

COMPOSED BY  
**PETER HILLIARD**

LIBRETTO BY  
**MATT BORES**

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THURSDAY MAY 4  
KEEGAN THEATRE  
[www.URBANARIAS.org](http://www.URBANARIAS.org)



# INBOX ZERO

Music by Peter Hilliard

Libretto by Matt Boresi

with Keith Phares as Jackie Pearson

Conducted by Robert Wood

Directed by Dennis Whitehead Darling

*Commissioned by UrbanArias*

*With the generous support of Ed and Andy Smith*

# Members of Inscape Chamber Orchestra

Violin

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

Sandy Choi

Megan Yanik

Ben Capps

Michael Rittling

Clarinet

Percussion

Drum Set

Piano

Evan Ross Solomon

Eric Plewinski

John Patton

Sophia Kim Cook

Danny Debner, Production Stage Manager

Voiceover (FTC Operator) – Elizabeth Hilliard

Special Thanks to the Keegan Theatre and Theater J

Additional support for Inbox Zero provided by  
Arlington Arts Commission

The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation

Mr. Phares' appearance is underwritten by a generous gift from the Savada-Stevenson Family

# Keith Phares

Keith Phares's recent highlights include Ty in the premiere of Kuster's and Campbell's *A Thousand Acres* with Des Moines Metro Opera, Fredrik Egerman opposite Patricia Racette in Arizona Opera's *A Little Night Music*, Robert Cohen's *Alzheimer's Stories* at Carnegie Hall, the premiere of Herschel Garfein's *King of the River* with the American Modern Ensemble, and Daddy Lowell/Mr. Floyd in Borzoni's and de los Santos's *The Copper Queen* film (premiere) with Arizona Opera. His engagements this season include Danilo in *The Merry Widow* with Toledo Opera, Paterson's and Cote's *In Real Life II* with Mostly Modern Festival – Netherlands, and Sky Masterson in *Guys & Dolls* with Charlottesville Opera. This Fall he returns to Toledo Opera for Dandini in *La cenerentola*.

An ardent exponent of contemporary American opera, Phares sang Kynaston on the Grammy-nominated recording of Carlisle Floyd's *Prince of Players*, Charlie in the premiere and recording of Heggie's and Scheer's *Three Decembers* with Houston Grand Opera and San Francisco Opera, the Father in the premiere and recording of Spears's and Walat's *Paul's Case* with UrbanArias, Dr. Ludwig Binswanger in the premiere of Ricky Ian Gordon's *Ellen West* and the title role in the premiere and live, Grammy-winning recording of Aldridge's and Garfein's.

Keith Phares is an Assistant Professor *Elmer Gantry* of Voice at BGSU.



# Robert Wood

Conductor **Robert Wood** founded UrbanArias in 2009. Under his guidance, the company has achieved national recognition as an innovator in the field of opera, and has produced over 30 contemporary works in Virginia, DC, and New York City, 16 of which were world premieres, and 12 of which were UrbanArias commissions. He conducts all of UrbanArias' productions.

Maestro Wood made his debut with the San Francisco Opera in 2004 with Verdi's *La traviata*; he also conducted *L'italiana in Algeri* there, as well as several concerts. He recently conducted *Rigoletto* at Austin Opera, *Silent Night* at the University of British Columbia with the Vancouver Opera orchestra, *Roméo et Juliette* and *Carmen* at Opera Colorado, *Die Fledermaus* and *As One* at Hawaii Opera Theater, and *Three Decembers* at Kentucky Opera.

Mo. Wood has also conducted *L'italiana in Algeri* at Vancouver Opera, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* for Hawaii Opera Theater, *The Love for Three Oranges* at Indiana University Opera Theater, *La cenerentola* at New Jersey Opera Theater, and *The Nutcracker* for San Francisco Ballet. Mo. Wood's collaborations with the Wolf Trap Opera Company include *Le Comte Ory* and *Die Zauberflöte*. Additionally, Maestro Wood was appointed Conductor in Residence at the Minnesota Opera from 2006-2008, leading productions of *L'italiana in Algeri*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, *La donna del lago*, *Rusalka*, and *Il barbiere di Siviglia*.

Mo. Wood held the position of Chorus Master at The Santa Fe opera from 2001 to 2004, where he received critical acclaim for the choral contribution to the world premiere of Bright Sheng's *Madame Mao*, and the American premiere of Kaija Saariaho's *L'amour de loin*. Mo. Wood was a Merola Opera Program and Western Opera Theater participant, and spent several years in Vienna studying voice and singing in the Arnold Schönberg Chor.





# Dennis Darling

Dennis Whitehead Darling is a stage director working in opera, theatre, and film/video. In 2018, he was selected by Opera Memphis as their Inaugural McCleave Fellow, a fellowship dedicated to advancing the careers of stage and music directors of color. His recent directing credits include the world premieres of *Marian's Song* (Houston Grand Opera), *Sanctuary Road* (North Carolina Opera), *Why I Live at the P.O.* (UrbanArias), *Buried Deep* (End Station Theatre), and *The Secret River* (Opera Orlando). Other works include *The Cunning Little Vixen* (Manhattan School of Music), *Maria de Buenos Aires* (Opera Columbus), *Jelly's Last Jam* (Concert Reading, Long Wharf Theatre), *The Falling and the Rising*, (Arizona Opera), *Lost in the Stars* (Annapolis Opera), *Hansel and Gretel* (film) (Playground Opera), *La Bohème* (Opera Columbus), *Giulio Cesare in Egitto* (film) (Carnegie Mellon University), *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess* (Red Mountain Theatre), *Independence Eve* (Opera Birmingham), *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill* (Hattiloo Theatre/Spazio Teatro No'hma, Milan), *The Parchman Hour* (Hattiloo Theatre), *Ain't Misbehavin'* (Spazio Teatro No'hma, Milan), *Intimate Apparel* (University of Memphis), *Movin' Up in the World* (Opera Memphis), *Sunset Baby* (Hattiloo Theatre), *James and the Giant Peach* (Circuit Playhouse), *Blue Viola* (Opera Memphis), and *Marcus; or the Secret of Sweet* (Hattiloo Theatre). Associate Directing credits include *Arts in the Armed Forces* on Broadway (Studio 54), *The Last of the Love Letters* (Atlantic Theatre), *Light's Out: Nat "King" Cole* (People's Light, Geffen Playhouse), and *Skeleton Crew* (Geffen Playhouse). For more information visit [www.denniswhiteheaddarling.com](http://www.denniswhiteheaddarling.com).



# Peter Hilliard and Matt Boresi

UrbanArias has been an artistic home for composer Peter Hilliard and librettist Matt Boresi since its production of the pair's comic intermezzo *The Filthy Habit* in 2011. Since then, UrbanArias has commissioned three works, *Blue Viola*, *The Last American Hammer*, and now *Inbox Zero* - tragicomic chamber works about life in contemporary America and the effects of aggressive capitalism on the individual.

These UrbanArias-birthing works have gone on to subsequent productions that have touched audiences across the United States and demonstrated that opera can be relevant, musical, and audience-friendly. Thanks to Maestro Wood's deft musical touch and uncommon sense of dramaturgy and his enlistment of some of our era's finest interpreters of new American work, including Jennifer Aylmer, Elizabeth Futral, and Keith Phares, Peter and Matt have been able to push opera forward in the new millennium.

Hilliard and Boresi are co-founders of the Decameron Opera Coalition, a collective of opera companies championing new work across the country. Upcoming work by Peter and Matt includes *MET the Musical*, a backstage musical comedy about opera at its grandest, produced by Nathan Gunn, Julie Jordan-Gunn, and Lyric Theatre @ Illinois. Peter and his wife live in Philadelphia and are parents to four gifted musicians. Matt and his wife live in Chicago with their young daughter, an actress.





# Danny Debner

DANNY DEBNER (Production Stage Manager) is the Director of Stage Operations at Theater J. Past projects at Theater J include Projection Designer on *Gloria: A Life* (2023) and *Compulsion, or the House Behind* (2022); Sound Designer on *Sheltered* (2020); and Stage Manager on *The Pianist of Willesden Lane* (2018 & 2022). Other DC-area Stage Management credits include *Transformations* (2023), *Portraits* (2018) and *Asian American Dance Journey* (2018) with the Dana Tai Soon Burgess Dance Company; *The Vandal* with Edge of the Universe Players 2 (2018); and *DIGG* featuring Kei Takei & Maida Withers (2018). He received his BA in Theatre and French from The George Washington University. Upcoming: Projection Designer on *One Jewish Boy* at Theater J (June 2023). [www.debner.net](http://www.debner.net).

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