



Off-Brand Opera [lab]
presents

En Route

A concert featuring works in development
from Off-Brand Opera Artists



Friday, April 26 at 7:30pm
at Brooklyn Art Haus
(24 Marcy Ave, Brooklyn, NY)

Off-Brand Opera [lab]

presents

En Route

Introducing Off-Brand Opera [lab], a new branch of the company designed to feature works in development and spotlight what's up-and-coming in musical theater and opera. Our [lab] branch is dedicated to hosting intimate events that create space for experimental work, emerging artists, and new compositions to shine.

En Route is our first [lab] concert and features work from Off-Brand Opera's resident creative team alongside new material from other up-and-coming composers in NYC.

Program:

Rage

from & *Aeterna*

Music by Jake Landau | Lyrics by Emily Garber

Veronica Shea, Sorceress

Nicole Goldstein, *Aeterna*

The Nightingale

1. Nightingale | 2. Fill the Cup

3. Tidal | 4. Wind and Water

Music by Alina Ranjbaran

Text from *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam | Translated by Edward Fitzgerald

Christine Duncan, mezzo-soprano

Alina Ranjbaran, viola

Dan Drew, tenor

The Right Reasons

1. The Right Reasons

2. Cinderella Syndrome

3. Villian

Music & lyrics by Hannah Gruendemann | Book by Emily Garber

Hannah Gruendemann, Ollie | Michelle Pauker, Sarah P

Nicole Goldstein, Katie | Christine Duncan, Crystal

Leslie Andrea Williams, Daniella

love is more thicker than forget

Music by Daniel Thompson

Text by e.e. cummings

Dan Drew, tenor

The Last Night Together

(Farewell Prince)

Music and Lyrics by Vicky Cheng

Nicole Goldstein, Sparrow

Christian Arencibia, Happy Prince

Desert Mansion

Music and Lyrics by Vicky Cheng

Vicky Cheng, vocals

Alina Ranjbaran, viola

Scenes from *Anton & Minna*

1. Minna's Lament | 2. Drowning Prelude

3. A Sunlight Aria

Music and Lyrics by Doug Hudson

Veronica Shea, Minna

Christian Arencibia, Anton

Rosie

Music and Lyrics by Jake Landau

When the Men Come Home

Ashley Snow, Betty

Michelle Pauker, Veronica Shea, Erin Kennedy, and Hannah Gruendemann, ensemble

Willing to Work

Michelle Pauker, Rosie

Domesticity

Nicole Goldstein, Harriet

Michelle Pauker, Rosie

Veronica Shea & Erin Kennedy, ensemble

I See You Now

Ashley Snow, Betty

Michelle Pauker, Rosie

Dere's a Cafe on de Corner

from *Carmen Jones*

Arranged by Opal Hoyt

Conceived & Choreographed by Leslie Andrea Williams

Music by Georges Bizet | Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II

Opal Hoyt, instrumentals & vocals

Jai Perez and Leslie Andrea Williams, dancers

Off Brand [lab]: En Route OPERA FEATURED ARTISTS



CHRISTIAN ARENCIBIA



DAN DREW



VICKY CHENG



CHRISTINE DUNCAN



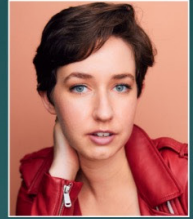
JAKE EISNER



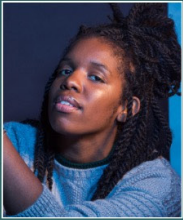
EMILY GARBER



NICOLE GOLDSTEIN



HANNAH GRUENDEMANN



OPAL HOYT



DOUG HUDSON



ERIN KENNEDY



JAKE LANDAU



MICHELLE PAUKER



JAI PEREZ



ALINA RANJBARAN



VERONICA SHEA



ASHLEY SNOW



DANIEL THOMPSON



LESLIE ANDREA WILLIAMS

ABOUT OUR ARTISTS

Christian Arcencibia (Performer) is excited to return to Off-Brand Opera! Previous roles include Masetto (Off-Brand Opera's *Don Giovanni*), Baron Douphol (*La Traviata*), Father (*Hänsel und Gretel*), and The Cat/The Clock (*L'enfant et le sortilèges*). Thank you for coming out to see this performance and please enjoy the show!

Dan Drew (Performer) is thrilled to be returning to Off-Brand Opera after his performance as Robert in *Jane Eyre*! Dan is a native of Newark NJ, and holds a degree from Rutgers University in Theater Arts and History. He works as Choreographer, Principle Dancer, and Guest Vocalist with the National Tour of *A Celtic Angels Christmas*. Past Credits: *Memphis* (Hucy), *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Jesus), *A Little Night Music* (Henrik), *Hairspray* (Corny Collins), *South Pacific* (Cable), *A Little Princess* (Capt. Crewe), *Into the Woods* (Cinderella's Prince). IG: @dan_drew3 / danieldrewjr.com

Vicky Cheng (Composer/Performer) is a composer, pianist, and lyricist that creates music for multiple genres. Growing up in China and playing piano since childhood, Vicky draws inspiration from Asian ancient music, Western classical music, jazz, rock, opera and other contemporary music forms. She's been studying composition in Juilliard school and is active in the US, Europe and Asia. Vicky's light opera and art song works ("Be His Queen" and "Fairy Song") were premiered in Narni Italy, summer 2023. Her contemporary chamber music works have been premiered in multiple music events in New York and she also writes indie/rock songs.

Christine Duncan (Performer) has always been fascinated by the voice and the different ways it can sound, convey emotion and tell a story. Trained simultaneously in classical, world folk and musical theater, she has developed a passion for a diversity of vocal styles and projects that cross genre boundaries. Christine has worked with companies such as Grammy-winning Odyssey Opera, Beth Morrison Projects, New Amsterdam Opera, The Center for Contemporary Opera, Astoria Music Festival and the Narnia Festival. Favorite recent roles include Maurya in *Riders To The Sea: The Musical*, The Witch in *Into The Woods* and La Principessa *Suor Angelica*.

Jake Eisner (Pianist/Music Director) [he/him] is a musician and theatre artist from New York City. Music and assistant music direction credits include *Eugene Onegin* at Heartbeat Opera, *Yemanjá* with Angélique Kidjo, *Kinky Boots* (Bucks County Playhouse), *nellie/nellie* (Antigravity Performance Project), *A Little Night Music*, and *La Bohème* (Williams College). Sound and assistant sound design credits include *A Christmas Carol* (Alabama Shakespeare), *The Tempest/King Lear* (Juilliard), *Love's Labour's Lost*, and *Mr. Burns*. He holds a B.A. in Music from Williams College.

Emily Garber (Librettist) is a queer librettist, novelist, and poet who draws on her love of fantasy, horror, and Classics. She is the book writer and lyricist for *Psyche*, a 2024 O'Neill semifinalist, which features songs in both English and Ancient Greek. Her work has been performed internationally by Broadway, West End, and opera stars alike at venues such as 54 Below, Crazy Coqs, and The York Theatre. Her one-act opera, *& Aeterna*, which premiered at the Narnia Vocal Arts Festival in Italy, will have its US premiere in the summer of 2024. She is also the cohort of Monster Donut: A Percy Jackson Podcast, which is very cool.

Nicole Goldstein (Performer) is an NYC-based crossover artist with an affinity for both Opera and Musical Theatre. Nicole has had the honor of performing at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Radio City Music Hall, Opera America and more. Credit highlights include: *Iolanthe* (Celia) and *Anyone Can Whistle* (High Soprano Soloist) at Carnegie Hall, *Dogfight* (Rose) and *The Light in the Piazza* (Clara u/s) at Red River Lyric Opera, *& Aeterna* (Aeterna) world premiere at The Narnia Vocal Arts Festival, *On the Right Track* (The Woman u/s) at AMT Theatre, *Jane Eyre* (Helen) with Off-Brand Opera, and singing with New York City Opera for the North-American premiere of *Vessels of Light* by Lera Auerbach. Nicole received her Bachelor of Music from Oberlin Conservatory, as well as a Graduate Certificate from the Professional Conservatory of Musical Theatre at The New York Film Academy.

Hannah Gruendemann (Composer/Performer) [she/her] is a composer, writer, director, and performer raised in Los Angeles, CA. She recently completed a year-long research

fellowship studying the intersection of musical performance and the natural world in Spain, Italy, the UK, Indonesia, and Aotearoa New Zealand, which included producing the world premiere of a musical about reducing carbon emissions, working on a permaculture coconut farm, and walking 550 miles across Spain. She has had recent compositional premieres at the Northwestern Beinen School of Music, I/O New Music Festival, and the New Explorative Oratorio Voice Festival. Most recently, she directed Off-Brand Opera's production of *Jane Eyre: The Musical*.

Opal Hoyt (Arranger/Performer) is a musician, singer, songwriter and producer who splits time between Brooklyn and the Western Catskills. With a wide range of influences from soul to grunge, she has joined artists like Helado Negro, Jordan Rakei, Okay Kaya and DOM on stage, providing keys, vocals and bass guitar. She spends most of her time writing for her project Zenizen, which released an album called P.O.C. (Proof of Concept) in 2021 on Topshelf Records. An artist BET has called "a skilled producer with an ear for outstanding arrangements and understanding of composition," she is currently working on a new album for the band and is looking forward to new live dates with the group in 2024.

Doug Hudson (Composer) is a New York area-based composer and tech lawyer, focused on chamber works and small ensembles. Recent public performances include the Schertzo from his Viola Sonata at Juilliard Spring 2023 Showcase, excerpts from the song cycle Songs of Grief and Water at the 2023 Narnia Arts Festival, and Etudes for Pianoforte with the Catskills Mountain Foundation.

Erin Kennedy (Producer/Performer) is a music director, pianist, and singer originally from St. Paul, Minnesota. Her training in opera, musical theater, choral music, and collaborative piano come together to create an interdisciplinary style that blurs boundaries between genres and adapts traditional performance practices for modern audiences. She is a co-founder of Off-Brand Opera, where she previously music directed *Jane Eyre*, *Carousel*, and *Into the Woods*. Recent music directing credits include the York Theatre, Ridgewood Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Company, Green Room 42, and Don't Tell Mama. More at erinkatkenedy.com!

Jake Landau (Composer/Pianist), b. 1995, is a composer and librettist based in New York City.

His music has been performed by the New York Philharmonic, Houston Grand Opera, and Premiere Division Ballet, and by Broadway stars including Jay Armstrong Johnson (*Parade*), Ciara Renée (*Frozen*), and Sam Gravitte (*Wicked*). Jake is a Clarendon Scholar of Oxford University and an Extension-Division faculty member at The Juilliard School, having graduated from both institutions. His musical *Psyche* had its first 29-hour Equity reading in November '22, following the premiere of his opera & *Aeterna* in Italy that summer. Jake is represented by UIA Talent. www.JakeLandau.com

Michelle Pauker (Performer) is thrilled to be returning Off-Brand Opera! She was recently seen as Fia in Jake Landau's *Pieta* and as Nora in OBO's *Riders To The Sea*, adapted by Jake Landau & Phoebe Corde and directed by George Abud. Past credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Idaho Shakespeare Festival), *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (Great Lakes Theatre Co.), *Into The Woods* (Forestburgh Playhouse). Michelle is grateful to the team at Off-Brand Opera for creating a space where artists can embrace their curiosity, explore, collaborate, and push boundaries! www.MichellePauker.com

Jai Perez (Performer) started his dance journey at the National Dance Institute where he cultivated a love for dance. He continued his training at the Alvin Ailey Junior Division, and is now an Alumni of the Conservatory of Dance at SUNY Purchase. He has performed works by Ronald K. Brown, Doug Varone, Ja'Malik, Ayodele Casel, Norbert De La Cruz III, Jacquelyn Buglisi, Agnes De Mille, and Martha Graham.

Alina Ranjbaran (Composer/Performer) is an Iranian- and Armenian-American composer and violist based in Brooklyn. She studied Statistics, Computer Science, and Music at Harvard University, where she received her Bachelors. Alina studied viola at the Juilliard Pre-College Division and is currently continuing her composition studies at the Juilliard Extension Division. She is also working on film scoring as a way to expand her storytelling through music. Alina is a recipient of several awards, including being the runner-up in an international call for scores, and has had her music performed in Italy at the Narnia Festival, at Juilliard, and in various venues in NYC.

Veronica Shea (Performer) is a singer, actor, producer and digital marketer passionate about storytelling and sharing authentic onstage connection with audiences. She is excited to be back on stage with her OBO family after performing as Blanche Ingram in *Jane Eyre*, Julie Jordan in *Carousel*, La Diretrice in *Pietà*, and Cinderella in *Into the Woods*. Other recent roles include Musetta in Light Opera of New Jersey's production of *La Bohème*, Juno in *& Aeterna* at the Narnia International Vocal Arts Festival, Rosalinda in Eccentric Theater Company's *Die Fledermaus*, and Mabel in both Ridgewood Gilbert & Sullivan's and Summit Chorale's *The Pirates of Penzance*. She is a Founder of Eccentric Theater Company and Off-Brand Opera, and the Director of Marketing at The York Theatre Company. veronicashea.com

Ashley Snow (Performer) is honored to be a part of the En Route concert with the Off-Brand Opera [lab]. Ashley is classically trained and holds a Masters in Gerontology from the University of Southern California in Los Angeles and a Bachelors in Integrated Music & Aging Studies with a music minor. Ashley's notable roles in shows include "Georgia" in *Hatchford Hotel: A New Vermont Musical*, "Crystal" in *Little Shop of Horrors*, "Rachel" in Middlebury Acting Company's staged reading of *Sophia*, "Mrs. Phelps" in *Maiilda the Musical*, and "Motormouth Maybelle" in *Hairspray!* Ashley would like to thank Jacob, family, friends, SH, & the OBO team!

Daniel Thompson (Composer) is a Colorado-based composer, arranger, and pianist with a foot in a wide variety of musical styles/genres including Jazz, Classical, Contemporary, as well as Blues, Folk, and Rock. Daniel has a masters

in Jazz Composition from the University of Northern Colorado. He was exposed to the great composers of the western canon but took particular interest in the harmonic language of Bach, Ravel, and Debussy. He also draws a large influence from composers in the Jazz canon such as the songwriting duo of Ellington/Strayhorn, George Russell, Barry Harris, and Bill Evans. In addition to writing pieces for large jazz ensembles, Daniel has been commissioned for a number of compositions and arrangements of classical, contemporary, and folk repertoire. Recently, Daniel has been acting as the arranger and musical director for the touring group *The Celtic Angels* which have performed his original arrangements of classic Irish songs for thousands of theatergoers all across the United States. A dedicated collaborator, Daniel has worked with a range of composers, ensembles, and soloists, helping to bring their musical vision to life in concert halls, recording studios, and venues small and large.

Leslie Andrea Williams (Performer) Hailing from Raleigh, NC, Ms. Williams is a graduate of the Julliard School and is a principal dancer with the Martha Graham Dance Company. She performs featured roles around the world in iconic Graham ballets as well as in works by some of today's top choreographers. Her role as the lead in *Chronicle* earned her a place on The New York Times' "Best Dance of 2019" list. Outside of Graham, Leslie works as a freelance model and has been featured on numerous NYFW runways. She also works in commercial film and television—her most recent role is dancing in an upcoming feature film starring Penelope Cruz. Ms. Williams has been profiled in Dance Magazine, Teen Vogue, and Psychology Today, among others.



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ABOUT OFF-BRAND OPERA

In a world where brand definition rules, three singers found themselves longing for a space to play around with something different—something off-brand. Tradition told them that's not *how it's done*. But what if it could be?

Off-Brand Opera strives to push and blur the boundaries of genre and performance practice, bringing musical communities together in the service of telling a story. We encourage cross-disciplinary collaboration in order to foster fresh, relatable, and relevant interpretations of beloved works.

Off-Brand Opera is committed to:

- Creating a safe space for artists to take risks when it comes to performance practice and genre.
- Performing in intimate, non-traditional venues to foster audience connection, communication, and immersion.
- Hiring musicians from a diverse set of musical backgrounds, including opera, musical theater, jazz, folk, hip-hop/R&B, and pop/rock.
- Welcoming project ideas from audience members, friends, and donors.

OFF-BRAND OPERA BOARD

Christine Duncan, Executive Director • Erin Kennedy, Executive Producer
Veronica Shea, Artistic Director

Phoebe Corde • Brendan Hartnett • Jake Landau • Leslie Andrea Williams

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