

SHE, AFTER

Nora, In the Great Outdoors



and

Alice, in the Time of the Jabberwock

November 9 – 17, 2013

She, After

Music by Daniel Felsenfeld

Part One: *Nora, In the Great Outdoors*

Libretto by Will Eno

Interlude

Part Two: *Alice in the Time of the Jabberwock*

Libretto by Robert Coover

CAST

Nora/Alice

Emily Pulley

Violin

Jenifer Kim

Cello

Sean Neidlinger

Piano

R. Timothy

McReynolds

Stage Direction

Beth Greenberg

Musical Direction

Robert Wood

Set and Costume Design

Valérie Bart

Lighting Design

Dan Jobbins

Stage Manager

Erin Patrick

Assistant Stage Manager

Christopher Anaya-

Gorman

Master Electrician

Alexander Keen

Nora, In the Great Outdoors was commissioned by American Opera Projects in New York City, and ***Alice in the Time of the Jabberwock*** was commissioned by UrbanArias and developed in AOP's First Chance program with generous funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

A Note about *She, After*

She, After imagines the lives of two of literature's great heroines – Nora, from Henrik Ibsen's play *A Doll's House*, and Lewis Carroll's Alice from *Alice in Wonderland* – **after** their moment of notoriety.

A Doll's House was written in 1879, and was a groundbreaking play at the time. It examines contemporary mores and the relationship between the sexes as seen through the unhappy, dishonest and ultimately failed marriage of Nora and Torvald Helmer.

The play is based on the life of Laura Kieler, a good friend of Ibsen. Laura (Nora) had taken out an illegal loan (illegal because women were not allowed to borrow money without their husband's permission) in order to pay for a rest cure for her husband's tuberculosis. She obtained the loan with a forged signature. In real life, when Laura's husband discovered her secret loan, he divorced her and had her committed to an asylum. Two years later, she returned to her husband and children at his urging, and she went on to become a well-known Danish author, living to the age of 83.

In the play the circumstances are slightly different. When Torvald discovers the loan, he tells Nora that she is immoral, a criminal, and an unfit mother. He will not divorce her, in order to keep up appearances, but will forbid her from any interaction with their three children. His attitude abruptly changes when the man who loaned Laura the money returns the bond; Torvald burns the papers, and declares himself saved and his wife forgiven. Nora, however, has seen her husband for who he really is, and decides to leave him and her children. The last thing the audience hears in *A Doll's House* is the door slamming behind Nora as she leaves.

Nora, In the Great Outdoors begins where Ibsen ended.

Alice, in the Time of the Jabberwock, is based on a short story of the same name by Robert Coover, from his book *A Child Again*, and imagines Alice having grown old, if not grown up, in a Wonderland she cannot escape.

ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Composer **Daniel Felsenfeld** (b.1970) has been commissioned and performed by Simone Dinnerstein, Two Sense, Metropolis Ensemble, American Opera Projects, Opera on Tap, Great Noise Ensemble, Da Capo Chamber Players, ACME, ETHEL, REDSHIFT, Two Sides Sounding, Momenta Quartet, Friction Quartet, Blair McMillen, Stephanie Mortimore, Jennifer Choi, Caroline Widmann, Cornelius Duffallo, Jody Redhage, Nadia Sirota, Caroline Worra, Elanor Taylor, Kathleen Supové, Jenny Lin, Ensemble 212, New Gallery Concert Series and Transit, at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, BAM, Kennedy Center, ATLAS, Le Poisson Rouge, City Winery, Galapagos

Art Space, The Stone, The Kitchen, BAM, Jordan Hall, Duke University, The Southern Theatre, Stanford University and Harvard University, as part of 21c Liederabend, Opera Grows in Brooklyn, Ecstatic Music Festival, MATA, Keys to the Future, and Make Music New York. He has also worked with Jay-Z, The Roots, Keren Ann, Rick Moody, Stew, Mark Z. Danielewski, and is the court composer for John Wesley Harding's Cabinet of Wonders. Commercially available on the Sony, Def Jam, Black Box, and Naxos labels. Raised in the outlying suburbs of Los Angeles, he lives in Brooklyn.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Soprano **Emily Pulley** made two role debuts last summer, as Georgetta in *Il Tabarro* for the Opera Theatre of St. Louis, and as Julie in *Showboat* at Central City Opera. She will soon reprise the role of Minnie in *La Fanciulla del West* with Eugene Opera, and joined the Metropolitan Opera last month for their production of Shostakovich's *The Nose*. Other recent role debuts include Leonora in *Fidelio* with Dayton Opera and Desdemona in *Otello* with Arizona Opera. Recent engagements have also included Marguerite in *Faust* at the Arizona Opera and New Orleans Opera, Bea in Jake Heggie's *Three Decembers* with Fort Worth Opera, Hanna in *The Merry Widow* at Kentucky Opera, a John Cage anniversary event with the Center for Contemporary Opera in New York, Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus* with Virginia Opera, and Minnie in *La Fanciulla del West* with Mobile Opera.

Previous performances have included *Carmina Burana* and Nedda in *I Pagliacci* at the Portland Opera and the Atlanta Opera, the title role in *Susannah*, the title role in *Vanessa*, Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*, and Beatrice in Heggie's *Three Decembers* for Central City Opera, Agathe in *Der Freischütz* with Opera Boston, the title role of *Susannah* at the Wexford Festival in Ireland, Blanche in *Dialogues des Carmélites* with Austin Lyric Opera, and Sarah in Jake Heggie's *The End of the Affair* for Lyric Opera of Kansas City. She also made her debut at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden as Mimi in *La Bohème*.

A frequent presence at the Metropolitan Opera, Ms. Pulley's roles in the legendary house included Marguerite in *Faust*, Nedda in *I Pagliacci*, Blanche in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Gretel in *Hänsel und Gretel*, Anne Trulove in *The Rake's Progress*, Musetta in *La Bohème*, Valencienne in *The Merry Widow*, Thérèse in *Les Mamelles de Tirésias*, and First Lady in a new production of *Die Zauberflöte* directed by Julie Taymor.

A champion of new repertoire, she created the role of Lysia in the world premiere of Mark Adamo's new opera, *Lysistrata*, in her Houston Grand Opera debut, which she then reprised for New York City Opera. She made her New York City Opera debut as Lavinia Mannon in *Mourning Becomes Electra* for which she won the New York City Opera Richard F. Gold Debut Artist Award.

Conductor **Robert Wood** debuted with the San Francisco Opera in 2004 with *La traviata*, and conducted *L'italiana in Algeri* the following season. Mr. Wood was 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*. Mr. Wood conducted Stephanie Blythe and Lawrence Brownlee in concert at San Francisco Opera, and 2012's Schwabacher Scenes Program with the Merola Opera Program. Mr. Wood recently conducted *Roméo et Juliette* at Opera Colorado and *Die Fledermaus* at Hawaii Opera Theatre. He 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 Opera New Jersey, *Lakmé* at Minnesota Opera, *The Nutcracker* for San Francisco Ballet, and *Le Comte Ory* and *Die Zauberflöte* at Wolf Trap Opera. Mr. Wood's upcoming engagements include *Carmen* at Opera Colorado. Mr. Wood held the position of Chorus Master at The Santa Fe opera from 2001 to 2004, receiving 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*.

Stage director **Beth Greenberg** has focused her career on new American work and the challenges of redefining where, and how opera can be performed. Greenberg has been involved in all phases of new work, from libretto development and workshop readings to fully-staged premieres. Adding to her list of new American opera productions will be the professional World Premiere of Lori Laitman's *The Scarlet Letter* for Opera Colorado in 2016. She recently directed the West coast premiere of Rorem's *Our Town*, as well as early workshops of *Before Night Falls* by Jorge Martin and the premiere of excerpts from Gordon Beferman's *The Rat Land*, a twice-featured work on City Opera's VOX series. *Pumped Fiction*, the comic opera by MacArthur genius John Eaton, also saw its world premiere, in New York, in Greenberg's hands. In 2014 she will direct the world premieres of *The Red Silk Thread* by Stella Sung and Ernest Hilbert, and the children's opera *The Three Feathers* by Lori Laitman and Dana Gioia, NEA's recent Chair.

Ms. Greenberg directed the site-specific *Il Tabarro* aboard a retired oil tanker moored in Red Hook, Brooklyn. The production received international attention. A return to this waterfront space and the tanker Mary A. Whalen is being planned for the New York premiere of Daniel Catan's *Florenzia en el Amazonas*. Ms. Greenberg was on the New York City Opera directing staff for twenty-three years. For City Opera at Lincoln Center she directed original mainstage productions of *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* and *Turandot*. She also helmed many City Opera revivals including *Der Rosenkavalier*, *La Traviata*, *Intermezzo*, *La Boheme*, and *Tosca*. Her original productions have been seen worldwide, with *Carmen* in Toyko and *Tosca* in Lima, Peru. In America she has staged *Aida* for the Utah Festival Opera, *Rigoletto* for The Phoenicia International Festival of

the Voice, *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *Don Pasquale* for the Pittsburgh Opera Center, and *Eugene Onegin* for Opera Delaware.

Valérie Thérèse Bart designed the sets and costumes for Tina Packer's *Women of Will* (The GYM at Judson Memorial; dir. Eric Tucker); the costumes for *The Servant of Two Masters* (Seattle Repertory Theatre, Guthrie, Arts Emerson Boston, Shakespeare Theatre Company DC, Yale Repertory Theatre; dir. Christopher Bayes), *Volleygirls* (NYMF; dir. Neil Patrick Stewart), *Broken Fences* (Ballybeg Company; Theater 54), *Song of a Convalescent Ayn Rand Giving Thanks to the Godhead in the Lydian Mode* (Wolf 359 Company; Joe's Pub, IRT), *The Bitter Tears of Petra Von Kant* (Lee Strasberg Theatre and Film Institute), *Say You Heard My Echo* (Asian Arts Alliance Association; HERE Arts Center, Flushing Town Hall), *In The Next Room, or the Vibrator Play* (Atlantic Theatre Acting School), *A New Brain* (Rider University), *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *Guys and Dolls* (New London Barn Playhouse), *Die Fledermaus*, Brahms' *Liebeslieder* (NYU Steinhardt), *The Robbers*, *Uncle Vanya* dir. (Yale School of Drama); and the sets for *Goodbye New York*, *Goodbye Heart* (Production Company; HERE Arts Center), and *POP!* (Yale Repertory Theatre; dir. Mark Brokaw), *The Tempest* (Yale School of Drama). Ms. Bart has an M.F.A. from the Yale University School of Drama. valeriebart.com

Lighting Designer **Dan Jobbins'** design credits include *Spoon River Project* (Variations Theater); *Lost Highway*, *The Hank Williams Story* (Merry Go Round Playhouse); *Children of Eden*, *Human Comedy*, *Secret Garden*, and *Blood Brothers* (Astoria Performing Arts Center); *The Works* (Jennifer Muller Dance Co.); *Souvenir Stories* and *Rites of Passage* (Prospect Theater); *Parade*, *A Man of No Importance*, *Reefer Madness*, and *Like You Like It* (Gallery Players); *Little Shop of Horrors* and *Pippin* (ReVision Theater); *King Lear* (American Bard Theater); *Orpheus and Euridice* (Collaborative Stages); Summer Season 2009 and 2010 (Millbrook Playhouse); *Last Supper* (Rising Sun Performance Group); Fall Season 2008 (Surflight Theater); and 2008-2009 Season (Tennessee Williams Theater).

SPECIAL THANKS TO

*The Arlington Arts Commission
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This program is supported in part by: the Arlington Cultural Affairs Division of Arlington Economic Development and the Arlington Commission for the Arts (www.arlingtonarts.org); the Virginia Commission for the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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UrbanArias is a new opera company dedicated to producing short, contemporary operas. All of our works were written within the last 40 years, and none of our performances exceeds 90 minutes. Our mission is to expose DC-area audiences to engaging, accessible, entertaining operas, and to provide a venue at which both established and emerging composers can present their shorter works. Our season now features both fall and spring productions. Additionally, UrbanArias presents programs of mini-operas with our special "opera improv," in which the audience directs scenes created before their eyes.

**Are you a singer?
We have a program just for you!
The UrbanArias Studio
Instructors: Robert Wood and Susan Derry**

Taught by UrbanArias Musical Director Robert Wood and local actress and teacher Susan Derry, this class is two for the price of one!

**Upcoming classes are
Wednesday December 4 from 7:30 – 9 p.m.,
Saturday December 7 from 11 – 12:30 p.m. and
Sunday December 15 from 2 – 3:30 p.m.**

**Interested in observing? You can do that, too. Contact Susan Derry at
sderry@urbanarias.org**

Visit www.urbanarias.org for details!

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UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

PAUL'S CASE January 8-13, 2014 at HERE in New York City

UrbanArias will present five performances of PAUL'S CASE in New York with the ENTIRE ORIGINAL CAST, director, conductor and production, under the auspices of the PROTOTYPE festival which features new operas and music theater.

PAUL'S CASE is the story of a middle-class Pittsburgh boy who has aspirations to something grander; stifled at home and at school, he finds freedom only when ushering at the opera house.

If you missed it in April, this is your chance to see the show of the Washington Post called

“. . . an arresting little piece that communicates its haunting story with clarity and a sense of inevitability,”

and of which the Wall Street Journal said,

“composer Gregory Spears combines minimalism, baroque gestures, and extended vocal techniques into a distinctive and pungent musical language . . . the overall pacing is taut, the nine-piece orchestration vivid and the denouement appropriately wrenching.”

ALSO

“Opera Like You've Never Seen It” Friday, February 21, 2014 at 9:30 p.m. and Sunday, March 2, 2014 at 5:30 p.m. at Atlas Performing Arts Center in Washington, DC

UrbanArias is thrilled to be a part of Atlas INTERSECTIONS Festival – twelve days of performing and visual arts that celebrates the diversity, energy and excellence of artists and audiences from DC and beyond.

UrbanArias will present two short operas, PLUS an amped-up version of opera improv, featuring zany skits from our warped minds as suggested by you, the audience.

Details at www.urbanarias.org



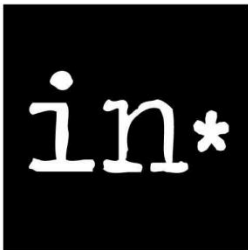
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Inscape performs Samuel Barber's "Dover Beach" for baritone and string quartet along with Johannes Brahms's Quintet for Clarinet and Strings. The program also includes works by two composers with local roots: Richmond, Virginia-born electronica and symphonic composer Mason Bates, and Peabody Institute and Montgomery College faculty member Justin Boyer.



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