WHY IS EARTHA KITT TRYING TO KILL ME?: A LOVE STORY
Composer: JEFFREY DENNIS SMITH | Librettist: DAVID JOHNSTON

Why is Eartha Kitt Trying to Kill Me?: A Love Story is a new one-act opera about a mysterious – and unlikely – murder suspect. A tour de force love story and mad scene all in one, a man shares his bizarre confession concerning the fate of a hot, young, art world star. Smith’s score blends elements of jazz with an edgy contemporary sound, creating an energy that propels the story forward.

Developed by American Lyric Theater, under the auspices of the Composer Librettist Development Program

Concert Performance: January 11, 2015
le poisson rouge | New York, New York
Presented by American Lyric Theater

ROLE
JB WILLIAMS (Tenor)*

*Role written for, and workshopped by Metropolitan Opera tenor Keith Jameson

INSTRUMENTATION
cl(bcl) / dmkit(perc) / pf / egtr(gtr) / vn, vc, db

DURATION
50'

JEFFREY DENNIS SMITH is currently a Resident Composer with the EtM Con Edison Composer’s Residency administered by Exploring the Metropolis in New York City. He was a Resident Artist with American Lyric Theater from 2011-2015 where he had the opportunity to study with Robert Beaser. He was selected to participate in the 2015 New Dramatists Composer-Librettist Studio, and in 2013 he received a scholarship to study at the European American Musical Alliance in Paris. His musical LIGHTNING MAN was presented as part of the ANT Fest 2011 at Ars Nova and was a semi-finalist for the 2015 Eugene O’Neill National Music Theater Conference. His piece TIGER DANCE was performed at the 2011 Percussive Arts Society International Convention and was recently released on an album by marimba soloist Scott Herring. He holds degrees from Tisch School of the Arts, Northwestern University and the University of Northern Iowa.

DAVID JOHNSTON’s New York productions with Blue Coyote Theater Group include CONEY, CONVERSATIONS ON RUSSIAN LITERATURE (also Germany), a new adaptation of THE ORESTEIA (Time Out Best of ’07); BUSTED JESUS COMIX (GLAAD nominee, London, Los Angeles, DC Cap Fringe, and Prague in 2016).Regional credits include THE GEORGE PLACE (Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theater). Projects with director Kevin Newbury include CANDY & DOROTHY (GLAAD winner, Wellfleet Harbor), THE EUMENIDES and the short award-winning film, MONSURA IS WAITING. Publications include LEAVING TANGIER (Samuel French), A FUNERAL HOME IN BROOKLYN (Smith & Kraus) and A NUMBER ON THE ROMAN CALENDAR (Applause Theatrebooks.).Playwriting awards: Theater Oxford, Berrilla Kerr Foundation Grant, Arch & Bruce Brown Foundation. Member: Actors Equity, Dramatists Guild, Charles Maryan’s Playwrights/Directors Workshop, and BMI Librettist Workshop. He was a Resident Artist with American Lyric Theater, where he wrote the libretto for the one-act opera WHY IS EARTHA KITT TRYING TO KILL ME? A LOVE STORY, with music by Jeffrey Dennis Smith. His opera, DAUGHTERS OF THE BLOODY DUKE, with music by Jake Runestad, was commissioned by Washington National Opera.

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