



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 that 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.

Feng went on to premiere his first opera with Nick Bentz titled "Having Guests for Dinner", a 1-Act Horror/Comedy. It received 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 received its full-length premiere with the Western NY Chamber Orchestra, /Kor/ Productions, and SUNY Fredonia. Feng and Bentz plan to write their second opera titled "Salmo": a grand space opera in prologue and four acts set for 2026/27 at Brown University. Robert has also worked with prolific NYC based composer Felix Jarrar on the art song "When they killed us, did you say they killed Americans?" as a response to the 2021 Atlanta Spa Shootings, and the supernatural horror opera "You do not recognize the bodies in the water," which workshopped at OPERA America in 2022. Other upcoming projects include an adaptation of "The Enigma of Amigara Fault", based off of the short story by Junji Ito to be set to music by Chris Drago Fistonich, a staged oratorio detailing nuclear war titled "Annihilation" (composer TBA), and a micro-opera collaboration with composer Yunfei Li commissioned by Lyric Opera of Kansas City and No Divide KC to premiere June, 2024.

Robert is the recipient of the Peabody Career Development Award and holds degrees from Peabody Conservatory and Manhattan School of Music. Feng will join Lyric Opera of Kansas City and No Divide KC as a Librettist Fellow for their Come As You Are (CAYA) Fellowship.