

Carson Kievman, Ph.D. (Princeton University)

For decades, Carson Kievman work follows an independent course that blends new music with the theatrical, visual and literary arts. His symphonies, operas, chamber music, music-theater and experimental works have been performed internationally in stage, concert, dance, and museum settings, from SoBe Arts to the Berkeley Art Museum; Ysbreker (Amsterdam), the Pennsylvania Ballet (Philadelphia), The Public Theater (New York City), the Rote Fabrik (Zurich), the Tanglewood Music Festival (Lenox), and the Nationaltheater Mannheim (Germany). His works have also been broadcast by British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC); Nord Deutsche Rundfunk; Radio France; National Public Radio (NPR) and other media outlets worldwide.

Carson Kievman's work in opera has been informed by a lifetime working in the theater and with music. He has created 22 multimedia music-theater works, including 7 full length stage works, such as *California Mystery Park* and *Intelligent Systems* (commissioned by a fellowship from The National Endowment for the Arts and the Donaueschingen Music Festival, in Germany). *Intelligent Systems, the surrender of self in mystical contemplation*, saw its world premiere in June 2015 and was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize by music writer Lawrence Budmen. The production sold out its entire run and was universally praised by critics and audiences alike: "*Intelligent Systems is a Smashing Success*"; "*This is Kievman's most daring, strikingly original work, and it succeeds through a plethora of musical and theatrical invention*" "[A] richly evocative, rhythmically urgent score. The mix of vocal and orchestral timbres is beautifully conceived, with a vast array of colors" (The Miami Herald/South Florida Classical Review).

In 2014 Kievman supervised the world premiere of his opera, *Fairy Tales, Songs of the Dandelion Woman*, which was received by enthusiastic audiences and rave reviews: "*Fairy Tales' is a shattering experience... makes a bold and powerful impact in world premiere... In a season that has seen more twentieth- and twenty-first century opera in South Florida than in the last two decades combined, Kievman's opus is a stunner!*" (South Florida Classical Review/Miami Herald) "...written with such sharp intelligence, high technical skill and uncompromising integrity." (Palm Beach Arts)

In 1987, the legendary theatrical producer Joseph Papp commissioned Kievman to compose a music-theater work based on Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (Papp's final commission for the New York Shakespeare Festival/Public Theater). Sadly, soon after the reading, Papp was diagnosed with cancer and subsequently died (which consequently ended plans for the production). However, In March 2012, after a 21 year postponement, *Hamlet Opera* received its world premiere in a staged concert version at SoBe Arts Little Stage Theater and was acclaimed by audiences and critics alike: "*Hamlet's solo monologues are poignantly emotive, the beautiful arioso writing dramatically powerful*" "*A strong theatrical crescendo builds from the confrontation of Hamlet and Ophelia through the play within a play and Ophelia's haunting mad scene. Indeed one of Kievman's major accomplishments is turning the usually nondescript character of Ophelia into a strong dramatic persona.*" (The Miami Herald).

Early in his career, the Tanglewood Music Festival commissioned and premiered his innovative *Wake Up, It's Time To Go To Bed!* Subsequently he entered the national spotlight at the Public Theater NYC with over 63 sold out performances of *Wake Up and Multinationals & the Heavens*. Critics praised the production as: "*Great Art!*" (The Boston

Globe), "*Enthralling*" (The New York Times) and "*Kievman is a Wizard!*" (The Village Voice).

Kievman has also composed large scale orchestral works, including *Symphony No. 2(42)* (1991), *Symphony No. 3 (hurricane)* (1995), *Symphony No. 4 (biodiversity)* (1998), *Symphony No. 5* (2010) and *Symphony No. 6 (no man's land)* (2014). He also wrote several orchestral suites and *Dear John*, a string orchestra piece (from a larger *Chamber Symphony No. 1(628)*) commissioned for the Collegiate School in New York City (the oldest school in American - founded in 1628) and premiered in 2010 by the South Dakota Symphony. In 1991, *Symphony No. 2(42)* was commissioned by the Florida Philharmonic Orchestra to honor the 200th anniversary of Mozart's death, and recorded by the Polish Radio National Symphony Orchestra- Katowice, and the Polish Radio Choir of Krakow, Delta David Gier, conductor, and released in 1996 on New Albion Records which received radiant notices including, "*A truly original and artistically sensitive work*" (All Music Guide) and "*It provides one of the most powerful musical experiences I have had in recent times.*" (Spoleto Today). Also in 1996 *Symphony No. 3 (Hurricane)* was recorded by the Polish Radio National Symphony Orchestra and later released on MPA Records. In 1999 *Symphony No. 4 (Biodiversity)* was read by The New Jersey Symphony, Lawrence Leighton Smith, conducting. *Symphony No. 4 (Biodiversity)* [*Glaciers, Rivers of Ice – The Great Swamp – Starving Angels – The Year of the Reef*] is a four-movement reflection on biodiversity and the plight of our worldwide ecosystems. The symphony conveys a vision of the grandeur and fragility of the natural world. Currently, Dr. Kievman and conductor, Delta David Gier are preparing to recording *Symphony No. 4 (Biodiversity)* in Europe during 2017.

Kievman has been the recipient of numerous international awards and grants, including the National Endowment for the Arts Grant for American Masterworks Series 2011-12, a Princeton University Research Fellowship 2001-2003 and Naumberg Fellowship at Princeton University 1997-2001. His most influential teachers and mentors include Earle Brown, Luigi Nono, Olivier Messiaen, Morton Subotnick and James Tenney. He is currently preparing for a 2017 production of one of his most penetrating multimedia works *Tesla*, about the life of visionary inventor Nikola Tesla, an immigrant whose transformative ideas challenged the staid society, inherited wealth, and power structure of the Gilded Age.