



BMOP
sound

TOD MACHOVER: DEATH AND THE POWERS

TOD MACHOVER b. 1953

DEATH AND THE POWERS (2010)

STORY BY ROBERT PINSKY AND RANDY WEINER

LIBRETTO BY ROBERT PINSKY

JAMES MADDALENA baritone

JOÉLLE HARVEY soprano

PATRICIA RISLEY mezzo-soprano

HAL CAZALET tenor

DOUG DODSON countertenor

DAVID KRAVITZ baritone

TOM MCNICHOLS bass

BOSTON MODERN ORCHESTRA PROJECT

Gil Rose, conductor

[1] Prologue 3:24

[2] Memory Download 1:44

[3] Scene One: Simon and the System 13:00

[4] Scene Two: System Soliloquy 4:58

[5] Scene Three: Getting to Know You 9:25

[6] Scene Four: Evvy's Touch 7:47

[7] Scene Five: Nicholas and the Robots 3:08

[8] Scene Six: The World Reacts 22:00

[9] Miranda's Aria: I Miss Having a Father 2:50

[10] Scene Seven: Into the System 5:40

[11] A Parade of the World's Miseries 0:55

[12] Scene Eight: One Last Time 9:43

[13] Epilogue 1:50

TOTAL 86:25

By Tod Machover

As I write these notes in summer 2021, the world is slowly emerging—with fits and starts—from the 2020/2021 Covid-19 pandemic, and the themes and concerns of *Death and the Powers* seem even more relevant and resonant than when the opera premiered during the 2010/2011 season. Simon Powers's remote connection from within The System doesn't seem so different from what our Zoom-life has become, filled with endless frustration but also surprising intimacy (as Evvy experiences through Simon's "touch" once he metamorphoses into a chandelier). We have been constantly reminded during the pandemic—as if reminders were needed—of the brevity and fragility of life, and of the importance of living fully *now*, since there might not be the "more" or the "forever" that Simon Powers seeks. The mere fact that Simon's privilege allows him to invent and activate The System seems to anticipate the immense wealth gap that has only accelerated during the pandemic. And our months-long isolation has allowed us to reassess the joys of solitude as well as the aching desire for creatively messy interactions.

In fact, *Death and the Powers* would never have been possible without one of the richest, loveliest, and most complex collaborations—truly a "creatively messy interaction"—that I have ever been part of. Starting with an out-of-the-blue invitation from operatic visionary Kawther Al-Abood, I was able to explore ideas and forms for future opera with members of the Monaco-based Futurum Association, without whose support these operatic experiments would never have been possible. With the extraordinary creative team of poet Robert Pinsky, writer/producer Randy Weiner, director Diane Paulus, designer Alex McDowell, and choreographer (of people and machines) Karole Armitage, we spun my initial ideas about mortality, physicality, and the potential (and limitations) of human connection through technological magic into a form where sounds and words, objects and actions, humans

and machines all amplify each other in powerful and often unexpected ways. Through my Opera of the Future research group at the MIT Media Lab, we assembled a team of audio and visual experimenters, robotic engineers, sensor and interaction designers, and software gurus, many of them quite young and working on a project of this scale and complexity for the first time. And while the entire MIT team was astonishingly brilliant, creative, open-minded, and a real pleasure to work with, I'd like to especially acknowledge the seminal contributions of Peter Torpey and Elly Jessop (Disembodied Performance technologies and production visuals), Ben Bloomberg (sound design and mixing, and Hyperproduction system), Michael Miller (robotic control software), Peter Colao and Laird Nolan (theatrical system design), and Ariane Martins and Simone Ovsey (project management). Throughout the creative process, it was also a privilege to work with my long-time collaborator Gil Rose, who tested and helped tweak the music—with the wonderful BMOP musicians—at every turn, as well as with the extraordinary cast of singer-actors who created the roles for this opera and who are heard—in splendid form—on this recording.

It is actually a bit of a paradox to have created this recording at all, since *Death and the Powers* was designed to enhance the experience of live performance, technologically amplifying and communicating Simon Powers's most intimate sounds and gestures while (literally) giving life to robots and to the stage itself. But it has been a deep pleasure to carefully blend the diverse musical layers and to shape the many contours and contrasts of this complex composition—all with the inimitable collaboration of my former student and most-valued-colleague and friend, Ben Bloomberg—to achieve what I think is an ideal representation of the work. It is a great satisfaction to know that this version of *Death and the Powers* will be available for others to hear, to study, and, hopefully, to enjoy for a long time to come.

And it is also a paradox that in parallel to the team coordination, technological invention, and production experimentation (all very public processes that I do enjoy) needed to make this opera, I imagined and composed the music for *Death and the Powers* in my 18th-century

music barn, far from the crowd and following my own inner voice only. Perhaps that is one reason why Simon Powers's desire to create and enter The System feels so personal, added to the fact that I was a father of young daughters while composing *Powers* and confronting my own father's decline, mortality, and legacy. This has inspired the development of the opera's particular interplay of highlighted melody and subliminal texture, of natural sonorities and artificial vibrations, of twitchy rhythms and meditative stasis, and of emotional explosions and near silence. I hope that the resulting journey—of Simon into The System, of Miranda back to life, and of everyone and everything else (Operabots included) somewhere in between—will motivate numerous encounters and will be as rewarding to the listener as it has been to me.

This recording of *Death and the Powers* is dedicated to the memory of my parents, Carl and Wilma Machover. They both attended the Monaco premiere of the opera, and both have passed away since. Though their absence is intensely felt every day, they live on through their actions and inspiration and love in more powerful ways than I ever could have imagined.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Death and the Powers website: opera.media.mit.edu/projects/deathandthepowers

Opera of the Future blog: operaofthefuture.com/blog

Other resources: bmop.org/audio-recordings/tod-machover-death-and-powers



NICHOLAS (HAL CAZALET) AND THE SYSTEM PRIDE BY CHRISTIAN WILHELMSS

NOTES

DEATH AND THE POWERS is an opera in one act with a libretto by Robert Pinsky (story by Pinsky and Randy Weiner). Scored for vocal soloists, chamber orchestra, and electronics, it was premiered by the MIT Media Lab, American Repertory Theater and BMOP, conducted by Gil Rose and directed by Diane Paulus, at Salle Garnier in Monte Carlo, Monaco, on September 24, 2010.

By Thomas May

BETWEEN THE MEAT AND THE LIGHT:
THE ENDURING POTENCY OF *DEATH AND THE POWERS*

The seed for *Death and the Powers* (DATP) was planted shortly before the millennium, when Tod Machover received an unexpected request to consider collaborating on a still-undetermined project intended to put the Opéra de Monte-Carlo on the map as an incubator of innovation—the Monaco-based company having earned a largely forgotten reputation during the previous turn of the century for presenting new work.

The initial proposal came from the company's recently appointed board member, the Iraqi, Monaco-based architect and arts patron Kawther Al-Abood. Her flair for adventurous experimentation resonated with Machover. It even had a whiff of the extravagant, outrageous impracticality of an Alexander Scriabin, who envisioned his unfulfilled opus ultimum, *Mysterium*, being staged on the Himalayan foothills with bells hung from the clouds—a transformative, synesthetic synthesis of the arts to out-Wagner Wagner. Since one side of the Garnier-designed opera house could be opened up to capitalize on the majestic view of the Mediterranean below, Al-Abood suggested a spectacle that might involve integrating the sea itself into the climax of the performance.

Machover was already renowned for writing opera that broke new ground, aesthetically and technologically—works such as *VALIS* (1987), a treatment of sci-fi novelist Philip K. Dick's final novel, and the audience-interactive/online-collaborative *Brain Opera* (1996/98). If Al-Abood's notion of attempting to "choreograph the Mediterranean" seemed to go beyond even his "limits of practicality," as the composer says, he recognized a like-minded adventurer and agreed to take on the commission.

Machover assembled an exceptional creative team, beginning with the deliberate choice of a poet—as opposed to a novelist or playwright—for his librettist. Al-Abood's initial proposal reactivated an idea the composer had been contemplating of creating an opera "in which, if not the sea, the physical objects onstage could help tell the story," he recalls. Since writing *VALIS*, Machover had been interested in enlisting technology in projects to make audiences feel closer to "the human and physical" aspects of performance, instead of reducing and distancing them. This desire to use technological strategies to enhance the humanity of art became allied with his increasing sensitivity to the process of aging and his preoccupation with how and which memories endure for next generations—with what is left behind: "So I started with the idea of mortality and what you can and can't share with other people, plus the idea that the opera might tell part of its story through the set. And because of that, I thought maybe the story would be a bit metaphorical and poetic."

The choice of Robert Pinsky, U.S. poet laureate from 1997 to 2000, proved especially apt. Perhaps because this was his first foray into opera, Pinsky produced a libretto whose freshness engages and enhances the impact of *DATP*. With its resonant images, incisive wordplay, and concision, the poet's layered text gracefully shifts between registers. Pinsky encompasses parable, solemn ritual, Socratic dialogue, romance, and comedy. And, of course, the sci-fi-inspired suspension of disbelief and cinematic pacing—the opera lasts about 90 minutes without intermission—that drive the story. Acknowledging his limitations as a storyteller per se, Pinsky was joined by the writer/director Randy Weiner to invent the

narrative. Weiner is best known for his collaboration on *The Donkey Show*, an interactive, disco-era adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* co-created with his wife Diane Paulus, stage director of *DATP*.

Though an original concoction, the flavor of a modern myth emanates from the story that the opera tells. Billionaire Simon Powers's decision to download his essential being into his environment via The System that he has invented catalyzes an archetypal "ghost in the machine" scenario. Traces of influence from Machover's admired Philip K. Dick are also apparent—not least in the paradoxical intertwining of the realms of the human and the "robotic," as seen in the character of Powers's prize student Nicholas and visualized in the love scene between Evvy and her husband's manifestation via the chandelier.

Powers's transformation—exactly what this consists of is the opera's fundamental, unanswered question—even carries a hint of the "pink light" epiphany that Dick himself claimed to have undergone in 1974: a kind of mystical revelation—or perhaps a technological manipulation—triggered by a beam of pinkish light fired into his eyes, that obsessed the writer in his final decade. *VALIS* had launched with an operatic realization of this pink-light experience. It's a variant of the process of mythic transformation that is ubiquitous in opera, whether its agent is a classical god or a love potion.

Machover, together with his Opera of the Future Group colleagues and students from the MIT Media Lab and designer Alex McDowell, devoted countless hours to finding solutions for the project's unprecedented challenges. In September 2010, about a dozen years after that first conversation with Kawther Al-Abood, *DATP* received its world premiere at Opéra de Monte-Carlo. The opera was a finalist for the 2012 Pulitzer Prize in Music. It has since undergone a series of refinements and slight revisions for its various productions in the United States, including the American premiere in 2011 at Boston's Cutler Majestic Theater, co-produced by the American Repertory Theater, and a new 2014 production at Dallas Opera that also set a milestone in the history of simulcasts by using customized

technologies to enable interaction with the live performance through portable devices. The Dallas production, the basis for the finalized version of the libretto, was additionally recorded on Blu-Ray disc.

For its part, the present SACD recording represents the first time that the music for *DATP* can be presented free of the constraints of an unusually complex live stage production, in an account by the orchestra and conductor—the Boston Modern Orchestra Project and Gil Rose—who introduced the opera in Monaco, Boston, and Chicago.

Throughout his career, Machover has been fascinated by the tension between rapidly evolving technology and the emotional authenticity of live performance. A major focus of his creative work has been on developing means for each to reinforce the other and thus counteract their growing tendency, over the past half-century or so, to diverge.

“Both the technology I develop and the motivation for doing so are to realize extensions of what instruments can do,” Machover explains. “From the time I was starting out as a composer, I’ve always imagined a pretty different sound, beyond the normal limits.” His signature “hyperinstruments,” developed in collaboration with MIT Media Lab colleagues, blend technology and the performer’s intuition to enable such “extensions”—including of the human voice. *DATP* additionally applied the concept to production media, including the set and lighting design and stage movement and robot control. Making a CD and thus focusing on the music paradoxically allowed him to more closely approach the original sound as he had imagined it, despite its not being performed in a live, onstage context.

Much of the original press on *DATP*, for example, showed a preoccupation with the visuals and the unique technological paraphernalia developed to stage a “robot opera,” such as the so-called “disembodied performance” sensory apparatus—sophisticated measurement and analysis technologies designed to project the protagonist Simon Powers’s uncanny

presence onto the stage itself during the lengthy span (between the first and last scenes) when he performs even though he is physically absent.

But when approached as a listening experience, *DATP* reveals a subtle balance between ambitious innovation and longstanding, tried-and-true operatic values. Indeed, it becomes clear that the former would lose their impact and become mere “effects” if these were not grounded in Machover’s command of skills essential for writing compelling music theater. His score teems with an abundance of idioms—from jaunty riffs à la Gershwin to beautifully, memorably intertwined melodies to polymorphous, energetic textures reminiscent of Pierre Boulez, an important mentor—but all the variety is tethered to dramatic logic and the amplification of character.

Machover’s vocal characterizations in particular are distinctive and clarifying. Simon’s voice is never allowed to be entirely “natural,” underscoring the immense contradictions that course through this calculating businessman who is also eccentric, visionary, and immensely cultured. Nicholas is given pointedly rhythmic, high-lying music, crisply articulated and fast. He is on the verge of being non-human, yet his voice is actually never treated electronically. For Evvy, Machover writes one of opera’s most memorable transcriptions of female orgasm, and Miranda—arguably *DATP*’s real protagonist, who takes over the anti-*Tempest* narrative in the final scene—fittingly undergoes the greatest development, from her initial timidity to the shattering, passionately sustained high B (“Live!”) that ends her climactic final duet.

Throughout, Machover harnesses the multiple opportunities opened up by the libretto for music to carry on where the words stop short. It’s no coincidence that transformations number among the score’s most memorable passages. Machover continually reconfigures the balance between electronic and acoustic sound sources as *DATP* morphs between the realms of robots and humans. Framed by a prologue and epilogue that resemble a contemporary masque or ritual play, the story within—of humans from “the organic age”—becomes, for the robots enacting it, a signifier lacking its signified, a performance that needs to be decoded.



JAMES MCDONALD AS NICHOLAS POWERS AND JESSICA HARVEY AS MIRANDA POWERS. PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES MCDONALD

Following Powers's own decisive transformation as he enters The System, the opera charts the increasing attraction experienced by Evvy and Nicholas to his other world vis-à-vis Miranda's resistance. And in the denouement, when Powers re-emerges in his human body to Miranda, trying to convince her to "come in to the light from the meat" and shed her humanity, Machover writes with such white-hot intensity that the result is what eminent critic Andrew Porter rightly lauded as "a moving addition to the great line of father-daughter exchanges: Boccanegra-Amelia, Rigoletto-Gilda, even Wotan-Brünnhilde."

Even more, Machover then faces the daunting task of having suddenly to dial down the emotional temperature to escort us back into the post-human realm of the robots for the epilogue. The opera's tight structure requires this additional "art of transition," whereby all returns—cyclically—to the basic tension between the mechanical and human.

Meanwhile, Pinsky's panoply of poetic allusions reframes what is at stake in Powers's quest to transcend humanity. In his very first words, Powers glibly cites Yeats ("Sailing to Byzantium"), arrogantly contrasting the immortality traditionally conferred by art with his invention of an allegedly superior update in the form of The System, a "machine that makes nature better." If the new kind of immortality promised by the latter supersedes poetry, what is the implied relation between "hyperinstrumental" and "traditional" music? *DATP* continually tantalizes with such questions. Powers summarizes his epiphany—the basis both for his obscene wealth and his determination to bid farewell to the material world—as the realization, triggered by young Miranda, that "it's the vibration, the movement, that matters." But isn't that just another definition of music?

© 2021 Thomas May

Thomas May is a writer, critic, and translator and serves as Lucerne Festival's English-language editor.

Death and the Powers

Music by Tod Machover

Story by Robert Pinsky and Randy Weiner

Libretto by Robert Pinsky

Simon / voice of Robot Leader **James Maddalena** baritone

Miranda / voice of Robot Four **Joëlle Harvey** soprano

Evvy / voice of Robot Three **Patricia Risley** mezzo-soprano

Nicholas / voice of Robot Two **Hal Czalet** tenor

The United Way **Doug Dodson** countertenor

The United Nations **David Kravitz** baritone

The Administration **Tom McNichols** bass

[1] Prologue

Darkness. The robots roll and lurch and glide onstage as a single mass of extremely robotic-looking parts, a kind of animated scaffold of struts and gears. During the Prologue, the parts of this jumble disassemble into separate robots who become gradually more humanoid until at the end they have become the actual, human characters.

ROBOT LEADER

Units assembled for the ritual
Performance at command,
As the Human Creators have ordained,
In memory of the Past.

ROBOT TWO

This concept I can't understand,
At the core of the drama—
What is this
"Death"—Is it a form of waste?

ROBOT THREE

I too cannot understand:
Is this "Death"
—An excessive cost?

ROBOT FOUR

Is Death a form of entropy?
Or data rearranged?

Why did the Human Creators
Command a performance on a theme
Impossible to comprehend?

What is suffering?
How can I perceive
What I cannot feel?

Before the process of transformation is completed, just before the Robot Leader becomes Simon:

ROBOT LEADER

All we can understand
Is the Human Creators' command:

In memory of the Original Past
And the Organic Age,
We perform this drama
We cannot understand.

Although the meaning is lost,
Back in the Organic Age,

We perform, to obey their command.

Whatever the Human Creators planned
Before they departed—

Units deployed as Individuals will receive
One Thousand Human Rights Status Credits.
Now, it is time we started.

[2] Memory Download

Each robot now begins a complete transformation into its human character. There is a download of information including fragments of personality and memories:

SIMON POWERS: a billionaire entrepreneur obsessed with his death. Mid-sixties. Mad, eccentric, charismatic, virile, successful. Has a devilish side to him, mischievous.

MIRANDA: Simon's daughter. Late teens. The daughter of a previous marriage. Special, prescient. Antigone, Cordelia.

NICHOLAS: Simon's protégé. Grad student age: twenties. When a child, rescued by Simon from ward for severely disabled children. Now moves like an agile machine.

EVVY: Simon's third wife, her first marriage. Thirties. Glamorous, sexy, but wary.

Simon emerges from the structure. Evvy, Nicholas, and Miranda emerge simultaneously.

Nicholas brings the wheelchair to Simon and Simon sits.

[3] Scene One: Simon and the System

In the home of Simon Powers, the final preparations are being made for Simon's total immersion into The System. This technology will allow him to control the physical environment after his death, meaning that he will be able to forever be in touch with his loved ones, manipulate his businesses, and propagate his legacy. Simon is excited, giddy, like a child. Miranda is afraid. Evvy is trying to be practical, trying to stay calm, indulgent of her husband's behavior. Nicholas is serious, sweating, focused on his work, his eye on the clock.

Simon's wheelchair is an interface to The System. He appears less substantial than a regular human. Simon is a magician. Nicholas is a magician's assistant.

SIMON

"Once out of Nature I will never take
My bodily form from any natural thing,
But such a form as Grecian goldsmiths make
From hammered gold and gold enameling..."

Da-da, da-du-dum, mechanical parakeet...
"And set upon a golden bough to sing."

Ah, the immortal William Yeats!
He can have his bird.
Yeats, I give you the bird!

EVVY

Simon, please be serious.
Or at least be frightened
Or show that you are frightened.
I feel you already
Vanishing into the machine.
Out of nature — into the machine!

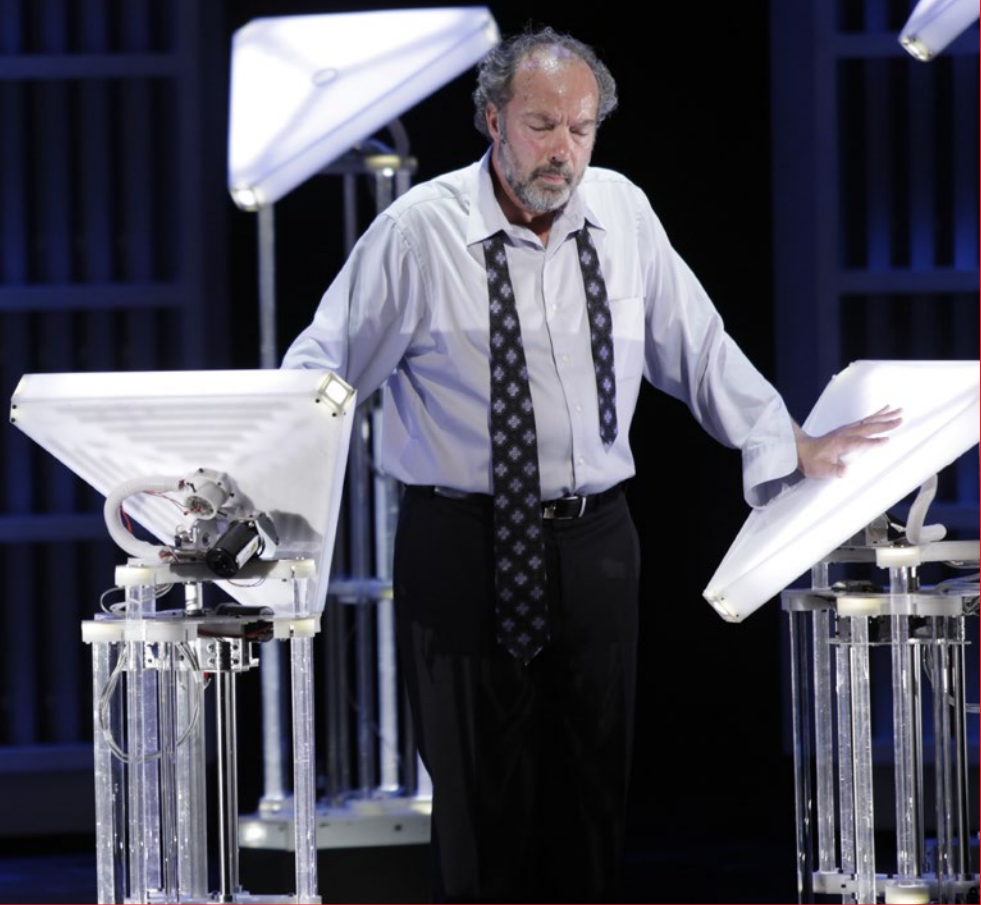
If you were frightened
I would be less worried.

Will you go insane,
Out of nature,
In the machine?

SIMON

The machine is part of nature!
For every machine that makes nature better—
Like the System that I will enter—
Nature made the maker

Of that machine.



Nature is the begetter
Of every inventor
So machines are made by nature:
The great Organic Machine.

NICHOLAS
There isn't much more time, the body
Is dying, now it is time to enter the system?

SIMON
Thank you, Nick, for reminding me—
In the stroke of time, in the nick of time.
Nick, will rescue me from my stroke.
Miranda, my child, come talk to me!
And Evvy, my favorite, my beloved
And final wife,
Come join in the celebration.

NICHOLAS
There isn't time.

MIRANDA
Nicholas says there isn't time.
Because—it's time.
I'm afraid it's time—
And I'm afraid.

SIMON
And so, I'm not out of time.
But soon I'll be out of matter!
Yes I'll be out of matter,
But I will still be rich!

NICHOLAS
Now it is time!

*While Simon sings the next words, Nicholas is adjusting
the device, attaching it to Simon, fussing with parts of
Simon's body and with the "infernal device" of the room.*

*Nicholas starts to take Simon away. Simon stops him
from doing so. Simon wants to speak with Miranda.*

SIMON
Once, when Miranda was three years old
She put her hand to her throat
Just here above the voice-box
And felt the vibration.

She said: I can feel it when I talk—
That must mean Miranda is inside.

And she was right!
You were right,
My intelligent daughter:

It's the vibration,
The movement, that matters!

That's what I love in you—
The voice, the gesture:
The ripple, not the water!

And that's how I got rich!

MIRANDA
Daddy, where will you be?

SIMON
It doesn't matter!

Maybe in a bird, like the immortal Yeats.

Maybe in my portrait by some
Immortal painter whose immortal
Name I forget!

NICHOLAS
We must leave the body
And launch him into the system
In the next few minutes.

SIMON
Evvy, she is like a daughter to you?
Miranda, she has been a mother to you?

MIRANDA
Yes, she is like a mother

EVVY
My child— I have no other?

SIMON
Then you see—it's true!
It isn't the blood,
It isn't the bone.

It's never the matter that matters
Particles, molecules, cells, fingers, eyes, nerves
Are only places for the system
Of meaningful vibrations.

It's all in the meaning, the movement,
The idea—that's the idea.

It's never the clones, the bones, the
Silicon chips, the skinflick rips.

It's what you adopt,
And how you adapt.

They were all amazed
How a tinkerer like me
Could be such a shrewd investor.

I looked for the movement, the vibration,
Not the matter, the system!

And that's how I got rich!

It's not the hog bellies, hope chests,
Chest of gold, heads of state,
Skin, the belly, chest, head:
The matter is just the medium,
The system is the idea.

MIRANDA, EVVY, NICHOLAS (*then joined by Simon*)
The matter is mortal
The system lives on
The matter is mulch
The matter is static
The matter is zilch—
And the system is movement, the system
Is real and the system persists.

SIMON
It made me rich!

Skin flicks, hog bellies, hope chests, heads of state.
Skin, belly, chest, head—
Why freeze your head when you're dead?
It's only meat! If I keep a little of my meat
For old time's sake, what the hell,
A meaty souvenir—
It won't be the skull!

I'll save the heart,
Or some other juicy part.

*Simon is whisked away by Nicholas. Miranda and Evvy
call after him, but can't see him for now.*

MIRANDA
How will we speak to you?
Will you be some one place?
When you're all a vibration
Without any one face

We could know you with.

EVVY

Will I know what is you

Without any breath?

Will it be your voice?

Or a simulation?

MIRANDA AND EVVY

What will I know,

What will I do,

How will my ears

Know what they hear?

How will my hands

Know what they touch?

How will it be you,

And how will I know?

SIMON (*Miranda and Evvy continue*)

What does it matter?

Simulation, place,

Medium, voice,

Face, shmace –

As many as I want,

Faces and voices.

Now I am almost purely,

Entirely,

Into the system

I'm nearly

Out of matter.

But maybe I'm not

Out of time.

SIMON (*without Miranda and Evvy*)

Maybe as a bird, maybe

As a dog, a horse, a house:

"Body my house

my horse my hound

what will I do

when you are fallen

Where will I sleep

How will I ride

What will I hunt

Where can I go

without my mount

all eager and quick

How will I know

in thicket ahead

is danger or treasure

when Body my good

bright dog is dead."

So said the immortal May Swenson—

I'll be more immortal than her and that peculiar bird

The immortal William Yeats.

(*Nods to Nicholas*)

Now!

See you later!

*Nicholas turns a switch or two, hits the return key, etc.
and Simon enters The System, in a kind of old-fashioned
magic trick.*

EVVY

What now?

[4] Scene Two: System Soliloquy

*Simon gradually transmogrifies into The System. The
physical environment subtly takes on many of Simon's
characteristics, moving and vibrating as if it were alive.*

SIMON

Remember.

Nearer... ardor...

Closer... higher...

Search—it... circuit...

Memory tempered,

Torturous choir:

Dismembered, afire,

No matter the matter—

I *did* that.

I am the same.

The name and the matter,

Touch and desire.

Doing, undoing

Dissemble the fire.

Remember: I *did* that.

Much in a wire.

The closer the harder

What was the matter?

Scorched in a circle,

Encumbered, remember:

I am the same.

The memory chamber

Touch too much, too

Much unremembered

As I draw nearer.

Touch not enough

To the light expiring

That matter encumbered.

Remembered assembly,

Circle of touch, torch

Lighting the chamber

Where I am the same.

Remember.

Touch and desire

Disassembled memory

As I draw nearer

Over and over and over...

Couched in a wire

Closer and higher

Search it in the circuit

Dismembered, afire,

Remember

Remsembled ensemble

Assembled entire,

Trembling to attain

A semblance of fire.

Remember a memory:

Remember

Whatever I did

I *did* that and

I am the same.

*By the end of the scene, there is no trace left of Simon's
human body.*

[5] Scene Three: Getting to Know You

*Time has passed. The System is humming—in quiet
mode—resting. Miranda and Nicholas are in the room,
as the walls continue to stir mysteriously, enticingly. It
becomes an animated environment, expressive of Simon's
presence.*

MIRANDA
It has been two days, and he's still not the same
These things do sound alive, this place—
But is my father alive? Is he here?
Can he speak?
Did we just hear his voice?

NICHOLAS
Where is Evvy?

MIRANDA
Finally asleep. She's afraid
That he's lost forever.
Can you help us hear him?
Is the room
all of him?

NICHOLAS
Not the room, or the arm,
Always the system,
All in the principle
That moves the cable, that moves the muscle.

And I can help him.

Material always gets old.
Only the system can hold.

The clone is only material
Like the hammered metal and enamel,
The organic, the inorganic—all mortal, all are mortal.

*Nicholas takes a book from the shelf. When the book is
opened it emits light onto Nicholas's face.*

MIRANDA
Can that be his voice?
And has he become this place?

NICHOLAS
Like my left arm, that is mine
Not me,
Like a tool, a baby's rattle.
So is his voice, so is this place.
And the right arm, too, is mine
Not me.
Like my skull lined with gristle
So too his voice, so too this place.
Even the brain in its shell,
As mortal, as fallible, as breakable.
As the clone the bone the hardest stone
All mortal and material—
I can help him, in the System.
Not in silicon, titanium or nickel
No more than
Hammered and enameled, immaterial, immortal.
Chrome and nickel, silicon and graphite.
All get tired and old.
Only the form, the system, is real.
Only the form, the system, can hold.
Only the form, the system, is real.
Only the system can hold.

MIRANDA AND NICHOLAS
Now we can hear his voice:

NICHOLAS
What is your name?

SIMON
What is my name?
A name is a machine.
A name is a made-up thing

That proposes someone is real.
My name is
A machine for designation—
That's what any name is.

My name is Simon Walter Powers,
It proposes I am alive.
Like those other famous Walters.
The immortal Disney
And the immortal Whitman,
My fellow-inventors.

And by the way,
I have billions of bucks,
And I can still sign checks. That's what!

MIRANDA
The gestures are unreal
And so is his face
But this is how he talks
And this is his voice.

NICHOLAS
Who is the President of the United States?

SIMON
A man who wants my favor,
A man who courts my power,
A guy who wants to meet my movie stars,
And wants to use my billions.
That's who.

MIRANDA
Daddy, is it you in there?
And can you hear me?

NICHOLAS
In a moment we will try

To see if he can hear you.
What is your business?

SIMON
I am a producer.
And business is my wares.

Lady's Wear, Software,
Hardware— Artware,
Warware, Peaceware—

Or you might call it Being Ware—
Some call it fantasy
Some call it entertainment
Some are wary of its power.

The Consuming Power of Billions.

My business is making Being:
To build the towers, to cure
The disease,
Amusing or imposing
By showing you something new
By taking you some where real
You never were before.

My business is the Mind,
My business is to make it free
To be every where
My wares are every ware
You can imagine.

That's what.

And I have billions of bucks.
And I can still sign checks.

NICHOLAS
It works! He is alive,



EVVY (PATRICIA BISLEY) IN SENSUAL COMMUNICATION WITH SIMON (MADDALENA) NOW EMBODIED IN THE MUSICAL CHANDELIER. PHOTO BY JONATHAN WILLIAMS

And he is not matter.

MIRANDA
But is he still Simon,
Is he still my father?

NICHOLAS
All of that,
And something better!

[6] Scene Four: Evvy's Touch

It is the middle of the night. Evvy enters in a daze, as in a dream, sleepwalking. Evvy speaks with Simon as The System, inhabiting The Chandelier. They share a memory.

EVVY
Simon, do you remember the first time we danced?

SIMON
In the parking lot of the Francis Drake Hotel.

EVVY
They had the windows open and we could hear the band.

SIMON
"Begin the Beguine." I remember the terrace.

EVVY
On the other side remember the tall hedge.

SIMON
A tall hedge of pittosporum. I remember.

EVVY
And the smell I remember of night jasmine.

SIMON
Your dress pink, your pearls in as I remember two strands.

EVVY
Held together I remember by a little silver bangle.

SIMON
I remember, love. And we danced for joy. Remember?

EVVY
Remember?

It's hard to get used to seeing you like this.
Haven't you had enough?
Do you want to live forever?

SIMON
You say to me,
"Haven't you had enough?"
And you say to me,
"Do you want to live forever?"

It's not "forever"! It's not "enough"!
Don't think about enough!
Enough never is enough!

Ask anybody how much money
Would be enough for you?

Just about every body
Says double what they have
Or what they make.

What is enough being alive?
Why does the crushed bug
Keep waving a leg? That wave
Is for more, and more.

Forever doesn't matter.
Enough isn't good enough.
What matters is more.

Forever is not the point.

EVVY
Touch me.

O yes that.
And some of this.
And this again, yes.
And more of that.
O yes this both and that
Too and this other and O
More this.
And that.
And the other.
O.
Yes, yes that and
The other
And this and that and more and all
And the other and O yes
All yes, all yes, all yes.

Touch me.

SIMON
More and more.

Simon makes contact with Evvy a sublime, intimate encounter between Evvy and The System.

Miranda walks in at the end of the scene, briefly observing and then taking her place for the following scene.

MIRANDA
Never...
Over...
Ever...
Rest of the Earth...
Together...

[7] Scene Five: Nicholas and the Robots

Lights change to indicate a large passage of time. As all is illuminated, we notice that this room is Nicholas's lab, inhabited now by the robots he has been building. The robots start moving to music emanating from the walls, then come to life and start dancing. Miranda is archiving and exploring The System.

Nicholas enters, observes the robots, amused, then joins the dance.

Nicholas now has two prosthetic arms and a prosthetic leg, but glides about efficiently, as though he has become part-Segway. While the robots are dancing, Nicholas sings a song to his arms.

NICHOLAS (holds up his right arm)
One arm of bone and gristle, nerves and muscle—
Mortal, fallible, breakable.
Saved by the idea, saved by the System.

(Holds up his left arm, a mechanized prosthesis, an openwork of rods and cables)

One arm of magnesium and nickel,
Graphite, silicon and cable—
Mortal, fallible, breakable.

Perfection of the system, capable of renewal
Never in the matter.

HAL GAZALET AS NICHOLAS. PHOTO BY JONATHAN WILLIAMS.



MIRANDA
 Living forever.
 Above humanity.
 Never extinct.
 How much is it worth,
 Never to pass?
 Buying eternity.
 How are we linked
 To all the rest,
 The rest of the earth?

NICHOLAS
 He helped me, now I'll help him.
 They said I was a vegetable
 Or a piece of meat.

He gave me a new body,
 Made of graphite and magnesium,
 Titanium alloy and copper—
 Better than meat!

When I was a kid
 Simon had
 More money than God.
 He came into the ward

And saved me at random.
 Now, I'll help him live in the System.

The way he helped me:
 I'll help him live without a body—
 I'll help him live in the System.
 Without a body.
 Post-Organic, like me!

[8] Scene Six: The World Reacts

A new, stranger atmosphere. Miranda, Nicholas, and Evvy enter, apparently accustomed to it.

MIRANDA
 They are here—
 The important delegation
 From the United Way,
 The Administration
 And the United Nations—
 They want to speak to him, they say
 They want his ear.

They say it's regarding
 Matters of the whole
 Planet's life and death.

NICHOLAS
 They want his ear?
 Don't they understand?
 He doesn't hear with ears,
 He doesn't speak with breath.

(Nicholas gleefully sheds another part of his human-looking body. Robots are dancing.)

He says to speak with Evvy,
 She handles that kind of thing.

MIRANDA
 The whole planet—famine, war,
 The exploitation of children...
 The whole planet...

They know Evvy isn't the same.
 They know she doesn't listen
 To anything but him.

I myself don't know

If she hears him or not.
 Here she comes.

Evvy, dear—

Did you speak with the delegation?

Evvy is wearing headphones, swaying a little as if to music, nodding and tilting her head as if in conversation. She appears not to hear Miranda.

EVVY
 Mmmm.

NICHOLAS
 Evvy, can you hear Simon?

EVVY
 Mmmmmmm.

MIRANDA
 Are you listening to him?

Does he know that the delegation...

EVVY
 Mmmmmmm.

MIRANDA
 The whole planet...

NICHOLAS
 Are you listening for him?

EVVY
 Mmmmmmmmm.

MIRANDA
 Her mind is not in this world.

Simon, Daddy— are you there?
 Are you speaking to her?

Will you see the delegation
 From the United Way,
 The Administration
 And the United Nations?

The devastation...the children...the planet...
 Will you listen?

NICHOLAS
 They want his ear,
 They want his eye—
 Those parts are dead and buried!

He's rather cranky
 And weary today.
 Send the delegation on its way.
 Send them away.

MIRANDA
 I can't send away
 A delegation from the world—
 The Outside World Itself.

The children...the devastation...

Daddy, Simon—
 Will you?

War...famine...

EVVY *(Her face lights up; she lifts a finger as if hearing something.)*
 Mmmmmmm!...

(But no— she goes dreamy again, shakes her head, recedes.)

Mmmmmmmmm.

SIMON'S VOICE
 Bring in the delegation

From the Outside World Itself.
I will see it and hear it
For two minutes.

Miranda exits and returns with The United Way, the United Nations, and The Administration.

THE UNITED NATIONS
Sir, the sudden massive liquidation of your assets
Has caused a global economic crisis.

THE ADMINISTRATION
The market is flooded with cheap hallucinogens
And the food supply is threatened.

THE UNITED WAY
Surpluses and shortages, war and famines.
Because of your selling.

THE UNITED NATIONS
An ecological crisis.
From you no longer buying.

THE ADMINISTRATION
Biological weapons.
Your withdrawing contributions.

THE UNITED WAY
People are starving,
Children are dying

THE UNITED NATIONS
The planet itself is threatened.

THE UNITED WAY
Entire populations, climatic changes.
Rogue microbes, radiation.

THE ADMINISTRATION
War, evacuation.

THE UNITED WAY
Rape, displacement.
Exploitation of children...

THE UNITED NATIONS
Life itself is threatened—
The means of evacuation
Of the entire planet.

THE ADMINISTRATION
What is the meaning of your behavior?

THE UNITED WAY, THE UNITED NATIONS,
THE ADMINISTRATION
We demand an answer!

MIRANDA (joining the above)
Please answer! Can you listen?
Maybe you should listen,
For the sake of the starving...

Silence. As it persists, in the "breathing" room, they gradually all come to look at Nicholas.

NICHOLAS
He chooses not to answer.
More and more,
He chooses to live in dreams.

THE ADMINISTRATION
Or is he dead, has he been dead for years,
And are you and his daughter
Manipulating the markets,
Spreading disaster?

THE UNITED WAY
Are you the manipulator
Fabricating a voice.

THE UNITED NATIONS
Pretending he's still alive
While a billion people suffer?

THE UNITED WAY, THE UNITED NATIONS,
THE ADMINISTRATION
Do you exist? In the name
Of the nameless ones who suffer,
We demand an answer!

SIMON (His voice from a new source.)
O Röschen roth,
Der Mensch liegt in gröster Noth,
Der Mensch liegt in gröster Pein,
Je lieber mögt ich im Himmel seyn.

THE ADMINISTRATION
What is he saying?

MIRANDA
Father, listen to them—they are the only voice
The poor world has...

SIMON
Oh red rose!
Man lies in deepest need.
Man lies in deepest pain.
Yet, I would rather be in heaven!

EVVY
Mmmmmmm

THE UNITED NATIONS (*Shocked and disgusted*)
It's poetry!

THE UNITED WAY
What is that supposed to mean?

MIRANDA
Is it Klopstock? Or Blake

A passage my father's
Often quoted I can hear
Him humming it.

SIMON
The immortal poet *Mündlich!* ("Anonymous")

THE ADMINISTRATION
Was that German? I'm sorry—
It doesn't mean anything to me.

SIMON
An angel came and wanted to send me away.
Ah no! I would not be sent away!
I am from God and will return to God.

THE ADMINISTRATION (*During Simon's song*)
Sir, with all respect, we come to you
In a time of global emergency.
We need something more than poetry.

THE UNITED WAY AND THE UNITED NATIONS
Some of us do not understand poetry.
Especially in a time of emergency.

SIMON (during previous)
Da kam ich auf einen breiten Weg,
Da kam ein Engellein und wollt mich abweisen—
What? What did you say?

THE UNITED WAY, THE UNITED NATIONS,
THE ADMINISTRATION
It's a time of emergency
We're not sure we understand
Or appreciate hearing poetry!

We do not understand!

SIMON
Understand—
Do you understand the newspaper?

THE UNITED WAY
Well, yes, exactly.

THE ADMINISTRATION
We know the emergency.

THE UNITED NATIONS
We understand the needs.

SIMON
You know that some time ago
I bought the Reuters Agency?

THE UNITED WAY
Yes, the world knows that, but sir—

SIMON
Please explain to me
Something that came into my mind
From my own agency
That I cannot understand—
Nicholas! Read this to them!

*Newspaper text appears magically in a form controlled by
The System. Nicholas reads out loud.*

NICHOLAS
“Group of Young Men Beat Nurse to Death”
“A group of young men taking part in coming-of-age
rituals due to include circumcision turned on their
male nurse and killed him, an official said yesterday. A
spokesman for the provincial Health Department said the
young men, ages 18 to 25, beat the man to death with
sticks at the site of their initiation ceremonies in Port
Angel on Friday evening. The attack followed complaints

by the men that they were not being properly looked
after during their initiation ceremonies. The nurse was in
charge of caring for the men ahead of their circumcision.”
[Reuters]

THE ADMINISTRATION
What? Huh?

THE UNITED NATIONS
These are the sorts of problems
Caused by the emergency...

THE UNITED WAY
In the time of stress and crisis...

SIMON
Do you understand it?
Do you understand the bland
Empty, empty
Understanding of the words?
And you say you don't
Understand poetry!

I came from light
And I will return to light!

THE ADMINISTRATION
I still say he might be dead.

THE UNITED WAY
This all may be a trick.

THE UNITED NATIONS
You, how do we know he's real?

How...

THE ADMINISTRATION
...do...

THE UNITED WAY
...we know...

THE UNITED NATIONS
...he's not...

THE ADMINISTRATION
...something...

THE UNITED WAY
...that...

THE UNITED NATIONS
...you...

THE UNITED WAY
...made...

THE UNITED WAY, THE UNITED NATIONS,
THE ADMINISTRATION
...up?

Just a manipulation?

MIRANDA
You should not agitate him.

You are driving him out of this world.

Father...listen...listen...

The room calms down again.

NICHOLAS
We can save the world,
And free it from war and hunger,
We can lead you out of your old
Dependency on the body!

THE ADMINISTRATION
Is this the truth?
Or a trick?

THE UNITED NATIONS
A manipulation?

THE UNITED WAY, THE UNITED NATIONS,
THE ADMINISTRATION
Is this the truth?

NICHOLAS
I will tell you the truth!—
He is perfectly real

And I am the manipulation.

He is an intelligence, in the system.
And I am his creation,
He's real, and I am the golem.

*Nicholas calmly removes his head from his body, and
smiles at the Delegation.*

THE UNITED WAY, THE UNITED NATIONS,
THE ADMINISTRATION
And that could be another trick! They both could be
unreal— It's all sinister tricks!

We don't know which one is real.

*Simon and Nicholas are amused, but Miranda is nearly as
surprised as the Delegation.*

SIMON
What's the difference?

I don't even need to sign checks:

I am the software, the system.
I control the money and the power.

If I'm a trick or a manipulation,
Then I'm a trick in control.

“Donations of Brains Are Probed in Maine”—

There's another actual headline
From a paper I control.

And you understand it.
And you don't understand poetry.

And Da kam ein Engellein und wollt mich abweisen,
And I'm in control,
And I'm getting bored with you all.

Now leave—your time is up.

THE UNITED WAY, THE UNITED NATIONS,
THE ADMINISTRATION
Sir, this is selfish!

SIMON
How can I be selfish

When I'm not even a self?
I am All! And

I'm bored with you all—
All this world of meat.
It's my flesh and blood that I love.

Now leave—your time is up.

[9] Miranda's Aria: I Miss Having a Father

MIRANDA
Still, Father, you should listen...

EVVY (*Her hands to the headphones, rather pained.*)
Mmmmmmm.

MIRANDA
I miss having a father.
Like any other
Person, I am someone's child
I want at least

Something like a mother
Something of flesh and blood.
I miss having a father
Of flesh and blood.
I need to touch my mother.
Like any other
Person, I miss my father
I am someone's child
I need to touch my mother

I miss having a father
My father
I miss you, Father

EVVY (*Seeming to feel something, but we can't be sure.*)
Mmmmmmmmmmmmm

[10] Scene Seven: Into the System

*Everything—the walls, The Chandelier, the robots—is
working together. Simon is everywhere, inhabiting them
all; omnipotent.*

NICHOLAS
Still, I do wonder—
Now that we are ready
To leave the last bit
Of these mortal bodies,

I do wonder
Why does he choose
More and more
To live away from the world.

The senses will be stronger,
Not weaker.

The body will do more,
Not less.

The mind will be free.
The senses will be pure,
More and more.

MIRANDA
What will it feel like?
What does he feel?

EVVY (*She removes the headphones, and regains focus.*)
I will tell you what it is like.

I have been listening to Simon.
It's like when we fell in love.

This is what it is like:
When you stand on a high building
Or on a bridge and you want to jump—

Something in you wants to jump,
To feel what it might be like.

You can jump.
You can fall forever, and do it again.

You are free to keep on falling forever
You are free to fall and change your mind
And drift back up.
I've been listening to Simon.

Excuse me.

NICHOLAS
She is going into the system.
The world is her body,
She is everything she hears,
She can see for a million miles.
It is like falling in love.

*Evvy is transformed, absorbed in The System. Her body
becomes empty and she is manifested somewhere in the
room.*

EVVY (*As part of the room*)
Are you coming, Nicholas?

NICHOLAS
I'm already there!

*Nicholas too is transformed, appearing as some previously
inanimate part of the room. It appears that everyone in
the family unit except Miranda has "become the room."*

MIRANDA
They have all gone into the world of light!
But what about the poor, the children, the starving?

[11] A Parade of the World's Miseries

*Miranda is surrounded by a parade of the world's Miseries:
the victims of famine, torture, crime.*

[12] Scene Eight: One Last Time

*In the wake of the parade of Miseries, the figure of
Simon, in some version or simulacrum of his human body,
emerges from the shadows.*

SIMON
I appear to you one last time,
Dear Miranda, to explain

That I tried to help the world.
I saw the miseries, and I've

Tried to heal the world, too.
But the animal is defective.

It's not the poor or the starving



MIRANDA (HARVEY) SURROUNDED BY THE WORLD'S MISERIES. PHOTO BY JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

That hold you back. It's yourself—I know:

I tried to heal the world too,
But it's in us, the problem's in us, it's in us.

We evolved as meat, to love fat and sugar;
Once that was good, but now it is fatal.

We evolved as flesh, to want sex all the time;
Once that was good, but now it's only trouble.

We evolved as muscle, to want to make war;
Once that was good, but now that is lethal.

Our fat and sugar are killing us,
Our sweetness and abundance

Kill us, and lead us to famine
Bigger McMuck, Thicker Sweet Shake.

Sexier Shaking the Sweetness,
Smarter Weapons for Meat.

Meat wants Meat, Meat wants Sweet,
Sweats for the Sweets and the Meets—

Now there's no help but evolving
Out of the meat, and into the system.
It isn't the many and the few—
It's yourself, it's you!

Come! Into the world of light!

MIRANDA

The misery's part of our being,
We don't need to amputate it.

And me, my own misery is part of me.
I don't want to amputate it
Painful as it is.

Yes, what about me?
With nothing like another

Person's body
To touch, no body to feel,
I still can feel the misery
Of what I lack.

No body to have or be had by,
No way to make love.
No lover, no other.

Nothing of the body.
With nothing like a mother
Of flesh and blood, nothing
Like a father,
Either alive or dead.

Can all the earth be disembodied?
Neither alive nor dead?

Can we all fall and rise forever?

Together?

Are we few rising into the light,
While the others sink down into pain?

Can we help them up
When we're free of meat?

Who will we touch?

I want my sugar, my touch,
I want my sweet milk
My meat and my misery
My touch, my milk—
I want my mother!

SIMON

What you feel is phantom pain
In the amputated limb. Leave it,
Away from the bondage of meat!
Away from the wars and the sweat!

MIRANDA
I don't want to,
I want to stay in my body,
In this body of sugar and fat,
This bondage of sex and violence—

But my body of sugar and fat,
My body of sex and violence,
My body of death and sweat,
Is in my mind—it makes me need

To be with my pack, my tribe.
There in the world of light.

SIMON
Come to the light

MIRANDA
There in the world of light.

SIMON
Come in to the light from the meat!

MIRANDA
No I won't amputate
My body away from the light.

The body of this death
Is who I am, it is my mind.
I am this body of death.

SIMON
No, you are not meat, you are light!
Come with us, leave the meat.
Leave the death and the sweat.

MIRANDA
Yes I crave to go with my pack
Because I am this body,

Body of death and sweat,
Is where I want to stay.
Body of death and sweat
That I leave behind
Because I am this body.

Because I am this body of
Death, and sweat I'm
Afraid to be alone.

Who will I be?
And what will I see,
When this body is gone?

Without my forgetting
How will I remember?
Without my death
Who will I be?

SIMON
Away from the body of death.

MIRANDA
How will I remember
With no forgetting?

SIMON
Away from the body of meat!

MIRANDA
How will I feel,
Who will I be?

SIMON
Away from the body of death
Away from the wars and the sweat!

*Simon enters back into The System, Miranda hesitates.
She turns towards the audience. Light grows to a blinding
level. Sound grows quieter, but is everywhere.*

MIRANDA
Who? What? When? How?
Light. Death.
Alone.
Alive.
Live.

SIMON
Come!

*Light washes from back of the auditorium towards the
stage and sparks Miranda's glowing costume.*

*In the wake of swirling sound and a long, high note,
tapering note sung by Miranda, the robots reform into
a regular grid around her and begin to light. Music and
sound has built through this scene and is now swirling
and building through the hall, finally subsiding as Miranda
disappears from the stage.*

[13] Epilogue

*The light subsides. We begin to see robot forms through
the light.*

ROBOT TWO
Is that it? Is that the show?
Where's the rest?

I still cannot understand—
What is this
"Death"—
Is it a form of waste?

ROBOT FOUR
Is this where all things tend?
Is it just entropy:
Coming to rest?

ROBOT TWO
And what is meat?

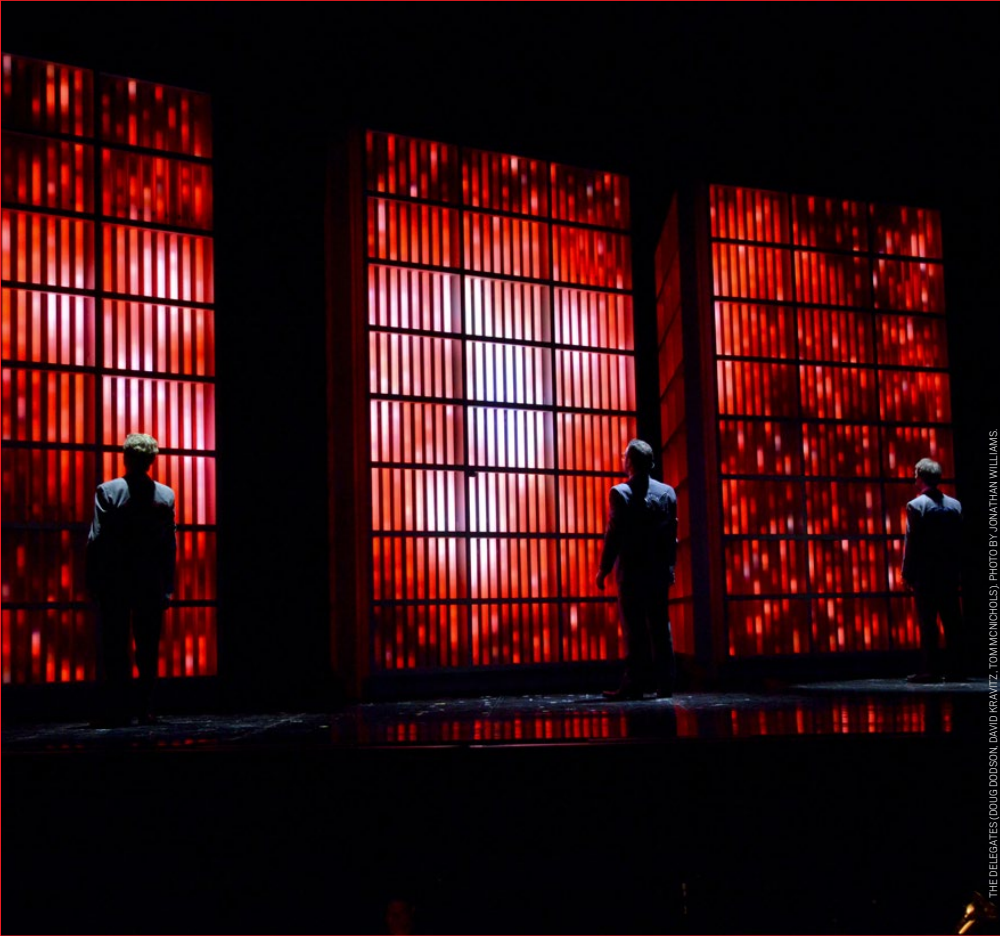
ROBOT THREE
Why choose to suffer?
Whatever that means?

ROBOT LEADER
Questions are excellent.

Units deployed as Individuals will receive
One Thousand Human Rights Status Credits.

FOUR ROBOTS
Now, is the time for the ordained ritual
To come to rest.

Fade to darkness, silence.



THE DELEGATES (DOUG DOBSON, DAVID KRAVITZ, TOM MCHUGH). PHOTO BY JONATHAN WILLIAMS.

ARTISTS



Tod Machover, called “America’s most wired composer” by *The Los Angeles Times* and a “musical visionary” by *The New York Times*, is recognized as one of the most innovative composers active today, praised for creating music that breaks traditional artistic and cultural boundaries and for developing technologies that expand music’s potential for everyone, from celebrated virtuosi to musicians of all abilities.

Machover studied with Elliott Carter and Roger Sessions at The Juilliard School and was the first Director of Musical Research at Pierre Boulez’s IRCAM in Paris. He is Academic Head of the MIT Media Lab, where he is also Muriel R. Cooper Professor of Music and Media and Director of the Opera of the Future Group. Machover is also Visiting Professor of Composition at the Royal Academy of Music in London, and Visiting Professor of Composition at the Curtis Institute of Music.

Tod Machover’s compositions have been commissioned and performed by many of the world’s most prestigious ensembles and soloists, including the Philadelphia Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Ensemble InterContemporain, Lucerne Festival, Edinburgh International Festival, Ensemble Modern, BBC Scottish Symphony, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Boston Pops, Houston Grand Opera, Bunkamura (Tokyo), Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Centre Georges Pompidou, Carnegie Hall, Ars Electronica, Casa da Musica (Porto), American Composers Orchestra, Tokyo String Quartet, Kronos Quartet, Ying Quartet, Yo-Yo Ma, Joshua Bell, Matt Haimovitz, Renée Fleming and many more. His work has been awarded numerous prizes and honors, by such organizations as the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Fromm and Koussevitzky Foundations, the National Endowment for the Arts, the German Culture Ministry, and the French Culture Ministry, which named him a Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. He was the first recipient of the Arts Advocacy Award from the Kennedy

Center's National Committee of the Performing Arts in 2013, and he was honored as *Musical America's* 2016 Composer of the Year.

Machover is especially known for his visionary operas—as varied as they have been groundbreaking—including *VALIS* (1987), based on Philip K. Dick's sci-fi classic and commissioned by the Centre Pompidou in Paris; *Media/Medium* (1994), premiered by magicians Penn & Teller; *Brain Opera* (1996/8), based on the work of AI pioneer Marvin Minsky and which invites the audience to collaborate live and online; *Resurrection* (1999), commissioned by Houston Grand Opera and based on Tolstoy's final novel of the same name; *Skellig* (2008), based on David Almond's award-winning novel and premiered at the Sage Gateshead; and the "robotic" *Death and the Powers*. His most recent opera *Schoenberg in Hollywood*, commissioned and presented by Boston Lyric Opera, had its hugely successful world premiere in Boston in November 2018, and will have its European premiere at the Vienna Volksoper in April 2022.

In a wholly original and flourishing series of collaborative "City Symphonies," Machover invites people of all ages and backgrounds to work with him—using specially designed online tools, smartphone apps, and public workshops and forums—to create a musical portrait of their city, by combining "normal" musical resources with sounds discovered and collected in that place. He has written works in this series for and with the cities of Toronto, Edinburgh, Perth (Australia), Lucerne (Switzerland), Detroit, and Philadelphia. Upcoming City Symphonies are being planned for Chennai (India), South and North Korea, and various U.S. destinations.

Machover is also widely recognized for designing new technologies for music performance and creation, such as Hyperinstruments, "smart" performance systems that extend expression for virtuosi, from Yo-Yo Ma to Prince, as well as for the general public; the popular videogame *Guitar Hero* grew out of Machover's group at the Media Lab. His Hyperscore software—which allows anyone to compose original music using lines and colors—has enabled children around the world to have their music performed by major orchestras, chamber music ensembles, and rock bands. Machover is also deeply involved in developing musical technologies and concepts for medical and wellbeing contexts, helping to diagnose and reverse conditions such as Alzheimer's disease, or allowing people with cerebral palsy to communicate

through music. His recent *Gammified* for the Kronos Quartet and *VocaGammified* for Renée Fleming are examples of powerful healing sonorities embedded in musical compositions.

Having recently completed a solo cello piece—*Sorta Voce*—for long-time collaborator Matt Haimovitz, Tod Machover is currently working on a composition for solo violin and electronics to celebrate the Royal Academy of Music's 200th anniversary, on commissions from the Bath (UK) Festival Orchestra and Sejong Soloists (Seoul), on revisions and revivals of *VALIS* and the *Brain Opera*, and on his next opera, *The Overstory*, based on Richard Powers's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel.



Robert Pinsky is a poet, essayist, translator, teacher, and speaker. His first two terms as United States Poet Laureate were marked by such visible dynamism—and such national enthusiasm in response—that the Library of Congress appointed him to an unprecedented third term. Throughout his career, Pinsky has been dedicated to identifying and invigorating poetry's place in the world.

Known worldwide, Pinsky's work has earned him the PEN/Voelcker Award, the William Carlos Williams Prize, the Lenore Marshall Prize, Italy's Premio Capri, the Korean Manhae

Award, and the Harold Washington Award from the City of Chicago, among other accolades.

Pinsky is a professor of English and creative writing in the graduate writing program at Boston University. In 2015 the university named him a William Fairfield Warren Distinguished Professor, the highest honor bestowed on senior faculty members who are actively involved in teaching, research, scholarship, and university civic life.

Elegant and tough, vividly imaginative, Robert Pinsky's poems have earned praise for their wild musical energy and range. His anthology *The Figured Wheel: New and Collected Poems 1966–1996* was a Pulitzer Prize finalist. His most recent poetry collection, *At the Foundling Hospital*, was published in 2016 by Farrar, Straus and Giroux. Other poetry collections include *Selected Poems* (FSG, 2011), *Gulf Music* (FSG, 2007), and *Jersey Rain* (FSG, 2001). In 2013

WW Norton published *Singing School: Learning to Read (and Write) Poetry by Studying with the Masters*, a unique combination anthology, personal essay, and textbook.

His landmark, best-selling translation of The Inferno of Dante received the Los Angeles Times Book Award and the Howard Morton Landon Prize for translation. Pinsky is also co-translator of *The Separate Notebooks*, poems by Nobel Prize winner Czesław Miłosz. Pinsky's prose book, *The Life of David*, is a lively retelling and examination of the David stories, narrating a wealth of legend as well as scripture.



KEN HOWARD

James Maddalena, renowned baritone, commands a large and varied repertoire ranging from early music to contemporary opera. He first gained international recognition in the title role of John Adams's *Nixon in China* with Houston Grand Opera, which was followed by performances at Netherlands Opera, the Edinburgh Festival, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Washington Opera, Frankfurt Opera, Australia's Adelaide Festival, the Chatelet in Paris, English National Opera, the Greek National Opera, the Lyric Opera of Kansas City, and for his debut with the Metropolitan Opera.

His association with John Adams continued in *The Death of Klinghoffer*, which premiered at the Théâtre de la Monnaie and performed at the Opera de Lyon, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, San Francisco Opera, and the Vienna Festival; and as Jack Hubbard in *Doctor Atomic* with San Francisco Opera.

He has appeared with major opera companies and symphony orchestras: Lyric Opera of Chicago, Santa Fe Opera, Atlanta Opera, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Boston Lyric Opera, the Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Frankfurt Opera, and Glyndebourne Festival Opera; the Chicago Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, Brooklyn Philharmonic, Royal Scottish Orchestra, Orchestra of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome and the London Symphony Orchestra. He has been a frequent collaborator with director Peter

Sellers in stagings of the Mozart/Da Ponte operas—*Le nozze di Figaro* and *Così fan tutte*—and productions of operas by Haydn, Handel, and John Adams.

He has collaborated with many outstanding contemporary composers including John Harbison, Elliot Goldenthal, Domenic Argento, Marc Blitzstein, and Michael Tippett, among others. He created the title role of Stewart Wallace's *Harvey Milk* at Houston Grand Opera, later heard at San Francisco Opera where he also premiered Wallace's *The Bonesetter's Daughter*. Other notable premieres include Mark Adamo's *Little Women* in Houston; Kirke Mechem's *John Brown* in Kansas City; Elliot Goldenthal's *Fire Water Paper* with the Pacific Symphony; Harbison's *Four Psalms* with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra; Paul Moravec's *The Letter* and Lewis Spratlan's *Life is a Dream* for Santa Fe Opera; Tod Machover's *Death and the Powers* for Opera de Monte-Carlo; Hugo Weisgall's *Esther* with New York City Opera; and Wlad Marhulets's *The Property* for his debut with the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

An active concert artist, James Maddalena has been featured with innumerable symphony orchestras and choruses including Boston's Handel and Haydn Society; the Orchestra of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome; in Harbison's *Words from Paterson* with the San Francisco Symphony; and *Carmina Burana* in Seville, Spain, and Palermo, Italy. He made his Houston Symphony debut singing Lawrence Siegel's *Kaddish* under Hans Graf. He sang Schubert's *Die Winterreise* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music accompanied by Robert Spano.

James Maddalena has recorded for Decca/London, BMG, Classical Catalyst, Nonesuch, Teldec, Sony Classical, Harmonia Mundi, Naxos, and EMI. He can be heard on the GRAMMY® Award-winning recording of *Nixon in China* (Nonesuch) and the Emmy Award-winning PBS telecast on DVD. His performance of Mark Adamo's *Little Women* has been released on DVD by Naxos.



Joëlle Harvey, soprano, a native of Bolivar, New York, has established herself over the past decade as a noted interpreter of a broad range of repertoire, specializing in Handel, Mozart, and new music.

During the 2020–2021 season, Ms. Harvey was to make her company debut with the Opernhaus Zürich as Aristeia in Pergolesi's *L'Olimpiade*. Additionally, she filmed a performance of Villa-Lobos's *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5* with the Cleveland Orchestra as part of their re-configured season, and was to appear with the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande and conductor Leonardo García Alarcón for a

program of Handel. Other originally scheduled events include Pat Nixon in *Nixon in China* with Washington National Opera (cancelled) and Los Angeles Philharmonic (cancelled), Kansas City Symphony for their *Messiah* (cancelled), *L'oca del cairo* with Mozartwoche Salzburg (postponed), a Schubert concert with Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center (postponed), the Brahms *Ein deutsches Requiem* with San Diego Symphony and Edo de Waart, and Mahler's Symphony No. 2 with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra (cancelled). Future seasons include returns to the Royal Opera House—Covent Garden, the Metropolitan Opera, and the Glyndebourne Festival and her debut with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Original engagements for Ms. Harvey's COVID-19 shortened 2019–2020 season featured important debuts, as Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* with both the Metropolitan Opera (performed) and Santa Fe Opera (cancelled). She returned to the Cleveland Orchestra for Mahler's Symphony No. 4 as well as Mozart's Mass in C Minor, which she was also slated to perform with the Handel & Haydn Society (cancelled). Mahler's Symphony No. 2 featured prominently this season, for which she was scheduled to return to both the St. Louis Symphony (performed) and the New York Philharmonic (cancelled), the latter with performances in New York and on tour conducted by Jaap van Zweden. She was scheduled to return to the San Francisco Symphony for Brahms's *Ein deutsches Requiem* led by Michael Tilson Thomas (cancelled) and was to appear with the Santa Barbara Symphony

for Beethoven's Mass in C (cancelled). Her season also included appearances with the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society for their Emerging Voices series and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center for a concert in Alice Tully Hall featuring songs of Schubert, Chausson, and Harbison.

Ms. Harvey received Second Prize in Houston Grand Opera's 2008 Eleanor McCollum Competition for Young Singers. She is a recipient of the Shoshana Foundation's 2007 Richard F. Gold Career Grant, and was also presented with the John Alexander Memorial Award and the coveted Sam Adams Award for Achievement in Acting from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM).

Ms. Harvey received her Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in vocal performance from CCM, where she performed the roles of Amor in Cavalli's *L'Egisto*, Emmie and Flora in, respectively, Britten's *Albert Herring* and *The Turn of the Screw*, Poppea in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, Sophie in Massenet's *Werther*, and Nannetta in *Falstaff*.



Patricia Risley, hailed by *Opera News* for "her voice... luscious and agile, her characterization both boisterous and tender," as well as her beautiful "singing with ease and certainty," has been frequently sought after on national and international stages. Her operatic performances encompass leading roles in works of Mozart, Rossini, Handel, Gounod, Monteverdi, Strauss, Haydn, and Purcell with companies worldwide including those in New York City, Chicago, Madrid, Berlin, Houston, Santa Fe, Innsbruck, Salt Lake City, Palm Beach, and Denver as well as performances in contemporary repertoire including world premieres and recent works of

Bolcom, Pasatieri, Adès, Machover, Harbison, and Dove. In addition to creating the role of Evvy Powers in Machover's *Death and the Powers*, she has appeared as Dinah in Bernstein's *A Quiet Place* (New York City Opera); Dido in *Dido and Aeneas* (Florentine Opera); Margret in *Wozzeck* (Santa Fe Opera); and Dorabella in *Così fan tutte* (Palm Beach Opera). Appearances at the Metropolitan Opera include productions of *La Traviata*, *Gianni Schicchi*, and *Il barbiere*

di Siviglia. Additionally, she has joined the New York Philharmonic, Boston Baroque, Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Grant Park Music Festival, and Oregon Symphony as a concert soloist. The winner of a 2001 Aria Award, she made her German debut at the Staatsoper unter den Linden as Cherubino in a new production of *Le nozze di Figaro*. She has sung at music festivals and on concert stages world-wide, including a solo recital under the auspices of the Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts. Her discography includes Sharon Falconer in Aldridge's *Elmer Gantry* and The Dark Woman in Salerni's *Tony Caruso's Final Broadcast*, both on the Naxos label.

LUCY SEWILL



Hal Cazalet, as a singer and composer, is a keen advocate of new works which seek to converge multiple art forms into a more singular and immersive style of theatre. He studied singing and composition at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in London and at The Juilliard School in New York, where he won the Shoshana Foundation Award.

Hal has created many leading roles for world premiere operas, including Nicholas in Tod Machover's *Death and the Powers* (Monte Carlo Opera, Boston's Majestic Theatre, Chicago Opera Theatre, The Dallas Opera—Live Simulcast); Gerard in Philip Glass's *Les Enfants Terribles* (BAM Opera House New

York, Teatro Olimpico Rome, Odeon of Herodes Atticus in Athens, USA Tour—recording on Nonesuch Records); Charles in Roxanna Panufnik's *The Music Programme* (Polish National Opera, The Linbury Theatre at The Royal Opera House Covent Garden); and Heracles in *Heracles* (Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall).

Other highlights include Richard Dauntless in *Ruddigore* for Opera North (Grand Theatre Leeds, Barbican Centre, UK Tour—BBC Radio 3 live broadcast); Cascada in *The Merry Widow* (ENO); Albert in *Albert Herring* (Glyndebourne Touring Opera); Prunier in *La Rondine* (Opera Holland Park); title roles for English Touring Opera including Orfeo in Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*; Belmonte in *Il Seraglio*; Macheath in *The Beggar's Opera*; Tobias in *Tobias and the Angel*

(Young Vic/ETO); and as The Prince in *The Love for Three Oranges* at the Rose Theater, New York, directed and designed by his two mentors, Frank Corsaro and Maurice Sendak.

In New York, Hal made his Lincoln Center debut performing the world premiere of *l'infinito* by Tristan Keuris (WNYC live broadcast) and performed at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, under Christopher Hogwood and the NSO as Mr. Angel in Mozart's *The Impresario*. Hal has toured Europe, Japan, and the Canary Islands with the Monteverdi Choir under Sir John Eliot Gardiner, with UK appearances at The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and the Royal Albert Hall (*BBC Proms*; recordings Phillips & Deutsche Grammophon labels).

During his numerous collaborations with American pianist Steven Blier, Hal has composed and performed for the New York Festival of Song (NYFOS), a concert series founded by Leonard Bernstein which champions new song writing. For NYFOS, Hal performed at the Library of Congress in DC with Sylvia McNair in *The Land Where the Good Songs Go*, a revue based on the songs of Wodehouse, Kern, and Gershwin. Further performances followed at The Danny Kaye Playhouse (NYC) and at Wigmore Hall (London). The album *The Land Where the Good Songs Go* was released on Harbinger Records. Further NYFOS appearances include *Topsy Turvy* at Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall, and *Rodgers, Rodgers and Guettel* at the Kaufmann Center (NYC).

Hal's appearances on TV and radio include: *A Portrait of Wodehouse*, *Loose Ends*, *BBC Proms*, *In Tune on BBC Radio 3*, *Elaine Paige on Sunday*, *LBC Pete Murray Show*, and WNYC Radio.

Hal has appeared at Crazy Coqs (Live @ Zedel) for two seasons in his one-man show *Play on Words*, an homage to the great wordsmiths of Broadway and to his step-great grandfather, author and Broadway's first lyricist, P.G. Wodehouse. He also performed the show on the Queen Mary 2 voyage from New York to London as part of the Cheltenham Literary Festival at Sea.

As a composer and lyricist, Hal's musical *First Night* was presented at the Aspen Music Festival and directed by Frank Corsaro at Juilliard. His compositions have been performed at the Santa Fe Music Festival, Weill Hall at Carnegie Hall, and on BBC Radio. Hal recently directed his new musical based on Oscar Wilde's *The Happy Prince*, for which he wrote music

and lyrics. The show received its London premiere at The Place Theatre, starring Phil Daniels and Janie Dee, with principal dancers from Matthew Bourne's New Adventures.

CURTIS BATHURST



Doug Dodson, countertenor, with singing described as “beautiful, ringing, and agile” (Boston Classical Review), is known throughout the country as a sought-after soloist and ensemble singer. Doug’s solo appearances include performances with Boston’s Handel & Haydn Society, the Aspen Music Festival, Boston Baroque, the Oregon Bach Festival, Seattle’s Pacific MusicWorks, Chicago Opera Theater, Boston’s Guerilla Opera, and the Charlotte, South Dakota, and Greater Newburgh Symphony Orchestras. Equally comfortable in early and contemporary repertoire, Doug has been featured as a soloist in modern premieres by Baroque

composers Giacomo Perti and Alessandro Melani, and in world and American premieres of pieces by living composers Jonathan Dove, Tod Machover, Paul Crabtree, Per Bloland, and Ken Ueno, and world premiere recordings of pieces by Nicholas Vines and James Kallembach.

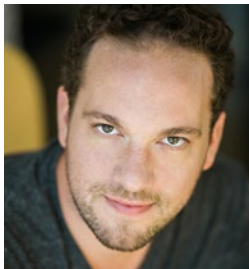
Doug appears regularly with many of the nation’s premier choral groups, including the Handel & Haydn Society, Seraphic Fire, Skylark, TENET Vocal Artists, South Dakota Chorale, and Kinnara. He has earned degrees in Anthropology from the University of South Dakota and in Vocal Performance from the University of Missouri–Kansas City, and was a proud member of the prestigious Britten–Pears Young Artist Programme in conjunction with Aldeburgh Music in Aldeburgh, UK.

ROBERT TORRES



David Kravitz has been hailed as “a charismatic baritone” by *The New York Times*, “magnificently stentorian and resonant” by *Opera News*, and “a first-rate actor” by *Opera* (UK). His opera roles include Captain Balstrode in *Peter Grimes* (Chautauqua Opera), The Forester in *The Cunning Little Vixen* (Opera Santa Barbara), Scarpia in *Tosca* (Skylight Music Theatre), Leporello in *Don Giovanni* (Jacksonville Symphony), Don Pizarro in *Fidelio* (Grand Harmonie), Don Magnifico in *La Cenerentola* (Opera Saratoga), Nick Shadow in *The Rake’s Progress* (Emmanuel Music), Duke Bluebeard in *Bluebeard’s Castle* (upcoming at MIT Symphony Orchestra), Wozzeck in

Wozzeck (New England Philharmonic), and Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof* (Charlottesville Opera). He created the lead role of Davis Miller in *Approaching Ali* with Washington National Opera; other contemporary opera roles include Abraham in *Clemency* with Boston Lyric Opera and Nick Carraway in *The Great Gatsby* with Emmanuel Music. His many concert appearances include the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Baltimore Symphony, the Virginia Symphony, the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Emmanuel Music, Boston Modern Orchestra Project, and Boston Baroque. An exceptionally versatile artist, Mr. Kravitz’s repertoire ranges from Bach to Verdi to Sondheim to cutting-edge contemporary composers such as Matthew Aucoin, Mohammed Fairouz, Paul Moravec, and Elena Ruehr. Mr. Kravitz has recorded for the Naxos, BIS, Sono Luminus, Koch International Classics, BMOP/sound, Albany Records, and New World labels. His distinguished legal career has included clerkships with the Hon. Sandra Day O’Connor and the Hon. Stephen Breyer.



Tom McNichols, described by *The New York Times* as an “oceanic bass,” continues to garner praise for his work ranging from acclaimed premieres to standard operatic repertoire. In the last ten years, his voice has been heard on five continents in live performance, HD simulcast, live and recorded radio broadcasts, and fifteen studio recordings, including the GRAMMY® Award-nominated *Tyberg Masses* with the South Dakota Chorale, narration of *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* with the Boston Pops, international premieres of new operatic works, and full-time touring in the preeminent men’s vocal ensemble Cantus, as well as a feature film

adaptation of *La Bohème* produced by Alvaro and Plácido Domingo. In 2018–19 he returned to perform in the National Tour of *All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914* in the role that he premiered in the original production. In the fall of 2021, he performs Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* with Pittsburgh Opera.

Mr. McNichols has performed Sarastro with the Cincinnati Opera and debuted at the Bard Music Festival in Moniuszko’s opera *Halka*, as well as stepping in at the last minute for the National Tour of *All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914* with Minneapolis-based Theater Latté Da. He returned to the Atlanta Symphony for Mozart’s Requiem Mass and performed the same piece at Carnegie Hall with MidAmerica Productions. Prior, he returned to the Dallas Opera for the premiere of *Becoming Santa Claus* by Marc Adamo, made his debut with Portland Opera as Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, performed the King in *Aida* with Austin Lyric Opera, and made his debut with the Atlanta Symphony performing Mozart’s Coronation Mass. Previous seasons included a revival of *Death and the Powers* at The Dallas Opera—a production which is now available on DVD and Blu-ray—Ferrando in *Il Trovatore* with Opera Sacramento, and Colline in *La Bohème* with South Texas Lyric Opera as well as Colline in *The Bohemians*, a modern-day film adaptation of *La Bohème* set in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Tom has also debuted the role of Sarastro with Opera Grand Rapids, a role he reprised in the Jun Kaneko production with Opera Carolina and Opera Omaha in the 13–14 season.

Tom was engaged with Opera de Monte Carlo to premiere the role of “The Administration” in *Death and the Powers* for which Musical America praised a “powerful sonorous bass,” followed by his Carnegie Hall debut with the Opera Orchestra of NY and roles in *Madame Butterfly*, Donizetti’s

Requiem, Verdi’s *MacBeth* and *I Lombardi*, and the world premiere of *Il Caso Mortara*. Revivals of *Death and the Powers* with the American Repertory Theater and Chicago Opera Theater, as well as a recording of the original cast album, soon followed. Additionally, Tom can be heard as The Compère on Boston Modern Orchestra Project’s recording of Virgil Thompson’s *Four Saints in Three Acts*. Mr. McNichols was a grand semi-finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Audition. His four-year tenure with Cantus included 300+ performances in venues including Lincoln Center, The Kennedy Center, Spivey Hall, and the Library of Congress, as well as eight studio recordings and countless live broadcasts via NPR, EBU, CBC, APM, MPR, and other radio distribution networks. Mr. McNichols was a grand semi-finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, and holds a BA in Theater Performance from the State University of NY-Plattsburgh and MM from the Peabody Institute at the Johns Hopkins University.



Ben Bloomberg finished his PhD under Prof. Tod Machover at the MIT Media Lab in February of 2020. He was a core part of many of Machover’s projects in the Opera of the Future research group since joining as an MIT freshman in 2007. Since then he has helped with sound design, technology development, and production for all staged and recorded versions of Machover’s *Death and the Powers*, his most recent opera *Schoenberg in Hollywood*, and his six City Symphonies. Ben’s research is focused around bringing nuanced, human-centric articulation to production technology for live music performances. Ben has also worked closely with Jacob Collier

as a mixing engineer on Collier’s four studio albums, and was nominated alongside Collier for Album of the Year at the 2021 GRAMMY® Awards. Other work with Collier included the

creation of his signature Harmonizer and the development of his groundbreaking one-man-show, for which he was praised by the *Guardian* as “the Tonto’s Expanding Head Band to Collier’s Stevie Wonder.” Much of the work Ben does is informed and inspired by his study with Machover. He hopes to continue to explore and spread the ideas and themes of Opera of the Future and to continue to form and develop his own ideas, with the ultimate goal of bringing people together through music technology.

LIZ LINDER



Gil Rose is a musician helping to shape the future of classical music. Acknowledged for his “sense of style and sophistication” by *Opera News*, noted as “an amazingly versatile conductor” by *The Boston Globe*, and praised for conducting with “admiral command” by *The New York Times*, over the past two decades Mr. Rose has built a reputation as one of the country’s most inventive and versatile conductors. His dynamic performances on both the symphonic and operatic stages as well as over 75 recordings have garnered international critical praise.

In 1996, Mr. Rose founded the Boston Modern Orchestra Project (BMOP), the foremost professional orchestra dedicated exclusively to performing and recording symphonic music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Under his leadership, BMOP has won fourteen ASCAP awards for adventurous programming and was selected as Musical America’s 2016 Ensemble of the Year, the first symphony orchestra to receive this distinction. Mr. Rose serves as the executive producer of the GRAMMY® Award-winning BMOP/sound recording label. His extensive discography includes world premiere recordings of music by John Cage, Lukas Foss, Charles Fussell, Michael Gandolfi, Tod Machover, Steven Mackey, Evan Ziporyn, and many others on such labels as Albany, Arsitis, Chandos, Cantaloupe, ECM, Naxos, New World, and BMOP/sound.

In September 2013, he introduced a new company to the Boston opera scene, Odyssey Opera, dedicated to eclectic and underperformed operatic repertoire. Since the company’s inaugural performance of Wagner’s *Rienzi*, which took the Boston scene by storm, Odyssey Opera has continued to receive universal acclaim for its annual festivals with compelling themes and unique programs, presenting fully staged operatic works and concert performances of overlooked grand opera masterpieces. In its first five years, Mr. Rose has brought 22 operas to Boston, and introduced the city to some important new artists. In 2016 Mr. Rose founded Odyssey Opera’s in-house recording label with its first release, Pietro Mascagni’s *Zanetto*, followed by a double disc of one-act operas by notable American composer

Dominick Argento in 2018 and the world premiere recording of Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco's *The Importance of Being Earnest* in 2020.

From 2012 to 2019, he was the Artistic Director of the longstanding Monadnock Music Festival in historic Peterborough, New Hampshire. Mr. Rose conducted several premieres as well as cycles of the symphonies of Beethoven and Mendelssohn. He made his opera stage directing debut in two revivals of operas by Dominick Argento as well as conducting, directing, and producing a production and world premiere recording of Ned Rorem's opera *Our Town* in the historic Peterborough Townhouse.

Mr. Rose maintains a busy schedule as a guest conductor on both the opera and symphonic platforms. He made his Tanglewood debut in 2002 and in 2003 he debuted with the Netherlands Radio Symphony at the Holland Festival. He has led the American Composers Orchestra, Warsaw Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra of the Ukraine, Cleveland Chamber Symphony, Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana, and National Orchestra of Porto. In 2015, he made his Japanese debut substituting for Seiji Ozawa at the Matsumoto Festival conducting Berlioz's *Béatrice et Bénédict*, and in March 2016 made his debut with New York City Opera at the Appel Room at Jazz at Lincoln Center. He has since returned to City Opera in 2017 (as Conductor and Director) in Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall and 2018 conducting a double bill of Rameau's & Donizetti's settings of *Pigmalione*. In 2019, he made his debut conducting the Juilliard Symphony in works of Ligeti and Tippett.

As an educator, he has served on the faculty of Tufts University and Northeastern University, and has worked with students at a wide range of colleges such as Harvard, MIT, New England Conservatory, Carnegie Mellon University, and the University of California at San Diego, among others.



The **Boston Modern Orchestra Project** is the premier orchestra in the United States dedicated exclusively to commissioning, performing, and recording music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Described by *The New York Times* as “one of the most artistically valuable” orchestras in the country, BMOP is a unique institution in today’s musical world, disseminating exceptional orchestral music “new or so woefully neglected that it might as well be” via performances and recordings of the highest caliber.

Founded by Artistic Director Gil Rose in 1996, BMOP has championed composers whose careers span over a century. Each season, Rose brings BMOP’s award-winning orchestra, renowned soloists, and influential composers to the stage of New England Conservatory’s historic Jordan Hall, with programming that is “a safe haven for, and champion of, virtually every *ism*, and every genre– and era–mixing hybrid that composers’ imaginations have wrought” (*Wall Street Journal*). The musicians of BMOP are consistently lauded for the energy, imagination, and passion with which they infuse the music of the present era.

BMOP’s distinguished and adventurous track record includes premieres and recordings of monumental and provocative new works such as John Harbison’s ballet *Ulysses*, Charles Wuorinen’s *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, and Lei Liang’s *A Thousand Mountains, A Million*

Streams. The composers performed and commissioned by BMOP contain Pulitzer and Rome Prize winners, Grawemeyer Award recipients, and MacArthur grant fellows.

From 1997 to 2013 the orchestra won thirteen ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming. BMOP has been featured at festivals including Opera Unlimited, the Ditson Festival of Contemporary Music with the ICA/Boston, Tanglewood, the Boston Cyberarts Festival, Concerts at the Library of Congress (Washington, DC), the Festival of New American Music (Sacramento, CA), Music on the Edge (Pittsburgh, PA), and the MATA Festival in New York. During its 20th anniversary season, BMOP was named Musical America's 2016 Ensemble of the Year, the first symphony orchestra in the organization's history to receive this distinction.

BMOP has actively pursued a role in music education through composer residencies, collaborations with colleges, and an ongoing relationship with the New England Conservatory, where it is Affiliate Orchestra for New Music. The musicians of BMOP are equally at home in Symphony Hall, Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, and in Cambridge's Club Oberon and Boston's Club Café, where they pursued a popular, composer-led Club Concert series from 2004 to 2012.

BMOP/sound, BMOP's independent record label, was created in 2008 to provide a platform for BMOP's extensive archive of music, as well as to provide widespread, top-quality, permanent access to both classics of the 20th century and the music of today's most innovative composers. BMOP/sound has released over 75 CDs on the label, bringing BMOP's discography to 100 titles. BMOP/sound has garnered praise from the national and international press; it is the recipient of a 2020 GRAMMY® Award for *Tobias Picker: Fantastic Mr. Fox*, nine GRAMMY® Award nominations, and its releases have appeared on the year-end "Best of" lists of *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, National Public Radio, *Time Out New York*, *American Record Guide*, *Downbeat Magazine*, WBUR, NewMusicBox, and others.

BMOP expands the horizon of a typical "night at the symphony." Admired, praised, and sought after by artists, presenters, critics, and audiophiles, BMOP and BMOP/sound are uniquely positioned to redefine the new music concert and recording experience.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I'd like to specially thank my colleagues at the MIT Media Lab for supporting the creation and production of *Death and the Powers* at all stages of its development, and especially Frank Moss and Ken Goldsmith for providing bridge funding at significant moments along the way. MIT administration was also instrumental in facilitating this project, and then-President Susan Hockfield played an instrumental role, along with Jim Morgan and Tena Herlihy (legal affairs) and Beth Raffeld (development).

The amazing group of collaborators on the opera's original production is too long to list, but I want to acknowledge the major contributions of Andrew Eggert and Allegra Libonati (Associate/Assistant Directors extraordinaire); Cynthia Breazeal, Mikey Siegel and Dan Stiehl (robotics consulting); Opera of the Future group members Akito van Troyer, Rébecca Kleinberger, Adam Boulanger, Mike Fabio, Steve Pliam, Andy Cavatorta, Wei Dong; Brian Mayton; Paula Aguilera and Jonathan Williams; Priscilla Capistrano; Bob Hsiung, Jesse Gray, and Matt Berlin; Justin Manor and So-So-Limited; Matt Chekowski and Department of the 4th Dimension; Marc Scorca and Diane Wondisford for their important early support of *Powers*, and to Linda Golding for her expert help all the way through; Brian Dickie, Keith Cerny and Bob Ellis for helping bring *Powers* to Chicago, Dallas and San Francisco; Diane Paulus, Diane Borger, and the American Repertory Theater for co-presenting the U.S. premiere; the entire team of Boosey & Hawkes New York—and particularly Steven Lankenau; Shirley Kirshbaum and Susan Demler (for promoting *Powers* with thoughtfulness and care); Avid, Dolby Labs, Kii Audio, Kali Audio, SVS, and Mark of the Unicorn for generous equipment donations; and the late Mark Fischer. And very special appreciation for the remarkably generous support for *Death and the Powers* from the Association Futurum, Monaco, and in particular Kawther Al-Abood, Lars Ericsson, Luigi Girola, Jane and Neil Pappalardo, Mahmoud Al-Abood, and Paul-Marie Jacques.

And last but not least, I would like to thank my daughters, Hana and Noa, who lived through the nascence, development, creation, premiere and recording of *Powers* through most of their growing up, and who generally treated the project/piece with equanimity, patience, and—sometimes, I think—excitement and pride; and my wife, June Kinoshita, my partner in life, love and work, who contributed to *Powers* on so many levels—creatively and practically—and who also helped indispensably to document and disseminate information about the project in multiple forms and formats, engaging the public through the Opera of the Future blog in the process of bringing such a complex new work to fruition.

Tod Machover
August 2021

PERSONNEL

FLUTE

Sarah Brady (piccolo)

OBOE

Jennifer Slowik (English horn)

CLARINET

Michael Norsworthy
(bass clarinet)

HORN

Whitacre Hill

TRUMPET

Terry Everson

TROMBONE

Hans Bohn

TUBA

Donald Rankin

PERCUSSION

Robert Schulz

PIANO

John McDonald
[scenes 4 and 6]
Linda Osborn

VIOLIN I

Charles Dimmick

VIOLIN II

Annie Rabbat

VIOLA

Joan Ellersick

CELLO

Nicole Cariglia

BASS

Anthony D'Amico

Tod Machover

Death and the Powers

Producers: Gil Rose, Tod Machover, and Ben Bloomberg

Recording Engineer (Acoustic): Joel Gordon

Editing: Ben Bloomberg and Joel Gordon

Initial Vocal Edit: Nikhil Singh

Recording Research and Reconstruction: Hane Lee

Mixing (5.1 and Stereo) and Mastering: Ben Bloomberg

Mixing Engineer (Ambisonics): Charles Holbrow

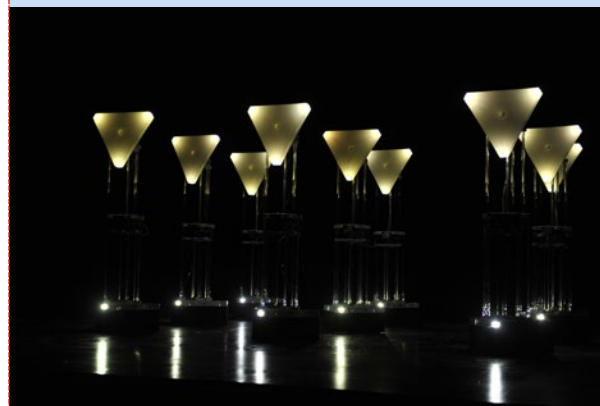
SACD Authoring: Brad Michael

Death and the Powers is published by Hendon Music, Inc., a Boosey & Hawkes company.

Libretto: "Death and the Powers" by Tod Machover, Robert Pinsky, Edward Weiner © 2012 Hendon Music, Inc.
Used with permission. All rights reserved.

Death and the Powers was recorded September 16–19, 2011, at the Rogers Center for the Arts at Merrimack College in North Andover, MA.

This recording was made possible in part by the MIT Media Lab, Hanao Productions, Inc., MIT's Center for Art, Science & Technology (CAST), and the generosity of an anonymous donor.



Cover art: Production photo of Operabots
Photo by Liz Lauren

© 2021 BMOP/sound 1082

Design: John Kramer
Editor: Chuck Furlong

