

PROTOTYPE: OPERA/THEATRE/NOW

SEVENTH ANNUAL FESTIVAL
FEATURES TEN PRESENTATIONS

JANUARY 5-13, 2019

PRISM

Ellen Reid + Roxie Perkins

4.48 PSYCHOSIS

Philip Venables + Sarah Kane

THISTREE

Leah Coloff

THE INFINITE HOTEL

Old Sound Room + The Windmill Factory

PANCHO VILLA FROM A SAFE DISTANCE

Graham Reynolds + Lagartijas Tiradas al Sol

TRAIN WITH NO MIDNIGHT

Joseph Keckler

STINNEY: AN AMERICAN EXECUTION

Frances Pollock + Tia Price

MILA, GREAT SORCERER

Andrea Clearfield + Jean-Claude van Itallie & Lois Walden

THE LITTLE DEATH: VOL. 1

Matt Marks

OF TIME AND PLACE

Ellen Reid + Sarah LaBrie / David T. Little + Royce Vavrek

PROTOTYPE: Out of Bounds

TBA

“The best news in opera in New York these days is the PROTOTYPE Festival...” – The Washington Post

*“The festival is one of the great things about being in New York City in January.” –
Opera News*

PROTOTYPE: Opera/Theatre/Now announces full programming for the seventh annual festival of fresh opera-theatre & music-theatre, running January 5-13, 2019 and featuring ten presentations that “shift the whole paradigm of what opera is and can be” (*New York Observer*).

Founded by co-directors **Kristin Marting** (of HERE), **Beth Morrison** (of Beth Morrison Projects) and **Kim Whitener** (of HERE), and led by them along with co-director **Jecca Barry** (of Beth Morrison Projects), the PROTOTYPE Festival emphasizes the bold and prolific work coming from today’s creative talents across the spectrum of gender, age, sexual orientation, and ethnic background. Since its launch in 2013, PROTOTYPE has presented a phenomenal 39 new works in six seasons, propelling the industry forward as an industry disruptor and international influencer, while bringing to the fore the work of 26 female-identifying lead artists.

The 2019 Festival spotlights the imaginative and dramatic work of 31 lead artists, 16 of whom are women, exploring ideas of mental health, ethnicity, and motherhood, as well as concerns around the public justice system and immigration, via four world premieres, a U.S. premiere, two New York premieres, a one-night-only presentation, and two works-in-progress.

Ellen Reid's *p r i s m* is the culmination of a breakout year for the composer whose had major works performed at LA Chamber Orchestra (LACO), LA Philharmonic, and LA Master Chorale (a commission also featured in this year’s PROTOTYPE Festival) in just one year’s time. *p r i s m* receives its NY premiere as part of a rolling world premiere with LA Opera, here co-presented with La MaMa and featuring the Choir of Trinity Church Wall Street and NOVUS NY. With libretto by **Roxie Perkins**, *p r i s m* follows a daughter’s rise to consciousness via a perplexing relationship with her mother. *p r i s m* was commissioned by Beth Morrison Projects and developed by BMP in collaboration with Arizona State University, Lyric Theater@ University of Illinois, and PROTOTYPE, and is directed by James Darrah.

Just added to this year’s Festival is the U.S. premiere of **Philip Venables'** bombshell opera, **4.48 Psychosis**, based on the final work of British playwright **Sarah Kane**. Hot off a sold-out Royal Opera House production in London, the piece explores the search for love and identity amid the turmoil and confusion of mental illness. Co-presented with Baruch Performing Arts Center.

Cellist/composer **Leah Coloff's *ThisTree*** is a performed prose poem drawing together multiple media to form a deeply personal exploration of infertility and the end of a family tree, presented as a world premiere music-theatre production at HERE’s Mainstage.

Old Sound Room and **The Windmill Factory's *The Infinite Hotel*** brings together writer and director Michael Joseph McQuilken with music and lyrics by Firehorse & The Few Moments and select songs adapted from material written by Amanda Palmer &

Jason Webley for this world premiere music-theatre production. A cathartic live experience inside a movie-making machine, each performance results in a unique film featuring the audience as extras. Co-presented with Irondale.

Distinctive performer **Joseph Keckler**, known for his sharp wit and rich vocal range, takes audiences on a world premiere music-theatre late night “train ride” through cities around the world in ***Train With No Midnight***, at HERE’s Dorothy B. Williams Theatre, commissioned and developed by PROTOTYPE. ***Pancho Villa From A Safe Distance***, co-presented with BRIC, plays with time and narrative in the New York premiere of a bilingual opera about the infamous bandit-turned-hero of the Mexican Revolution. A number of talents from both sides of the border band together to tell the tale, including composer **Graham Reynolds**, librettists **Lagartijas Tiradas al Sol** of Mexico City, and GRAMMY Award-winning guitarist **Adrian Quesada**.

The first of the two 2019 Festival works-in-progress comes from composer-librettist **Frances Pollock** and co-librettist **Tia Price**. ***Stinney: An American Execution*** is based on the horrific true story of the innocent young black child, George Junius Stinney Jr., who was convicted and executed in the mid 1940s for rapes he did not commit (co-presented with French Institute Alliance Française (FIAF) and Harlem Stage). A panel conversation will take place at Harlem Stage on January 10. Also in progress is composer **Andrea Clearfield** and librettists **Jean-Claude van Itallie** and **Lois Walden**'s *Mila, Great Sorcerer*, an exploration of the folk hero, singer, and spiritual teacher, Milarepa, directed by **Kevin Newbury**.

The Festival honors one of its own with the one night only memorial tribute to **Matt Marks** featuring his music-theatre work ***The Little Death: Vol. 1***. Net proceeds will be donated to the Matt Marks Impact Fund of Alarm Will Sound. Co-presented with Roulette.

PROTOTYPE partners once again with Trinity Church Wall Street to present a premiere program featuring a choral commission each from leading composers Ellen Reid and David T. Little. Reid’s *dreams of the new world* with libretto by Sarah LaBrie, receives its East Coast premiere while David T. Little and Royce Vavrek's *Am I Born* receives its world premiere on the Festival in an SATB version.

Programming for **PROTOTYPE: Out of Bounds**, the Festival’s series of short, free, site-specific works in public spaces, will be announced at a later date. A special soirée with enticing guests is planned for January 9 at City Vineyard.

Tickets are \$30-\$75 | \$25 with PROTO Pack | \$70 with Premium PROTO Pack. For the full calendar visit www.prototypefestival.org.

2019 FESTIVAL PRESENTATIONS

p r i s m

Composer **Ellen Reid**

Librettist **Roxie Perkins**

Director **James Darrah**

Music Director **Julian Wachner**

Rolling World Premiere/NY Premiere Opera-Theatre

Co-Produced with Trinity Church Wall Street, featuring the Choir of Trinity Wall Street and NOVUS NY

Co-Presented with La MaMa

Commissioned, developed, and produced by Beth Morrison Projects

Locked away in a sterile room, a sickly child Bibi and her doting mother Lumee are each other's sole protectors from the unknown. When a mysterious illness lurking outside their door leaves Bibi unable to walk, her youthful curiosity begins to simmer and a seductive external existence can no longer be ignored. Written by Ellen Reid and Roxie Perkins, *p r i s m* is a haunting, kaleidoscopic new work of opera-theatre that traverses the elasticity of memory after trauma. Composer Ellen Reid's music erupts with color, using choral and orchestral manipulation to deliver an eerily distinct sonic world.

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4.48 Psychosis

Composed by **Philip Venables**

Based on the play by **Sarah Kane**

Directed by **Ted Huffman**

Conducted by **Richard Baker**

Featuring **Contemporaneous**

U.S. Premiere

Produced in association with New Vision for Opera and Baruch Performing Arts Center

Co-Presented with Baruch Performing Arts Center

Straight from the Royal Opera House's sold-out production, PROTOTYPE presents the U.S. premiere of the contemporary opera that has the industry buzzing. Composed of 24 fragmented episodes, Sarah Kane's chilling final play details the experience of clinical depression and reveals an individual's struggle to come to terms with their own psychosis. Philip Venables' greatly acclaimed operatic adaptation, directed by Ted Huffman and conducted by Richard Baker, explores the search for love and happiness and the struggle for identity through a fusion of opera and spoken text. As an opera, *4.48 Psychosis* brings a new resonance to the last creative utterances of one of the most courageous young British writers of her generation. *4.48 Psychosis* is a

production from the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London. This production was first seen at the Lyric, Hammersmith on 24 May 2016.

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ThisTree

Written/Composed/Performed by **Leah Coloff**
Directed by **Ellie Heyman**

World Premiere Music-Theatre

Produced by PROTOTYPE
Commissioned and developed by HERE through the HERE Artist Residency Program (HARP)

Dappled late-afternoon light bathes a clearing in the hand crafted forest. Cellist/singer Leah Coloff emerges, trailing a 25-foot cape of tattered denim. Tracing the secrets of her family history, Coloff glides between idyllic childhood memories, unanswered questions and her roller coaster ride of fertility treatments. *ThisTree* weaves autobiographical storytelling, 8 mm home movies, and Coloff's signature blend of blues, rock and non-traditional cello playing, supported by an all-female band, to investigate the vantage point of being the last branch on the family tree.

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The Infinite Hotel

Written & Directed by **Michael Joseph McQuilken**
Music & Lyrics by **Firehorse & The Few Moments**
Select songs adapted from material written by **Amanda Palmer & Jason Webley** for this production

World Premiere Music-Theatre

Co-Produced with Old Sound Room and The Windmill Factory
Co-Presented with Irondale

Rock music and Rube-Goldberg-cinematography collide in a cathartic and inventive music-theatre experience. *The Infinite Hotel* invites live audiences to become 'extras' and step inside an elaborate movie-making machine, producing a one-take feature film together every night. Refreshingly honest, the film's narrative follows five strangers unknowingly writing music together across space and time, and questions the nature of human interrelatedness, our appetite for visibility, and the creative ideas we accidentally share.

Featuring music and lyrics by Leah Siegel (Leisure Cruise/Firehorse) & The Few Moments; and select songs adapted from material written by Amanda Palmer (Dresden Dolls) & Jason Webley for this production; rock concert moments by The Windmill Factory (NIN, Metric, Phantogram); and a powerhouse cast.

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Pancho Villa From A Safe Distance

Composer **Graham Reynolds**

Librettist **Lagartijas Tiradas Al Sol**

Director **Shawn Sides**

NY Premiere Multimedia Opera

Co-Presented with BRIC

Pancho Villa From A Safe Distance is a bilingual cross-border opera about the enigmatic general, legendary bandit, and hero of the Mexican Revolution. Through a non-linear collage of scenes from or inspired by the life of the complex, contradictory, and controversial leader, the piece provides a timely lens into the relationships and overlaps between the communities of Mexico, the United States, and the borderlands. Originally commissioned by Ballroom Marfa and co-commissioned by Fusebox Festival, this Creative Capital Award-winning project brings together an impressive array of artistic collaborators from both sides of the Rio Grande: Austin, TX-based composer Graham Reynolds, librettists Lagartijas Tiradas al Sol of Mexico City, director Shawn Sides of Rude Mechs, and an exceptional ensemble of two vocalists and six instrumentalists built around Grammy-winning producer-guitarist Adrian Quesada.

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Train With No Midnight

Written/Composed/Performed by **Joseph Keckler**

World Premiere Music-Theatre

Commissioned, developed, and produced by PROTOTYPE

Co-Commissioned with Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago and Hopkins Center for the Arts at Dartmouth College

Distinctive singer-songwriter Joseph Keckler and an intimate musical ensemble lead the audience through a series of vignettes, each like a stop on a late night train -- from Paris to Hamburg, Michigan to Times Square and the symbolic space of The Crossroads, a place of danger and possibility. The text "dances between comedy, commentary and communion," while the score features smoky pop songs, propulsive invocations, and leaps into the operatic realm.

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Stinney: An American Execution

Composer **Frances Pollock**

Librettists **Tia Price & Frances Pollock**

Co-Directors **Emma Weinstein & Jeremy O. Harris**

Music Director **Alexander Lloyd Blake**

Work-in-Progress Opera

Co-Presented with French Institute Alliance Française (FI AF) and Harlem Stage

An involuntary symbol of sickening injustice, George Junius Stinney Jr. was executed at the age of 14. Having been wrongly accused and convicted of the brutal rape and murder of two white girls in Alcolu, SC, in 1944, George became the youngest person legally executed in 20th century America. *Stinney* tells the story of George, his family, his divided hometown, and the action and inaction that led an innocent black child to the electric chair. A new opera with roots in gospel, blues, baptist hymn, Appalachian folk music and electronic techniques, *Stinney* spotlights the anger and agony of the entire populous of Alcolu, connecting the dots to our own socio-political climate in 2019 and the pervasive "fear of the other."

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Mila, Great Sorcerer

Composed by **Andrea Clearfield**

Libretto by **Jean-Claude van Itallie & Lois Walden**

Directed by **Kevin Newbury**

Work-in-Progress Opera

Produced by New Vision for Opera

Folk hero, singer, and spiritual teacher, Milarepa has been venerated for one thousand years. But as a child, directed by his mother, he wields black magic against the aunt and uncle that stole his inheritance, and destroys his entire village. His remorse sends him on a life journey from mass murder to enlightenment. Set to lush orchestration melding Eastern and Western sounds, his transformation and redemption into the most revered teacher of Tibetan Buddhism offer hope and spiritual wayfinding to all who regret acts of consequence and seek higher ground.

Commissioned by New Vision for Opera

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The Little Death: Vol. 1

One Night Only Tribute to Matt Marks

Composer & Librettist **Matt Marks**

Starring **Melissa Hughes & Ted Hearne**

One night only memorial Music-Theatre tribute to Matt Marks

Co-Presented by PROTOTYPE and Roulette

Net proceeds will be donated to the Matt Marks Impact Fund of Alarm Will Sound

In May 2018 the contemporary music community of New York City lost one of its shining stars and most beloved members, composer Matt Marks. In 2017, PROTOTYPE premiered Matt's opera (with librettist and director Paul Peers), *Mata Hari*, to great success. As we all wrestle with this seismic loss, PROTOTYPE pays tribute to Matt by showcasing his first music-theatre composition, *The Little Death: Vol. 1*, in which he originated the male lead. *The Little Death: Vol. 1* fuses bombastic electro-pop hooks, frenetically chopped break beats, hypnotic lyrics, and apocalyptic Christian imagery.

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of time and place

Conducted by **Julian Wachner**
Featuring The Choir of Trinity Wall Street and NOVUS NY

dreams of the new world

Composed by **Ellen Reid**
Libretto by **Sarah LaBrie**
Lead Researcher **Sayd Randle**

Am I Born

Composed by **David T. Little**
Libretto by **Royce Vavrek**

Premiere Program

Trinity premieres a program featuring a commission each from leading composers Ellen Reid and David T. Little, exploring within the vernacular of specific times and places what has been lost for the sake of progress. Ellen Reid's *dreams of the new world* (libretto by Sarah LaBrie), originally premiered in Los Angeles and here presented in its East Coast premiere, portrays little-known, interview-based stories about the pursuit of the American dream in Memphis (1890), Houston (1970), and Los Angeles (2018). *Am I Born* by David Little with libretto by Royce Vavrek, which premiered in Brooklyn in 2012 and receives its world premiere on the Festival in an SATB version, explores lost histories, altered places, and the spiritual bleed at the intersection of modernity and antiquity. Works are performed by The Choir of Trinity Wall Street and NOVUS NY with Julian Wachner conducting.

dreams of the new world is co-commissioned by the Los Angeles Master Chorale and The Choir of Trinity Wall Street.

Am I Born will be the world premiere of the Trinity commissioned SATB version of the work. Presented by PROTOTYPE in association with Trinity Church Wall Street.