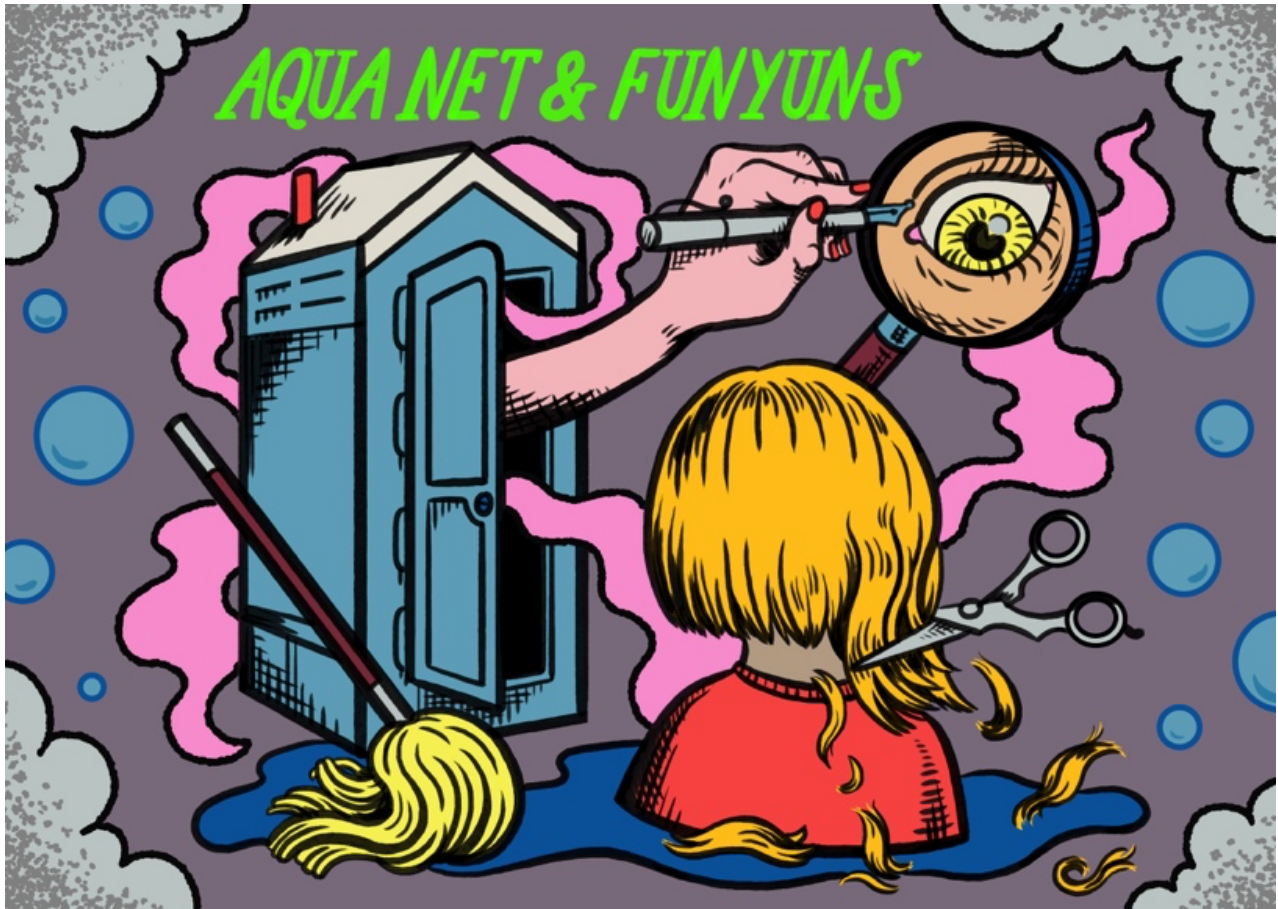


experiments In opera



Aqua Net & Funyuns is a podcast opera featuring five newly-commissioned, original stories, each written by a different librettist/composer combo. Drawing from the style of audio fiction podcasts, the 25-minute, serial episodes are designed specifically to tell compelling narratives with voices, instruments and immersive sound design.

Aqua Net & Funyuns is available for download on Apple Podcasts, Spotify or wherever you listen to podcasts.

FEATURED OPERAS

Beauty Shot

Libretto by Daniel Shepard

Music by Tariq Al-Sabir

What starts out as a simple trim, turns into a murderous trial of infidelity at a quiet hair salon in Kansas.

Another One Bites

Libretto and Music by Jason Cady

A high school student ditches an anti-drug assembly to smoke pot and hides from a cop in a porta-potty—which becomes a portal to a parallel universe.

Ships That Pass

Libretto by Cara Ehlenfeldt

Music by Aaron Siegel

When Alden discovers that his deceased mother authored queer fanfiction, he reexamines his high school memories and his reluctance to tell her about his own queer identity.

The Understudy

Libretto by Jason Cady and Cara Ehlenfeldt

Music by Kamala Sankaram

An opera company hires a private eye to go undercover as an understudy to a soprano. There's only one problem: she can't sing.

Arkana Aquarium

Libretto by Annie-Sage Whitehurst

Music by Michi Wiancko

A widowed janitor at an aquarium becomes convinced that his wife has been reincarnated...as the newly acquired fish.

The *Aqua Net & Funyuns Theme Song* is composed by Hannis Brown, with lyrics by Jason Cady.

PERFORMERS

The Understudy

Rocky Duval as Pat Dickson

Kamala Sankaram as Donna Pearlbottom, private eye

Rachel Doehring as Wanda, the Impresario

Eric McKeever as Rich Lexington

Joshua Jeremiah as Manny, the Stage Manager

Eliza Bonet as Missy, the Mezzo

Brandon Snook as Tony, the Tenor

Ships That Pass

Brandon Snook as Alden

Kamala Sankaram as Janelle

Rocky Duval as Alden's Mom

Another One Bites

Joanie Brittingham as Mel
Eliza Bonet as The Narrator
Joshua Jeremiah as Officer Dunphy
Rachel Doehring as Yolanda
Rocky Duval as Mel's Mom
Brandon Snook as Curtis
Kamala Sankaram as Mrs. Bloom
Eric McKeever as Mel's Dad

Arkana Aquarium

Eric McKeever as Arthur
Rachel Doehring as Audrey
Rocky Duval as Margaret
Joanie Brittingham as Isabel
The Fish Chorus - Kamala Sankaram, Eliza Bonet, Brandon Snook, and Joshua Jeremiah

Beauty Shot

Joanie Brittingham as Karen
Rachel Doehring as Lucy
Rocky Duval as Tonya
Eliza Bonet as June

Ensemble

Dmitry Glivinskiy, piano and music director
Jeanann Dara, viola and violin
Jeff Hudgins, reeds
Drew Fleming, electric guitar
Pat Swoboda, bass
Kamala Sankaram, drum machine and samples (on *The Understudy*)
Jason Cady, modular synthesizer and drum machine (on *Another One Bites*)
Tariq Al-Sabir, drum machine (on *Beauty Shot*)

Cara Ehlenfeldt, sound design
Jeff Cook, mixing

THE ARTISTS

Tariq Al-Sabir (Composer) has been described as a "boundless talent" by Baltimore's City Hall and The Examiner deemed him "a rising musical mastermind." In 2017, he premiered commissioned works at The Lincoln Center, National Sawdust, and Joe's Pub at The Public Theater. He collaborated with Kambui Olujimi and the Lone Wolf Recital Corps at MoMA in short film and live performance for the exhibition *Projects 107: Lone Wolf Recital Corps*. He nationally and internationally premiered the roles of Richard Moss and Travis Douglass in Octavia E. Butler's Parable of the Sower, an opera by Toshi Reagon and Bernice Johnson Reagon. In 2018 Tariq was selected to be a member of the inaugural SUITE/Space Artist residency with the legendary Mabou Mines Theater Company, where he conceived and presented a workshop

version of his theatrical-multimedia song cycle *#UNWANTED* in their new theater at Performance Space 122.

Al-Sabir served as music director for the Off-Broadway run of *Black Light* at the Public Theater and Greenwich House Theater. *#UNWANTED* premiered to the world at THE SHED in NYC among the inaugural Open Call commissions. In Summer of 2019 Al-Sabir made his LA Philharmonic debut in the cast of Meredith Monk's, *ATLAS* under the direction of Yuval Sharon. He is currently collaborating with Monk on her new evening-length performance, *Indra's Net*.

Eliza Bonet (Mezzo-Soprano) Lauded for her 'full, warm sound' and 'sparkling, uninhibited deliveries', Eliza Bonet is a Caribbean-American Mezzo-soprano that continues to garner critical praise. She has performed with such companies as The Washington National Opera, The San Francisco Symphony, and performed at Carnegie Hall.

Joanie Brittingham (Soprano) Praised for her "dramatic versatility" (Opera News), "meltingly beautiful" voice (Forbes), "lucid diction" (NY Times), "captivating stage presence" (New York Classical Review), while demonstrating "strength and resistance" (Opera Wire) throughout her "outstanding solo work" (NY Concert Review).

Jason Cady (Librettist and Composer) is a composer and librettist. He performs on pedal steel and modular synthesizer. Pitchfork called him a "mod-synth mastermind...funny and engaging." Anthony Tommasini, in the New York Times, described his video opera, *I Screwed Up the Future*, as "charming fantasy...drably comic and spacey." Opera News described his opera *I Need Space* as "delightfully weird...hilarious, dry and detached performances made this futuristic, retro story of love and rejection endearingly poignant." His most recent opera, *Candy Corn*, was called "hilarious" by The Wire Magazine, and "radically enjoyable" by I Care If You Listen.

Cady's CDs have been released on Lockstep Records and Peacock Recordings, and his podcast opera, *Buick City, 1:00 AM* is available on Apple Podcasts. The Brooklyn Arts Council, New Music USA, Wave Farm, The Casement Fund, Lighton International Artists Exchange and the American Music Center have funded his projects. He has been interviewed on WBEZ, WNYC, WKCR, WPIR, KMFA and East Village Radio. NPR featured him in "The Mix: 100 Composers Under 40." Cady is the Co-Artistic Director of Experiments in Opera. He has an M.A. in composition from Wesleyan University, where he studied with Alvin Lucier and Anthony Braxton. He was born in Flint, Michigan and now lives in New York City.

Jeanann Dara (Viola and Violin) is a force in modern creation, collaboration and performance. She has developed her own sound with modern viola performance, improvisation and composition. She now lives between Marfa, Texas and Brooklyn in support of her new non profit residency program in Marfa and New Orleans.

Rachel Doehring (Soprano) enjoys performing a variety of operatic, concert, chamber and new works. Most recently, she sang in Experiments in Opera's new podcast opera "Aquanet & Funyuns," and excerpts from her latest self-produced recital aired on WCNY Radio's "Fresh Ink." www.racheldoehring.com.

Rocky Duval (Mezzo-Soprano), sometimes known as Rocky, is an opera singer, performance poet, public speaking coach, and actor. She likes singing weird new music, weird old music, and writing pretty poems with dense imagery that make you feel really a lot of all the emotions.

Cara Ehlenfeldt (Librettist and Sound Designer) is a writer and audio producer based in New York City. By day, Cara produces audio fiction and beyond with Gideon Media, Radiotopia, and others. By night, Cara co-creates/produces the independent audio drama *The Godsheed Incidental*, which explores found family and myths of adulthood. Cara holds an M.A. in Sound Arts and Industries from Northwestern University and studied linguistics and creative writing at Swarthmore College. <https://caraehlenfeldt.com>

Drew Fleming (Guitar) is a guitarist/singer/composer who has toured and performed with Anti-Social Music, KaiserCartel, and the award-winning Bombay Ricky. Drew is ABD in Music Theory and has given national papers on race and multi-vocality in Fishbone. He is now writing a book about a pretty chord.

Dmitry Glivinskiy (Music Director and Piano) is a Ukrainian vocal coach and conductor. He is a graduate of Mannes College of Music and of the Peabody Institute. He is currently on the faculty of Hofstra University as a vocal coach and is the Music Director of the Opera Theater at Brooklyn College.

Jeff Hudgins (Reeds) has been mostly wearing bathrobes and not bothering to shave, but, in addition to working with Experiments In Opera, has been working with Opera On Tap and Kamala Sankaram this Covid season. Jeff is a founding member (with Sankaram and Drew Fleming) of the group Bombay Rickey.

Joshua Jeremiah (Baritone) is thrilled to be back working with EiO, where he was most recently seen as Father in Chunky in Heat. Highlights from his 19-20 season include the title role of Rigoletto with Houston Grand Opera, and Lionel (The Maid of Orleans) with New Orleans Opera. www.JoshuaJeremiahBaritone.com

Eric McKeever (Baritone) The 2020-2021 season sees Mr. McKeever recording the role of Charlie in Kamala Sankaram's "Looking at You," performing as a soloist with Salt Marsh Opera, singing Dandini for Opera on Tap's digital "La Cenerentola," and returning to Opera Columbus as Marcello in "La Boheme"

Kamala Sankaram (Composer and Soprano) has been praised as "strikingly original" (*NY Times*), Kamala Sankaram writes highly theatrical music that defies categorization. She has written pieces for the Glimmerglass Festival, Washington National Opera, Houston Grand Opera, the PROTOTYPE Festival, and Shakespeare Theatre Company, among others. Known for her use of cutting-edge technologies, recent compositions include *Looking at You*, a techno-noir featuring live datamining of the audience and a chorus of 25 singing tablet computers, *all decisions will be made by consensus*, a short absurdist opera performed live over Zoom (featured on NBC and the BBC3,) and *The Parksville Murders*, the world's first virtual reality opera. As a performer, she moves freely between the worlds of experimental music, creative music, and contemporary opera. Notable collaborations have included Meredith Monk's *Atlas* with the LA Philharmonic, *Thumbprint* with LA Opera and Beth Morrison Projects, and Anthony

Braxton's *Trillium E*, *Trillium J*, and *Syntactical Ghost Trace* Music. Kamala is the leader of Bombay Rickey, an operatic Bollywood surf ensemble whose accolades include two awards for Best Eclectic Album from the Independent Music Awards and appearances on WFMU and NPR. Dr. Sankaram holds a PhD from the New School and is currently a member of the composition faculty at SUNY Purchase. www.kamalasankaram.com

Daniel Shepard (Librettist) is a Brooklyn-based writer, producer and showrunner. In 2006, Daniel started working for the Emmy Award-winning series, *Inside the Actors Studio*, where he helped produce over 60 episodes. In 2011, Daniel co-founded Woodland View Productions where he produced award-winning films, web series and animated digital series including *Chicks on a Bench* (MTV) and *Swimming Lessons* (Above Average, Hulu, Comedy Central).

In 2015, Daniel co-founded Cartuna, a Brooklyn-based animation company, where he served as Head of Animation & Development and produced over 30 animated digital series including *Human Kind Of* (Facebook Watch, Annie Nomination for Best TV Production), *Dogs in a Park* (Comcast, IFC), *Museum of Human History* (Topic Studios), *Science!* (SYFY), *Tammy's Tiny Tea Time* (Sundance), *North Pole* (Comedy Central), and many more. His film credits include the critically-acclaimed documentary *Nuts!* (Sundance, Amazon) and the animated feature film *The Adventures of Drunky* starring Sam Rockwell, Steve Coogan, and Tyler the Creator (currently in production). In 2019, Daniel founded Top Seed Productions where he develops and produces animated series, films, podcasts, comics and more. Visit thatdanielshepard.com for more info.

Aaron Siegel's (Composer) inquisitive and playful work represents a personal vision of how we live with and respond to the sounds in our world. He is a composer of music for the concert stage, the theater, video, and public art. His large body of work for mallet percussion instruments has been embraced by a wide range of ensembles and is performed on a regular basis throughout the United States. Siegel is one of the co-founders of Experiments in Opera (EiO) with whom he has produced over 60 new operatic works since its founding in 2011. In 2019, Siegel released 'A Great Many' on New Amsterdam Records, featuring Mantra Percussion and clarinetist Christa Van Alstine. They celebrated the release of this recording with a performance at National Sawdust in Brooklyn. In April 2019, Siegel premiered five movements of a new oratorio *I Will Tell You The Truth About This, I Will Tell You All About it*, based on poems by U.S. Poet Laureate Tracy K. Smith, at the Schomburg Center in Harlem. His contributions to the collaboratively-composed opera, *Chunky in Heat*, were heard at the premiere in May 2019 at The Flea Theater, produced by Experiments in Opera. Other recent work has included a performance of the opera in development, *Rainbird*, co-created with Mallory Catlett at the Baryshnikov Arts Center in November 2019 as part of the Artist in Residency program. For more information visit aaronsiegel.net.

Brandon Snook (Tenor) is happy to be making his EiO debut for these premieres, as he is a stalwart of new opera. Other select contemporary productions include *Bonfire of the Vanities*, *Glory Denied*, *Independence Eve*, and *Looking at You*. He has performed locally at Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, BAM, and Off-Broadway, and is a native Texan.

Pat Swoboda (bass) is a NYC-based bass player. He is a member of the trio Bearthoven and the Latinx group LADAMA. Recent highlights include David Lang's opera *The Loser* with Bang on a

Can and LA Opera, Michael Gordon's Mixed Tulips with Beethoven, and NPR Music's Tiny Desk series with LADAMA.

Annie-Sage Whitehurst (Librettist and Host) is a film, theatre and voice over actor, writer and collaborator in New York City. Writing credits include the shorts "Prime Matter," "422 E. 75th St" and "Rodney at 3:00am". Film/TV credits include Discovery ID's "A Crime To Remember", "Roadside Assistance" and "B.P.M". VO work includes originating "Lia Haddock" in the podcast "Limetown," "Elena Collins" in Experiments in Opera's podcast, "Buick City 1:00am", as well as audiobook narration and nationally syndicated broadcasts. Theatre credits include "Juliana" in the serialized, two-year run of Juliana at The Duplex, as well as performances at La Mama Experimental Theatre Club, Cherry Lane, The Kennedy Center, and more. Quarantine Edition: Annie-Sage is the founder of The Sequestered: A Micro Short Online Film Festival for filmmakers sheltering-in-place, a core performer on @SociallyDistantImprov and a member of The Armory's In Between Sketch Team. www.annie-sage.com @anniehyphensage

Michi Wiancko (Composer) is a composer, arranger and violinist whose work has been performed by ensembles, bands and orchestras around the world. She has collaborated with artists from across a wide musical spectrum and performed with some of the great musical artists of our time. Michi's first opera, *Murasaki's Moon*, premiered at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in May of 2019. This work was created in collaboration with librettist Deborah Brevoort and director Eric Einhorn from OnSite Opera. Michi is a 2018 recipient of an Opera America Commissioning Grant. Upcoming projects include new compositions for yMusic and NOW Ensemble, and arrangements and reimaginings for Camerata Bern, violinist Patricia Kopatchinskaja, soprano Anna Prohaska, and violinist Anne Akiko Meyers.

ABOUT EXPERIMENTS IN OPERA

Experiments in Opera is focused on re-writing the story of opera. We believe that new operas can be adventurous and fun, focused on strong and intimate storytelling, while also challenging notions of what experimental music can be. EiO invites composers, directors, designers and performers to create new work that embraces unconventional mediums, a range of durations and production scales, and explores collaboration between all types of artists working to share their visions. We bring new operas to the stage as quickly as we can, marking the urgency of artists with something important to say and the desire of audiences to be a part of the excitement of risky and rewarding work.

Co-Founded in Brooklyn in 2010 by composers Aaron Siegel, Matthew Welch and Jason Cady, and since 2018 with composer/vocalist Kamala Sankaram as co-Artistic Director, Experiments in Opera has commissioned 75 new works in ten years, from 47 composers collaborating with over four hundred performers, designers and directors from the New York City artists community. During that time we have produced events at Roulette, National Sawdust and Issue Project Room in Brooklyn, as well as at The Flea, Symphony Space, Merkin Concert Hall, The Stone, Le Poisson Rouge, Anthology Film Archives and Abrons Arts Center in Manhattan.

Experiments in Opera Board of Directors: Nadia Berenstein, Erin Flannery, Dalia Levine, Nicole Goldberg, Todd Marcus, and A.M. Homes.

Experiments in Opera's 2020-21 Season is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature. This program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council. Experiments in Opera is a proud professional company member of Opera America. Experiments in Opera's 2020-21 Season is made possible by support from the Casement Fund, The BMI Foundation, Inc., and The Howard and Sarah D. Solomon Foundation.

