work would be fundamentally different.

My idea is to create a work for vocalist and cello, with basic instructions in the score to incorporate one dancer. Rather than specifically creating with one choreographer, as usual, the intent would be that various choreographers could take the work and make it their own. There would be a few essential elements and events to incorporate, and a few suggestions for staging, but otherwise the choreographer would be invited to discover their own way through the work. So each performance could be wildly different in visual style and movement vocabulary, yet each recognizable as an interpretation of the same dramatic work (and with the same music, of course). A “repertoire” work of a different sort.

The dancer and singer would share the stage, and there would be movement opportunities for the singer, as well as vocal opportunities for the dancer, depending on the particular performers’ abilities and the choreographers’ preferences.

Future performances could therefore be initiated by a choreographer, by a vocalist, by a dancer, or even by a cellist. It would join the repertoire with an unusual flexibility and reach. And I’d plan on finding a few initial partners so that the work can be launched with multiple choreographic interpretations.

[Andrea Cohen](#) is perhaps my favorite contemporary poet, and her poem “Live Girls” sets up a beautiful exploration of two women, one who struggles to be heard and one who is quite easily seen. Cohen’s work finds oddly specific ways to tap very deep emotional reserves, and I’d look forward to the chance to set her work.

Confirmed collaborators: Andrea Cohen is happy to have her poem set, and at least one singer is interested. As for choreographers, Audrey Rachele of [AnA Collaborations](#) is on board to choreograph the role and produce a performance, and a prominent university dance department is looking into hosting a Periapsis residency to set the work with their students. Choreographer Asya Zlatina in Philadelphia is also interested in creating her own version of the work.

Unconfirmed elements: I still need to speak more with choreographers and vocalists to line up further initial interpreters and performances.

Composer fee: \$6,000-\$9,000 is in line with the industry.

Estimated additional costs: Support for initial performances would be very helpful.



## VOICE, CELLO, DANCE

Work samples: See the “Collected Art Songs” links (p. 3) for examples of my vocal writing. For examples of my integration of musicians and dancers, see my [new reel](#) of music for dance. Of particular interest might be *Twine*, for viola and dancer ([0:03](#)); *Elle ne m'aime pas*, for singing dancer and pianist ([15:17](#)); and *Noesis*, for five dancers, viola, cello, and piano ([31:01](#)).

Extended cello writing may also be found in *Noesis* (see above), and the last part of [Laid upon the children](#).

## THE ROPE AND THE SEA

For viola and piano, with dance choreographed by Gabrielle Lamb; 15-20 minutes.  
Based on the short story "The Rope and the Sea" by Ben Loory.

Choreographer Gabrielle Lamb offered this particular short story by Ben Loory as a starting point for a new collaboration. It's an odd narrative, almost a fable that loops back on itself, and I was instantly struck by how easily it maintains its unsteady atmosphere and achieves its emotional kick. The characters are nameless and somehow both archetypal and modern at the same time, which encourages the reader to maintain a strange balance between distance from them and identification with them.

The story seems to be about two people who discover something inside of themselves that terrifies them. Though they're introduced as a romantic couple, it's not a love story. Rather, when they find this secret thing they retreat from it, and from one another. But the fear remains, and they each flail blindly, trying desperately to quash it. In so doing, they become that which they were trying to escape.

Approaching this as a composer, it's the exploration of the shadow, the perilous journey within, that gives me an emotional hook. Additionally, the story evokes strong images and offers some structural surprises to play with. And then, of course, responding to Gabrielle's movement language and her take on the story is a critical component, and the most fun.

We crafted this as a project for Periapsis, for four dancers in two couples. Pianist and violist would represent a shadow third couple.

Confirmed collaborators: Gabrielle and Periapsis are in, pending funding. And Gabrielle contacted Ben Loory, who is happy to see his story adapted in this way. Partial funding has been secured from New Music USA.

Unconfirmed elements: None

Composer fee: \$7,500-\$10,000 is in line with the industry, though I'd accept a lower fee (around \$4,500) with broader support for the overall project.

Estimated additional costs: Additional costs for choreographer, dancers, etc, would total about \$15,000-\$20,000. There are relevant grants for this, but substantial individual support would likely be needed to get started.

Work samples: For examples of strings-and-piano writing with dance, see my [new reel](#) of music for dance, especially *Crescit eundo*, for five dancers and piano quartet ([11:51](#)), and *Noesis*, for five dancers, viola, cello, and piano ([31:01](#)).

More about Gabrielle Lamb and her work can be found [here](#).

## FALLING FOR IT: CHAMBER OPERA

A chamber opera for two voices and small ensemble; 15-25 minutes.  
Libretto based on *Falling for It*, a short play by Rebecca Bossen

Playwright [Rebecca Bossen](#) has been a friend for over a decade, and I've been intrigued by her short, one-act play *Falling for It* since I read it many years ago. As in much of her work, there's a deft interplay between humor and trauma, with characters' banter hinting at hidden pain.

The setting is a mountain hike, where a woman and her older male cousin revisit their childhood and a family secret.

An ideal project for my first opera, there are only two characters (M/F), and the play itself is under 10 minutes long, leading to a likely musical duration of 15-25 minutes. I'm open to a variety of instrumentations for a small chamber ensemble, depending on the ultimate scope of the first production.

Confirmed collaborators: Rebecca is happy to offer permission and help adapt her play as a libretto, though it can largely be kept as is.

Unconfirmed elements: I have connections to a couple small, independent opera companies, so I have a places to begin. Generally, some production funding would need to be secured to get a commitment from a company.

Composer fee: \$8,000-\$15,000, with 10-15% copying fee for piano/vocal score and parts

Estimated additional costs: Anywhere from \$5,000 to \$20,000 for a full production, but a concert or semi-staged production could be substantially less. Librettist fee could be \$500-\$2500, given that it's an existing work.

Work samples: Most of my vocal writing exists in voice/piano song cycles: [Talking of Michelangelo](#) (2009, for tenor), [Meacham Songs](#) (2012, for soprano), and [Chalices from My Hands](#) (2008, for baritone). Some examples of small ensemble writing are [Too Close for Contact](#) (2015), [String Quartet](#) (2017), and [Laid upon the children](#) (2014).

# FLUTE CONCERTO

For flute and ensemble; 15-20 minutes

I'm often interested in reexamining familiar images and assumptions, looking more deeply into what we take for granted and what it tells us about ourselves. The association of the flute with Pan is a common musical cliché, and yet the image of Pan is generally bowdlerized in Western culture.

A deeper look at the Pan character or archetype exposes our earthly nature: primal reservoirs of chaos, sexuality, the natural world, and the unknown, a far cry from the benign trickster that's often represented (particularly in musical imagery).

This rather simple, but fertile image is the starting point for this piece, and is intended to bring a sharp edge and penetrating gaze into the conventions of the flute concerto.

I'm very happy that Chicago-based flutist Shanna Pranaitis is on board as soloist. We are, however, in search of an ensemble, and whether it's a full orchestra, chamber orchestra, or simply a large chamber ensemble that ultimately decides to program the work will determine its scope. The idea for this piece came early in the COVID-19 crisis, so it has not been practical to pursue ensembles at this point.

Confirmed collaborators: Flutist [Shanna Pranaitis](#)

Unconfirmed elements: The ensemble is the main unknown, and will determine the ultimate scope of this project.

Composer fee: \$12,000-\$18,000, with 10-15% copying fee for flute/piano score and parts.

Estimated additional costs: N/A

Work samples: Most of my substantial flute writing has been in small chamber works such as [Laid upon the children](#) (2014) and [Three Sketches on Paintings by Regina Guerrero](#) (2010). There's also my [Romance on D and A](#) (2011), a simpler work for flute and piano.

## PIANO ETUDES

For solo piano; 12 short etudes totaling 35-45 minutes

This work would be my most meaningful contribution to the piano literature to date, and perhaps the most likely to achieve an ongoing performance life. Strongly informed by the tradition of Chopin, Liszt, and others, yet filtered through my own pianistic and musical voice, it would constitute twelve new concert etudes for solo piano, totaling 35-45 minutes of music. The etudes could be performed individually, in subsets, or as a whole, offering programming flexibility.

Like Chopin's and Debussy's etudes, each of mine would concentrate on a particular technical concern (or a few related areas). Like Ligeti's etudes, they'd seek novelty in structure, challenging the intellect as well as the fingers. And like all of the above, they'd be character pieces that evoke images and emotions, so that a strong performance would be not just technically impressive, but exciting and engaging. This would be an exploration of virtuosity, of sound, and of musical language.

I've put together a consortium of five fantastic concert pianists—[Jihye Chang](#), [Dominic Cheli](#), [Winston Choi](#), [Conor Hanick](#), and [Kathleen Supové](#)—who would each give a local premiere of the full set in different US cities, integrated into their own solo recital programming. They'd also each continue to program the works beyond the premiere, ensuring a wide audience. Furthermore, my published scores are distributed by both Harrassowitz and Theodore Front, so after the premieres the works would enter major music libraries around the world, in addition to retail availability.

Confirmed collaborators: The five pianists listed above have all confirmed their commitment to programming and promoting the work. I'd reconfirm with them once the commission is funded and a timeline can be set. Also, Dominic is represented by Concert Artists Guild, which has offered to help publicize the project.

Unconfirmed elements: None

Composer fee: \$15,000-\$24,000 (all-inclusive)

Estimated additional costs: None.

Work samples: I've written extensively for solo piano, and I'd draw upon a wide range of styles and techniques for these works. For a cross-section, I'd recommend [Reflection](#) (2015) for its evocation of older styles and *fin-de-siècle* virtuosity; [Encaged](#) (2018) for its lyrical qualities; [Europa](#) (2015) for its intense pianistic challenges in contemporary idioms; and [Trace](#) (2013) for its quasi-impressionistic colors.

## DIVERS SCHEDULES OF MY BEAUTY

For soprano and chamber ensemble, 30-40 minutes  
Texts by William Shakespeare

*Divers Schedules of My Beauty* will be a 30- to 40-minute theatrical vocal cycle for soprano and chamber ensemble. Each movement will set a female monologue (or excerpt) from a different play of Shakespeare, creating a kaleidoscopic portrait of Shakespearean women that traverses the nearly infinite range of emotion and experience encountered in the plays. Pierrot-like in its scope and ambition, it will bring to the repertoire a fresh perspective on iconic characters, while exploring valuable moments of complexity from lesser-known roles.

This is a piece I've wanted to write for a long time. Shakespeare comes with many musical ghosts, yet I believe there remains some untrodden ground. By separating the women from their surrounding plays, we are left with moments. These moments are outgrowths of their own contexts, of course, but when immersed in one moment after another purely through the lens of each character's voice, we come closer and closer to distilling an essence of creative empathy through language. Finding the intensity of that essence and matching it in musical language will be the over-arching challenge of this piece.

Was Shakespeare a proto-feminist? Much has been written on this, and perhaps I'll have a firm opinion once I've written the piece. But he does have a way of infusing his female characters not only with strength and resilience, but also with ambiguity, complexity, and humor, and he often seems interested in introducing shades of humanity that lesser playwrights might have ignored.

I'm not firmly committed to a particular instrumentation at this point, but it would be a mixed chamber ensemble of about 7-10 players (conducted).

Confirmed collaborators: Soprano Mary Mackenzie has been a committed partner for this project for years.

Unconfirmed elements: We've had a couple new music ensembles sign on at particular times when we've applied for grants, but we'd need to revisit with them with confirmed funding to get a new commitment and timeline.

Composer fee: \$18,000-\$25,000, with 10-15% copying fee for parts and vocal score

Estimated additional costs: Potentially \$3,000-\$7,000 toward the ensemble's production costs, including Mary's fee.

Work samples: [Meacham Songs](#) (2012) is a previous collaboration with Mary, so it's my most relevant existing vocal work. For mixed ensemble writing, the best examples here would be [Crux](#) (2012), [Laid upon the children](#) (2014), and [Three Sketches on Paintings by Regina Guerrero](#) (2010).

# VIOLIN CONCERTO

For violin and orchestra, 40-50 minutes

To write a large, three-movement concerto for violin and full orchestra today, when orchestras struggle to take risks with new music and there are so many standard concertos that continue to be overplayed, one requires a strong *why*, a sense that it's both possible and necessary to invest the form with a new approach.

I envision the relationship between soloist and orchestra in this piece to be that of the personal consciousness (the I, or ego) and the mind. With most of us, most of the time, we are continually beholden to the fragmented mind and its preoccupations. We are pulled in multiple directions at once by traumas and desires, many hidden, and our perceptions are distorted through the maze of our own conditioning. We express our emotions partially, accidentally, or in the wrong direction. We grow so accustomed to a base level of internal and external chaos that when we gain a moment's respite, we find a way to bring the whirlwind back. This is the first movement.

The process of undoing this chaos is usually a journey of many years and is at heart a meditative one. This involves training the mind to clear and focus, with mantras and other techniques, which is what most of us think of as "meditation." But meditation also necessarily includes self-inquiry and self-knowledge, illuminating the fragments and the traumas, bringing them to conscious awareness and integrating them. We discover just how conditioned we are, how much we are a product of images and thoughts, and that these images and thoughts come from many sources. This is the second movement.

The process is never really complete, but at a certain point one is conscious and integrated enough to relate to the mind as an ally, rather than an adversary. The journey is revealed to be more spiritual than psychological, and a transformation of perception, identification, and relationship to the world is effected. This is the third movement.

I'm currently in initial discussions about this work commemorating the 20th anniversary of the passing of a friend, a violinist who died in an accident while in college. She was a deeply joyful and spiritual person, and the subject matter of this work feels connected to the journey she was focused on in life.

The performance would take place at the university she and I both attended, sometime around fall 2022. Until the conversation is a bit further along I'll withhold names, but her family is likely to contribute some amount to the project, and I also have the interest of a well-established concert violinist who also knew her.

Confirmed collaborators: Again, the conversations are just starting, but a prominent soloist is interested, and the family is likely to help support.

## VIOLIN CONCERTO

Unconfirmed elements: We have not yet pitched this to the university, given the major disruptions this year. It's also possible, though so far unexplored, that in addition to the university orchestra, one or more professional orchestras could form a consortium.

Composer fee: \$35,000-\$75,000, with 15-20% copying fee for parts and violin/piano score

Estimated additional costs: The soloist's artistic fees and travel costs (perhaps \$5,000-\$12,000) are the main additional concern if this is solely done within the confines of the university. If additional orchestras are involved, they may require some cost-sharing support.

Work samples: My existing piano concerto is, sadly, unperformed, though I can offer a score and MIDI recording to those who are interested. For an extreme example of my virtuoso solo violin writing, there's [Coda](#) (2010). For a larger chamber work that includes substantial string writing and ends with a sort of transformed apotheosis, there's [Crux](#) (2012). Another large chamber work featuring strings that's more stylistically familiar is [Laid upon the children](#) (2014). And there's my [String Quartet](#) (2017), which, like *Crux*, is on the thorny side but with a glowing coda.



# DANCE OPERA

For voices, dancers, and chamber ensemble, 2-acts  
Libretto by Rebecca Bossen

This collaboration with choreographer [Mari Meade](#) and playwright [Rebecca Bossen](#) will be an evening-length hybrid dance-opera inspired by the 19th-century ballet *Coppélia*. But rather than an homage, it's more of a deconstruction, laying bare the undercurrents of selfishness and desire, and following them to a logical conclusion.

While often treated as light family fare, the story of *Coppélia* involves creating an artificial human as an object of desire, and the degree to which people will lose themselves in the image of a "perfect" lover. In particular, it's an artificial woman created by a man and preferred by another man over his actual human partner. Viewed today, with a greater awareness of the destructiveness of the objectifying gaze and of toxic aspects of masculinity (and with other tales involving artificial humans, such as *Westworld*, in the collective consciousness), the story's inherent darkness is hard to overlook.

By reexamining a familiar story with an unflinching investigation into its shadow, we invite the viewer to look more deeply into what we take for granted within our beliefs, our assumptions, our views of others, and ourselves. In particular, the selfish nature of desire, and the ways in which one can project one's desires onto others, is prominent.

Our intended scope is a two-act, evening-length work, with four vocalists, 10-12 dancers, and 8-10 instrumentalists. We intend to blur the boundaries between disciplines, with all performers mobile and portraying characters on stage. My work with Periapsis has explored musician/dancer interaction in various ways, and this would be a natural extension.

Regarding the *Coppélia* content, we do not expect to use any of the original Delibes music or any existing choreography, nor will the movement be ballet-based or reliant on doll-like tropes. Rather, there will be enough elements of the original story to make apparent the heritage, but it will veer sharply in its own direction. We also plan to update the setting from mid 19th-century to mid 20th-century and introduce some new narrative elements.

We feel that this work will have the ability to attract the interest of various artistic communities—new opera and new music, of course, but also modern dance, ballet, and theater—with subject matter that engages with history and artistic tradition but is ultimately fiercely relevant to today's society. The darkness in this work will come from a place of compassion and self-inquiry, offering the viewer opportunities for deep engagement.

Initial support could go towards developing the story and creating a short scene or excerpt that would help secure more substantial funding for the full project.

Confirmed collaborators: Playwright Rebecca Bossen, choreographer Mari Meade, soprano Charlotte Mundy, and Periapsis Music and Dance, all pending funding.

## DANCE OPERA

Unconfirmed elements: This will need to be produced under the auspices of an opera company or similar organization that has experience with the full process.

Composer fee: Highly dependent on the ultimate scope of the production, but \$50,000-\$125,000 would not be extreme, and some of it could be filtered into my pay as artistic director for Periapsis.

To create a sample scene or excerpt that could be part of a pitch for the larger project, \$5,000 would be appropriate.

Estimated additional costs: Librettist, choreographer, stage director, sets, costumes, dancers and musicians. The full production could readily come to \$250,000 or more.

To create a sample scene that could be part of a pitch for the larger project, \$15,000-\$25,000 would be appropriate.

Work samples: The vocal works linked above in other projects would be helpful, as would all the excerpts from my [reel of music for dance](#).