

MICHAEL ROTH

Composer, Sound Designer, Arranger, Music Director, Pianist

1034 21st Street, #A
Santa Monica, CA 90403

4660 Louisiana Street
San Diego, CA 92116

626-437-2204

rothmusik1@gmail.com

<http://rothmusik.wix.com/rothmusik>

<https://www.thewebopera.com>

Michael Roth, whose work has been described as music “one could imagine Charles Ives composing had he lived long enough to encounter rock-and-roll and beat poetry,” is a composer, sound designer, music director, orchestrator, and pianist. His work encompasses chamber music, new opera and music/theatre, film, dance, his acclaimed THE WEB OPERA, and especially music and sound for theatre - over 250 productions throughout North America including Broadway, off-Broadway, Canada’s Stratford Festival, and as a resident artist at both La Jolla Playhouse (35 productions) and South Coast Repertory (57 productions). Michael has collaborated with, among others, Tom Hanks, Tom Stoppard, Christopher Plummer, Stacy Keach, many times with Randy Newman including music direction for Disney’s PRINCESS & THE FROG, and with Al Pacino on a new work-in-progress. He has taught sound design at UCSD, attended San Diego Opera’s Opera Hack (2021-22), and has workshopped projects at Sundance. Recent credits and works-in-progress include:

THE WEB OPERA* (2018-21) - self-produced filmed opera streaming at thewebopera.com, an official selection at 32 Film Festivals; collaboration with director Kate Jopson, poet Kate Gale, musicians, actors, singers and motion graphic digital artists; produced to support suicide prevention and the fight against cyberabuse; winner: Santa Monica Arts Commission Fellowship; New Music Gathering featured event-2021; launched 1/27/19; new episode to premiere in 2023

LAST WORDS OF UNCLE DIRT* (2022) - director, composer, sound designer; Soundstage audio play by Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig, commissioned by Playwrights Horizons; with Kok-Hwa Lie, Wu Man (pipa); streaming now: [UNCLE DIRT](#)

THE GOLEM OF LA JOLLA* (2019-23) - opera/music-theatre/film work-in-progress, collaboration with Allan Havis

AL PACINO SEMINAR (2022) - composing score for a work-in-progress Shakespeare project, collaboration with Al Pacino; derived from Julius Caesar, click here for more info and excerpts from the score: [PACINO](#)

HENRY IV (2018) – music/soundscape; Shakespeare Center of LA production with Tom Hanks as Falstaff, Daniel Sullivan, director

IMAGINATION DEAD IMAGINE* (2017-8) – music/theatre treatment of Samuel Beckett’s text (authorized by Beckett), for string quartet, recorded voices, and laptop, with Quartet Nouveau - world premiere: San Diego Jewish Arts Festival; LA premiere: Broad Stage (2017); Red Hen Press/Pasadena (2018); European Premiere: Beckett & Technology conference, Prague (2018); winner, American Composers Forum Subito grant; for more info: [Beckett](#)

A WORD OR TWO* (2012-14) – music, music direction; collaboration with Christopher Plummer, solo performance piece, Des McAnuff, director (Stratford Festival, Ahmanson Theatre/LA); more info: <https://vimeo.com/101955731>

PAMPLONA* (2016-8) – music, soundscape; collaboration with Stacy Keach, solo performance as Ernest Hemingway, Jim McGrath, writer, Robert Falls, director (Goodman Theatre); more info: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WF8m4mX1CFI>

THE TEMPEST (2010) – music, music direction, soundscape; Stratford production with Christopher Plummer, filmed for theatrical release and Bravo; Des McAnuff, director; more info: <http://rothmusik.wix.com/rothmusik#!film/c24kz>

RANDY NEWMAN’S FAUST* (1994-2023) - orchestrations/vocal arrangements; collaboration with Randy Newman; premiere productions (La Jolla Playhouse, Goodman Theatre, 1994-5), revised, City Center Encores (2014); upcoming production of the revised concert version - Soraya Performing Arts Center, Los Angeles (2023); more info: <https://vimeo.com/101107208>

THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG* (2009) – additional music direction and arrangements; Disney Animated Feature, songs by Randy Newman; more info, excerpts: <http://rothmusik.wix.com/rothmusik#!with-randy-newman/crjw>

THE NEW PLANET* (2018-21) - music/songs/soundscape for a new work-in progress music/theatre collaboration written with Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig, Maija Garcia (director); workshops/readings-Los Angeles, Minneapolis (2020)

JEWS & BASEBALL* (2010-11) – music, music direction; documentary by Peter Miller, featuring Sandy Koufax, Dustin Hoffman, narrator; theatrical release, co-produced by PBS; more info excerpt: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qb9nEdBskXg>

VENICE IS DEAD* (2018-21) - music/soundscape/pianist for a new work-in-progress collaboration created by Richard Montoya and Roger Guenveur Smith, Diane Rodriguez, director; for the Center Theatre Group, Los Angeles

LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT (2017) – music/soundscape; Geffen Playhouse/Broadway HD production, featuring Alfred Molina, Jane Kaczmarek; more info: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rStN-iqERHg>

SAPO* (2018) – composer/music direction/sound/pianist; collaboration with Culture Clash, from Aristophanes' FROGS (Getty Villa)

MELANCHOLY PLAY (2004) – music, songs, soundscape; collaboration with MacArthur Fellow Sarah Ruhl, west coast premiere; score used in productions worldwide; more info: <http://rothmusik.wix.com/rothmusik#!music-for-melancholy-play/c35j>

TWELFTH NIGHT (2011) – music, songs (with Des McAnuff), music direction; Stratford production with Brian Dennehy; filmed for theatrical release and Bravo; more info: <http://rothmusik.wix.com/rothmusik#!more-music-for-shakespeare/c1hv3>

THE PERSIANS (2003-6) - music/soundscape, live percussion score; premiere, Ellen McLaughlin's Aeschylus adaptation, Ethan McSweeney, director (National Actors Theatre/NY, Tony Randall, producer; Shakespeare Theatre, DC-Helen Hayes nominee)

KYRIE-MERCY-ANA M* (2007) - eight-part motet for a capella choir, premiere, American Composers Forum/LA salon; from music/theatre collaboration with Alice Ripley; more info: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AzEhZHYMIPE>

INVENTION OF LOVE, INDIAN INK (1998-2000) - music, music direction, soundscape; two American premieres, collaborations with Tom Stoppard, Carey Perloff, director - American Conservatory Theatre, Bay Area Critics Circle Nominations

THE BIRDS (1994-2004) - music/lyrics, music direction; music/theatre adaptation of Aristophanes with Culture Clash; South Coast Rep, Berkeley Rep; revised for Getty Villa; Bay Area Critics Award; more info: <https://vimeo.com/146066914>

THEIR THOUGHT & BACK AGAIN* (1994-6) - music/lyrics; chamber opera for soprano, alto, string quartet, piano, dancers; lyrics derived via cut-ups; more info: <http://rothmusik.wix.com/rothmusik#!their-thought---american-theatre-review-/c9yl>

WIT* (1995) - music/soundscape; world premiere production, Pulitzer Prize winning play by Margaret Edson (South Coast Rep)

FATS NOVEMBER* (2012-14) – piano sonata; more info: <http://rothmusik.wix.com/rothmusik#!fats-november---piano-sonata/c1tg0>

STREICH* (1988-2009) – chamber rag: flute, violin, viola, cello; winner, American Composers Forum/LA competition (2009; Athenaeum, La Jolla world premiere, 1988); more info: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p7wC647sG-g>

Additional Productions-Broadway - BROOKLYN BOY* (premiere by Donald Margulies, Daniel Sullivan, director, 2005); A WALK IN THE WOODS* (premiere by Lee Blessing, Des McAnuff, director, 1988)

Additional Productions-off-Broadway - SABINA, ST. IVES (2005), PEOPLE BE HEARD* (2004), TALKING HEADS (2003), DINNER WITH FRIENDS (Pulitzer Prize/Donald Margulies, Daniel Sullivan director, 1999), SIGHT UNSEEN* (1992)

Additional films - LOUELLA (2016), TERMITE (Hollywood Reel Indie, 2011); YOUR NAME HERE (Bill Pullman, 2008); HOLY DAYS (1998); BLOODHOUNDS OF BROADWAY (1989); more info: <http://rothmusik.wix.com/rothmusik#!film/c24kz>

Work with the United Nations/UCLA Center for International Medicine - music for films on Landmines, Combat Casualty Care, Family Planning (2006-12); more info: <http://rothmusik.wix.com/rothmusik#!the-un--ucla-international-medicine/celb>

Additional collaborations with, among others: Anne Bogart, Justin Ellington, Michael Greif, Beth Henley, Doug Hughes, Tom Hulce, Thomas Kail, Mark Lamos, James Lapine, Garry Marshall, Michael Mayer, Peter Sellars, Caridad Svich

As a pianist, accompanied singers from Alicia Keys to Madonna, Marni Nixon, Laura Osnes, Katey Sagal, & Michael McKean.

FURTHER CREDITS

Selected Additional Productions-La Jolla Playhouse (over 35 productions/resident composer, 1983-94): Sideways (2013), The Scottish Play* (2005), Eden Lane* (2003), Going to St. Ives (2000), Importance of Being Earnest (1998), Valley Song (1997), Good Person of Setzuan, Harvey (1994), Luck Pluck & Virtue*, Hairy Ape,(1993), Much Ado(1992), Fortinbras*, Three Sisters (1991), Twelfth Night (1990), Down the Road* (1989), Two Rooms*(1988), Hedda Gabler, The Matchmaker (1987), Three Cuckolds* (1986), Sea Gull (1985), As You Like It (1984), Romeo & Juliet, Simone Machard (1983)

Selected Additional Productions-South Coast Repertory (over 55 productions/resident artist, 1992-4): The Roommate (2017), The Whipping Man (Ovation/NAACP Award Nominee-2016); Rest* (2014), The Whale (2013), Misalliance (2010), What They Have*, Importance of Being Earnest (2008), Nothing Sacred (2006), Mr. Marmalade* (2004), Last Night of Ballyhoo (2003), All My Sons (2000), Summer Moon* (1999), Ah Wilderness (1998), Death of a Salesman (1997), Taming of the Shrew (1996), Cherry Orchard (1995), Night & Her Stars*, Streetcar Named Desire (1994), Great Day in the Morning* (1993), Noah Johnson* (1992), Extra Man* (1991), Man & Superman (1990), Abundance* (1989), The Crucible (1988)

Selected Additional Productions-Stratford Festival, Canada: Henry V (2012), As You Like It, Dangerous Liaisons (2010), Macbeth (2009), Romeo and Juliet (2008)

Selected Additional Productions-Old Globe Theatre, San Diego: A Body of Water*(2006), Compleat Female Stage Beauty (2004), Midsummer Night's Dream (2001), Dracula (1997), Gate of Heaven* (1996)

Selected Additional Productions-San Diego Rep: Beautiful North (2017), Oldest Boy (2015), Time of the Butterflies (2014), Doubt (2009), Death of a Salesman (1999), Death & the Maiden (1993), The Women (1992), Albanian Softshoe* (1988)

Selected Additional Productions-Bay Area: American Conservatory Theatre: Arcadia (1994, 2013), Streetcar Named Desire (1997), Rose Tattoo (1996); Berkeley Rep: Suddenly Last Summer (2003), Heartbreak House, Sight Unseen (1994-5)

Selected Additional Productions-Seattle: You Can't Take it With You (2008), The Women (2007), Doubt (2006), Enchanted April (2004), Summer Moon*, Pygmalion (1998), Taming of the Shrew (1997), Pericles, Harvey (1993)

Additional Productions-Guthrie Theatre: Body of Water* (2005), Romeo & Juliet (2004), Six Degrees (2003), Thief River (2002)

Additional Productions-Manhattan Theatre Club: Night & Her Stars (1996), Abundance (1990), Songs Mother Never Sang (1982)

Additional Collaborations with Anne Bogart: The Women (1992-4), La Dispute (UCSD), Cleveland* (1987), 1951* (UCSD, 1986)

Additional Collaborations with Mac Wellman: Allegory Of Whiteness* (music/theatre piece, Humana Festival, 2001); Obie-award winning premieres of Bad Penny*, Terminal Hip* (1989), Bitter Bierce* (2003); Lesser Magoo* (1997-9), tigertigtiger* (1997), Albanian Softshoe* (1988), Cleveland*, Energumen* (1985), Porcupine Man* (1984), Starluster* (1978)

Additional chamber work - TUESDAY FOR TOY PIANO (composed for Mark Robson/Boston Court, 2015); **NO END TO STAND ON** (Commissioned Chamber Rag-1985); **RAG FOR FIVE INSTRUMENTS** (Commissioned Chamber Rag-1982)

PUBLICATIONS, SPECIAL PROJECTS & EVENTS

What a Pair/LA-Duets for Women - 2002 Music Direction/Pianist/Orchestrator Jo Levi, Daniel Henning, Directors
Benefit for UCLA Breast Cancer Center with Debbie Harry, Megan Mullaly, Marni Nixon, Jean Smart, Rita Wilson

Musical Supervision/Editing for five Songbook/Anthologies for Alfred Music and Warner Bros Publications (1999-2010):

Randy Newman Anthology Randy Newman Anthology Two: Music for Film, TV, & Theatre
Bad Love Songbook Randy Newman Songbook Harps and Angels Songbook

TEACHING EXPERIENCE/POSITIONS HELD/GRANTS & AWARDS

Lecturer in Sound Design, Music Composition for Theatre, University of California, San Diego (2018-20)

West Coast Representative - Theatrical Sound Designers and Composers Association (TSDCA - 2016-21)

Music and Voice/La Jolla Playhouse Conservatory (1988-95)

Los Angeles Critics' Nominations - 1984, 1989
Los Angeles Dramalogue Award - 1986-8, 1992-9
Bay Area Critic's Circle Award - 1995, 1998, 2002
Santa Monica Arts Fellowship - 2017

Lila Wallace Foundation Grant - 1994-5
Meet the Composer - 1980, 1986-7, 1991-4
San Diego Critic's Circle Awards/Nominations -
1984-5, 1989-90, 1992, 1997, 2000-01, 2005, 2015

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts, cum laude (1975) - University of Michigan; Compositional Studies with William Bolcom

Master of Fine Arts (1993) - San Diego State University

LINKS TO FEATURE ARTICLES, INTERVIEWS

Global Village/Public Radio interview-THE WEB OPERA: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aCFHdGVAaGM>

Global Village/Public Radio interview-Beckett Premiere: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jzOOvPZRz0Y>

SCR-57 productions: http://southcoastrep.blogspot.com/2015/01/the-whipping-man-milestone-production.html#.VMb_9Uu9VJc

SCR-Nothing Sacred: <http://www.oeregister.com/entertainment/roth-98713-play-actors.html>

THEIR THOUGHT AND BACK AGAIN: <http://articles.latimes.com/1997/sep/21/entertainment/ca-34508>

(Denotes world premiere)*

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Further information, compositions, credits, and excerpts from reviews available - <http://rothmusik.wix.com/rothmusik>