

# OPERA FROM SCRATCH 2023

**Sunday, August 13, 2023 @ 3PM**

**Saint Andrew's United Church, Halifax**

***With Joseph Dowell - piano***

**Admission by donation**

## **PROGRAM**

### **The Waterfront**

Hsiu-Ping Patrick Wu - librettist/composer

Lindsay O'Rourke - soprano

### **What It Means To Be**

Chris Millen – librettist/composer

Fiona Ryan – mezzo soprano

### **Invisible**

Owen Bloomfield – librettist/composer

Mele Santos – soprano

### **Clam Digger**

Ellen Fulton - poet

Elizabeth Rudolph - composer

Sorrel McCarthy - soprano

### **Franey Trail**

Sean Clarke - librettist/composer

Talia Fuchs – soprano

### **Glimmer on the Ocean**

Tsz Long Fish Yu - composer

Shayanne De Boer - librettist, baritone

*Opera From Scratch is generously funded by the SOCAN Foundation and supported by the Dalhousie School of Performing Arts (Special thanks to Jerome Blais), Saint Andrew's United Church*



**For a full program go to [www.vocalypse.ca](http://www.vocalypse.ca) (Scroll down and click OFS2023 program)**

## Our Artist Biographies

### The Waterfront:

Taiwanese-born Canadian **Hsiu-Ping Patrick Wu** is constantly on the search for musical language that bridges his multicultural identity. Patrick's music ranged from his own style of neo-romanticism to avant-garde soundscapes, fusing theatrical elements and improvisational techniques. Patrick's pieces have been premiered at high SCORE Composition Festival, Zodiac Music Festival & Academy, Uzmah Upbeat Composition Program, Atlantic Music Festival, Longy's Divergent Studio, Tuckamore Chamber Music Festival, and most recently, the Mostly Modern Festival. Patrick has worked with renowned composers such as Jérôme Blais, Dinuk Wijeratne, David Ludwig, Andrew List, Joel Hoffman, Amy Beth Kirsten, Vivian Fung, and Alexandra Du Bois. His recent ensemble collaborations includes Hypercube Ensemble, The Julius Quartet, Loadbang, the Alkali Collective, and Neave Trio. Patrick is an Associate Composer of the Canadian Music Centre and an affiliate member of the Canadian League of Composers. Patrick is a Longy Equity Scholar, a Nova Scotia Talent Trust scholarship recipient, and has received support from Arts Nova Scotia, SOCAN Foundation, and the Unison Fund. Patrick is currently pursuing his Doctoral of Musical Arts at the University of Toronto. Patrick holds his Master of Music in Composition and Violin Performance as well as a Graduate Diploma in Composition from Longy School of Music of Bard College. He earned his Bachelor of Music from the Fountain School of Performing Arts, Dalhousie University.

**Lindsay O'Rourke** came late to her love of music, starting voice lessons at 20 while studying for a science degree. Studying for five years under Cheryl McCarthy, she decided to go further, earning her Bachelors and Masters in Music at UBC under Heather Thomson-Price. A native Nova Scotian, Lindsay returned to Halifax and is currently in the studio of Lucy Hayes-Davis. While at UBC, she was an in-demand soloist, singing as part of several recital series. In Nova Scotia, she has performed with the Chebucto Symphony Orchestra, the Halifax Institute of Traditional and Early Music and as a lead member of the Halifax-Yarmouth Archdiocesan choir.

### What It Means To Be:

**Chris Millen** grew up in the west end of Ottawa, Ontario. His musical journey started at age 7 when he picked up guitar before quickly switching to the drums set. Much of his early years were spent learning metal and rock songs to play with his older brother. Never having the intention to pursue music as a career, he moved to Montreal to attend Concordia University as a student of computer engineering. Within his first year, he was convinced that it wasn't the right fit. After returning home to Ottawa, he was struck by inspiration, suddenly finding musical ideas blooming in his mind, and within a year, he moved to North Vancouver to attend Capilano University. While at Capilano, he completed the music diploma program in classical studies as well as a year and a half of Jazz Studies before leaving academia to pursue writing the music that began to blossom a few years earlier. He moved to Halifax in 2016 with the hopes of finding his own voice and developing his craft on his own terms. He now works as a project manager, producer, writer, and composer in the TV industry while keeping his sights set his own music.

Mezzo-soprano **Fiona Margaret Ryan** is a performer/composer who lives in Halifax Nova Scotia. Fiona has spent time studying and working in the UK and Ontario, but always ends up returning to Nova Scotia. Fiona has a Bachelor of Music in clarinet performance from Dalhousie University, a Master of Music in Composition from Newcastle University and a Doctor of Music in composition from the University of Toronto, hence most of Fiona's opera experience has been as a composer, in the audience, or in the orchestra. Fiona attended Opera From Scratch several years ago as a composer, and is delighted to have this opportunity to return as a vocalist! Fiona has studied voice privately and attended vocal workshops over the years. Fiona has sung in choirs since she was eight years old, and has also occasionally sung in improvisation ensembles, musicals, and indie rock bands. In 2021 Fiona performed in Vocalypse's production of Ordo Virtutum and O Greenest Branch. When she is not singing and composing, Fiona teaches music, directs a choir, and enjoys spending time with her wife and cat!

### Invisible:

**Owen Bloomfield** is an active Cambridge, Ontario based community musician and composer. His music has been performed across Canada and in Amsterdam, Honolulu and Boston. Large scale projects include the interdisciplinary works *River Flow: Confluence of Words, Music and Dance* with writer Rae Crossman and choreographer Michele Hopkins, and *Tilt!*, a collaboration with Yukon based artist Lawrie Crawford. *Woman of the Drum*, a unique piece for the Indigenous drum group Mino Ode Kwewak N'Gamawak and the community singing group Inshallah, was mounted in Waterloo in 2019. In the summer of 2021 his song cycle *Slagflower Songs*, based on poems by Thomas Leduc, was premiered on Youtube garnering an international audience and much attention on social media. More recent projects include the world premiere in Westerstede, Germany of *Reflection* for solo mandolin in May 2022, the premiere of the chamber symphony *In Tempore Mutationes* by the Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber Orchestra in October 2022. Owen is an Associate Composer of the Canadian Music Centre and a member of the Canadian League of Composers.

Soprano **Mele Santos** is a native Hawaiian, born in Honolulu. She holds a Master of Music degree in Vocal Performance from The University of Arizona, and a Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance from Brigham Young University. She has appeared in Seattle area recitals and concerts, as a soloist with The Eastside Symphony, with Ladies Musical Club of Seattle, and internationally, in Europe. Other credits include Verdi's *La Traviata* and *Rigoletto*, Mozart's *Requiem* and *Die Zauberflöte*, Handel's *Messiah*, Bizet's *Carmen*, Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, and others. Mele is also an accomplished teacher, with over 17 years of experience. She currently maintains a voice studio and has served as a guest vocal technique clinician for high school choral programs in Washington and Arizona. She is a classically trained singer who enjoys singing musical theatre, jazz, and other modern genres.

### Clam Digger:

**Elizabeth Rudolph** is a Chicago-based composer whose music "takes advantage of the rhythmic complexity of minimalism to emphasize thoughtfully composed melodic storytelling." according to contralto Katherine Dalin. Rudolph's music has been performed and/or recorded by VOX3 Collective, Third Eye Theater Co, New Moon Opera Chicago, Chicago Fringe Opera, and Opera on Tap- Chicago among others. Rudolph is an established classical singer in their own right, and frequently collaborates with working artists to create new operas, choral, orchestral, instrumental and chamber music, and their preferred medium: art-songs for solo voice. Soprano Mary Lutz Govertsen, who has debuted or performed Rudolph's music on numerous occasions, says their music "allows more leeway for singers to make the music their own, and singing their music is always immensely musically and dramatically fulfilling." They are trusted to handcraft music which allows singers to thrive. Other commissions include, *Petticoats and SlideRules* for Third Eye Theater, *The Widow's Will* for Chicago Fringe Opera and the Decameron Project, *Lincoln Square* (soprano and cello) for the Chicago Fringe Opera City of Works project, *Just a Phase* (TTBB Choral) for the Chicago Gay Men's Chorus on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Stonewall, *The Third Night* (baritone, bass clarinet, and piano) for VOX3, *La Belle Dame sans Merci* (SATB chorale) and *Incidental Music for The Tempest* (chamber music), for Interlochen Arts Academy.

**Sorrel Bohannon McCarthy**, soprano, comes from the USA, where she is currently studying vocal performance at the University of North Texas, located north of Dallas in the city of Denton. She is also concurrently pursuing a Masters of Education in Teaching. When she is not singing or studying, she works as the Director of Education for The Actors Conservatory Theatre, a children's theatre in Lewisville, Texas, where she also teaches, directs, stage manages, and serves as the website manager. She also maintains a private voice studio out of her home, which she shares with her husband Mike, their four kids, and many pets. Sorrel most recently sang the role of Belinda in *Dido and Aeneas* at UNT, was a soloist (Fairy/Nymph) in *The Fairy Queen* at the Baroque Opera Workshop in Queens, NY, and performed as a dancer in *L'Erismena* at the Amherst Early Music Festival at Muhlenberg College. She has sung in the opera choruses for *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Gluck) and *The Bartered Bride* at UNT. She is thrilled to be visiting Nova Scotia for the first time and is so excited to share this new work, *Clam Digger* by Elizabeth Randolph, with you all!

### **Franey Trail:**

**Sean Clarke** is an Ottawa-based composer and flutist originally from Calgary. He completed a doctorate in composition at the University of Montréal under the guidance of Ana Sokolovic and Jonathan Goldman, generously supported by a SSHRC Joseph-Armand Bombardier Doctoral Scholarship. Previously, he studied flute and composition at the Royal Northern College of Music under Peter Lloyd and Anthony Gilbert, and the University of Calgary under Allan Bell and David Eagle. His works have been performed in France, America, and across Canada by ensembles including the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the National Youth Orchestra, Quatuor Bozzini, Land's End Ensemble with Robert Aitken, and Ensemble Mise-En, as well as featured in the World Saxophone Congress and the Canadian University Music Society annual conference. Sean has presented his theory research, which focuses on the music of Pierre Boulez and formal function in contemporary music, at national and regional conferences. As a freelance flutist, Sean has performed in contemporary music festivals in Montréal, Calgary and Saskatoon, with the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra and the Red Deer Symphony, and in concert series including the Société de Musique Contemporaine de Québec's Série Hommage and McGill University's Schulich Professional Concert Series.

**Talia Fuchs** is a singer and theatre artist with a passion for interdisciplinary live performance. A classically trained vocalist and performer, she has performed in productions with Opera McGill and the McGill Savoy Society. Equally at home in choir and concert work, she has sung with Schulich Singers of McGill University, St. Matthias Anglican Church, The Brooklyn Youth Chorus in New York City as both an ensemble member and a soloist. Constantly seeking to expand her knowledge, recently, she participated in workshops with Bernard Hiller (acting), Meredith Monk (voice/movement). She holds a Bachelor of Music from McGill University where she studied with Tracy Smith Bessette and Dominique Labelle and continues to train at the House of Actors with Vanessa Rancourt.

### **Glimmer on the Ocean:**

**Fish Yu** is a Toronto-based young composer from Hong Kong. Yu composed a wide range of music, including solo, chamber, Chinese music, orchestral work, electroacoustic music, and opera. Yu's works have been premiered and broadcast worldwide like Radio Television Hong Kong Radio 4, University of Toronto New Music Festival 2023, Hong Kong Contemporary Music Festival: Asian Delight, Lithuanian national radio, etc. Yu has also worked with artists worldwide, like Wind Kamerata, Cong Quartet, Nova Ensemble, Dawning Quartet, New Morse Code Duo, Reiko Manabe, Hong Kong Gaudeamus Dunhuang Ensemble, etc. Furthermore, his work— 'Please Don't Open' for Trombone and Electronics—was nominated to the 67th International Rostrum of Composers in 2021 and chosen as Recommended Works by Composers Under 30 Category. Yu was the winner of the Hong Kong Composers' Guild's Music New Generation 2020. His other work— 'Torrent' for Flute and Electronics—received the third prize in The Young Composers Competition of Isidora Žebeljan International Festival 2021. In 2021, Yu led a multimedia production for a mini-opera 'The Diary.' He acted as the director, composer and sound engineer in this production. In 2022, Yu received a fellowship to attend Toolbox International Creative Academy and take composition lessons with Prof. Ken Ueno and Dr. Matthew Schreibeis and finished a composition work 'My Journal' for Cello, Percussion and Electronics. His collaboration with Toronto-based percussion group KÖNG Duo for the work 'Frolic' also performed in Canada, the US and competition worldwide.

Soprano **Shayanne de Boer** was often told as a child that she needed a volume control button. Thankfully, she's now using that voice to her advantage on the stage. She is a graduate of Western University with a Bachelor of Music Honours Voice Performance with Distinction. Having recently performed in Puccini's *Suor Angelica* in Berlin and at UWO with Contemporary Music Studio and the Opera Gala, she loves using her voice in more productive ways today. Shayanne has won many awards from local music festivals as well as a 1<sup>st</sup> place award at the National Association of Teachers of Singing Vocal Showcase in 2021. She is passionate about new and contemporary music, and she is proud of what she performed this past year with the Contemporary Music Studio at Western University. Many years ago, when Shayanne de Boer worked in a bakery, customers often heard her singing and encouraged her to pursue it further. Today she's working on making that dream happen.

## **Joseph Dowell – Piano**

**Joseph Dowell** has been studying and playing piano in Halifax for most of his life. He is classically trained and followed the Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM) requirements to the ARCT level with honors. In 2011, Joseph received his piano performance degree at Dalhousie University. He received the Tietje Zonneveld scholarship in his third year and the following year received the William Tritt scholarship to participate in the Scotia Festival of Music's Young Artists Program. After his undergrad he completed an additional year of advanced applied study and focused on piano pedagogy and collaborative piano. Joseph has performed many solo piano works over the years including Rachmaninoff's 2nd piano concerto with the Dalhousie orchestra, Haydn's Seven Last Words of Christ in concert, and many works by celebrated piano composers such as Bach, Scarlatti, Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, and more. His favorites are romantic composers Liszt, Chopin, and Rachmaninoff. Joseph is the resident pianist for Saint Mary's University events and plays many solo pieces there. He also performs regularly at Christ Church Dartmouth as he is the pianist and organist there. In 2022 he was the official rehearsal accompanist and ensemble pianist for Vocalypse Productions world premiere of "Escape to Freedom", an opera by Canadian composer Sandy Moore. He has also started working with cellist Anna Shabelina in the "Soul Strings Duo" featuring many different styles of music for piano and cello.