



ROBERT ELLSWORTH FENG

Librettist

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Robert Ellsworth Feng is a Chinese-American librettist from Kailua, HI who creates impactful and entertaining works who often find themselves interwoven with his identity and experiences as an Asian-American. Robert's goal is to help create an equitable industry and a stage that reflects the diverse and multicultural audiences of today.

Robert began writing libretti while attending the Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University, where he collaborated with several student composers to premiere their works including Terrence J. Martin's song cycle "Projections" for bass voice and piano, and Nick Bentz's monodrama "Mikylvxka Hllupo" for bass voice and Pierrot Ensemble.

Mr. Feng has gone on to premiere his first opera with Mr. Bentz titled "Having Guests for Dinner", a one-act horror-comedy opera. It made its virtual premiere with New Opera West in 2020 and has since received live performances with Hartford Opera Theater in 2021 for their New in November series and with the aforementioned New Opera West in 2022. In February 2024, the opera will receive its full length premiere with orchestra in association with /Kor/ Productions and Fredonia University. Robert has also worked with prolific NYC based composer Felix Jarrar; first on an art song titled "When they killed us, did you say they killed Americans?" as a response to the 2021 Atlanta Spa Shootings, and later in 2022 on the supernatural horror opera titled "You do not recognize the bodies in the water," which saw its workshop premiere at OPERA America. His third opera will be set to music by Christopher Drago Fistonich titled "The Enigma of Amigara Fault", based off of the short story by Junji Ito. Robert has since written the libretto for an oratorio detailing nuclear war titled "Annihilation" and is working with Nicholas Bentz on their next opera "Salmo", a grand space opera.

Robert is the recipient of the Peabody Career Development and holds degrees from Peabody Conservatory and Master's degree at Manhattan School of Music. Mr. Feng is currently a Resident Artist with Hawai'i Opera Theatre for their 2023-24 season.