
music direction for a new piece of music theater in Spring 2022

4 messages

Jean Randich <jrandich@bennington.edu>

Tue, Jun 22, 2021 at 1:02 PM

To: Chris Rose <chrisrose@bennington.edu>, Allen Shawn <ashawn@bennington.edu>

Dear Chris and Allen,

Hi Chris. You don't know me, but I am a director and teach at Bennington College. Allen Shawn, Anna Maria Hong, Sue Rees, and I have been collaborating to create a new piece of music theater that we will be staging next spring. Allen has composed 55 minutes of music and he will be playing the piano live in the performance. We are hoping you might be interested in working with us as Music Director, along with Allen, in teaching the music, helping the students understand the differing musical idioms, and if needed, conducting the performances. We will be holding auditions in October and then begin rehearsals in February 2022. We plan to go up the weekend of April 22, 23, and 24, Friday through Sunday, in Lester Martin Theater in VAPA.

Below is an overview and character breakdown. If you are interested or have any questions, we could set up a zoom meeting where you, Allen and I can talk. Allen and I can share the music and lyrics as they exist so far. Allen was also able to have some students record some songs. Joe Alpar is singing the FATHER, and he also thought it would be great to have you on this project. Tom Bogdan is also singing two gorgeous songs. We look forward to hearing from you.

With warm wishes,

Jean Randich
917.374.9220**H & G, a great and terrible story. A New Music Theater Work.**
Music by Allen Shawn
Libretto by Anna Maria Hong and Jean Randich

This is a faculty performance production of a new music theater piece freely inspired by Anna Maria Hong's novella, "H & G," a cubistic re-envisioning of the Grimm's tale of Hansel and Gretel as a surreal, feminist hero's journey. Here abandonment, enchantment, and the fear of being consumed challenge the protagonists to imagine the unimaginable: how do you give birth to the self you want to become when everything is stacked against you.

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

H, a young, poetic, pliable boy. Vocal range: tenor or high baritone. Part does not go above F above middle C.

G, a young, self-aware, rebellious girl. Vocal range: lyric soprano - ideally with a range of Bb below middle C to high Ab.

WITCH, a sexy, jaded artist who builds candy houses to lure children she then consumes to remain forever young. A beautiful abuser who revels in her groove. Funny. Vocal range: should be an agile and rich-toned soprano--range is comparable to G.

FATHER, a man who thinks he has to choose. Haunted. Cast: Joseph Alpar

FERAL CHILDREN: Spirits of the children the WITCH has consumed. They sing, dance, chant, question, confront, and in general, aid H & G the way animals aid children in fairy tales. They have no names. We are looking for performers who enjoy physical improvisation and expressive movement. Vocal range: SATB

OPERA SINGER, cast: Tom Bogdan

MOVERS: Three movers, already cast:

LEADER OF THE FERAL CHILDREN: Nosizo Lukhele

THE SHADOW: Emily Heath

GODS OF INERTIA, ENTROPY, AND DELAY: Stefanos Zogopoulos, Nosizo Lukhele, Emily Heath (roles TBD)

POTENTIAL AUDITIONERS

Amanda Tafeen
Linn Scharf
Celina Einem
Karana Stokum
Julisa Juarez
Tristan Archibald
Elias Bayes
Mohammed Amar
Teslyne Junior
Ava Renz
Madeleine Wood
Vera Much (formerly Owen Yarmo-Gray)
Kriss Mincey
Ayla Kanciruk
Pietrina Poritzsky
Christopher Robin Wamsle

Chris Rose <chrisrose@bennington.edu>

Tue, Jul 13, 2021 at 12:25 PM

To: Jean Randich <jrandich@bennington.edu>, Allen Shawn <ashawn@bennington.edu>

Hi Jean and Allen,

Hello from Montana and sorry for the slow response. Thank you so much for thinking of me for this star-studded collaboration and happy to help.

My only concern is the time commitment, so if we could just discuss the particulars there, I think I'd be ready to sign on.

(For example, am I needed for all evening rehearsals? Could I arrange to do individual coachings in my office during the day? Are weekends protected?)

Thanks for understanding! For now, I'll pencil the tech week and performance dates into my calendar.

All the best,

Chris

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Chris Rose
Music Fellow, Accompanist
Jennings 213
dancetothink.com
[My Zoom Meeting Room: Jennings213](#)

Jean Randich <jrandich@bennington.edu>

Sat, Aug 14, 2021 at 9:55 AM

To: Chris Rose <chrisrose@bennington.edu>, Allen Shawn <ashawn@bennington.edu>, Anna Maria Hong <ahong@mtholyoke.edu>, Sue Rees <srees@bennington.edu>

Hi Allen, Anna Maria, Chris and Sue,

Just a quick update. Chris Rose may be coming on board to help us out with the music direction of "H & G." Chris, meet Anna Maria Hong and Sue Rees. "H & G, a great and terrible story" is an adaptation of Anna Maria's brilliant eponymous novella. She teaches at Mount Holyoke, but will be coming up for auditions and callbacks. Sue Rees is our terrific set and projections designer. I will share our google folder with you so you can have a look and listen before Allen, you and I meet on zoom on Monday.

Also wanted to let everyone know I am meeting with my student assistants (directing/choreographic) on zoom today to prepare them to present our piece in the first drama informational session that is happening on Monday 30 August at 4 pm in D-207. I want to be able to give them exact details about how we are conducting auditions and callbacks. Allen and Chris, if music has such a first information meeting, or at music workshop, you should also present this material to get the word out. I can also have the Drama SEPC reps make an information poster and send it out.

Nitty gritty: First two weeks of school are in masks, then who knows. Should we set up a system by which students submit videos of themselves singing? Or do we want to wait and if need be, have them sing outside Jennings without a mask while accompanied by a piano inside? I will travel up to Bennington. I could make myself available for auditions on the evenings of Thursday and Friday, Oct 7 & 8. Then callbacks could be during the day on Saturday. On Sunday I need to drive back to CT for my brother's wedding. My goal would be to find our cast and post the list by Saturday evening. (Sue, could I crash on your couch or a bed at your place for auditions?)

A block of time could be set aside for a physical rehearsal to find the Feral Children, but I could do that with recorded music and the students, after we know which actors can sing the music.

Anna Maria, Allen and I have spoken about the possibility of having 2 actors playing G. This has to do with the enormous vocal demands. We would only pursue this if it could be seamlessly woven into the doubling that already exists in your piece.

Recap:

I inform students about the project today so we get it on everyone's radar from day one.

Allen, Chris and I meet on Monday to work out details re: auditions, callbacks, rehearsals, etc.

I run the audition and callback dates by Michael G to see if there are conflicts.

We problem solve the covid/singing situation at least for callbacks.

Very excited. Talk soon,

Jean

[Quoted text hidden]

Anna Maria Hong <ahong@mtholyoke.edu>

Sun, Aug 15, 2021 at 2:56 PM

To: Jean Randich <jrandich@bennington.edu>

Cc: Chris Rose <chrisrose@bennington.edu>, Allen Shawn <ashawn@bennington.edu>, Sue Rees <srees@bennington.edu>

Dear All,

Great to meet you, Chris, and thank you for these updates, Jean! Sounds great re: the auditions in October, and I very much look forward to them.

Very best!

Anna Maria

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Anna Maria Hong
Assistant Professor
Department of English
Shattuck Hall 208
Mount Holyoke College
she | her | hers