

Serenoid

All humanoids and other life-forms, organic and synthetic, are welcome to experience *Serenoid*, a ghostly, steampunk-flavoured story of queer romance and found family inspired by online fanfiction and its creative niche spaces, debuting this year at Tête-à-Tête Festival.

Xaven (Victoria Oruwari, soprano) is a brilliant engineer, esteemed by her colleagues who put her on a pedestal. But her blindness is isolating her. She has built a device for herself that can help her perceive, but it doesn't change the fact that people treat her differently and that she struggles with expressing her frustration. Until one day, she gets lost in the woods and stumbles upon a secret hidden away in an abandoned house. Blinded by the thunderstorm destroying her visual aid and attracted by a haunting melody played on a violin, she encounters Corrie (Taryn Surratt, mezzosoprano), a sentient synthetic lifeform trapped in the house. The lower half of their body has been rendered unfunctional, their passion for music in form of their violin is all they have left. Out of necessity, Xaven and Corrie agree to "fix" each other's technical issues, causing Xaven to return to the house every night to work. But whilst they solve each others' engineering problems, they start growing together and alongside each other and find a unique connection. When Xaven's self-appointed arch-rival Merton (Philippe Eugusyene, baritone) learns of Corrie's existence, this connection becomes the basis for a new future together for Xaven and Corrie.

Originally an idea for a work of fan fiction, *Serenoid* is inspired by the many diverse and creative niche spaces that arise in online fan communities. Like so many others, the creative team behind this opera as well as the many wonderful performers featured in it have been inspired by its stories and the rich worlds of imagination behind them to overcome whatever stands in our way.

Characters like us haven't always been present on stage or in the media. So we've found each other in the creative online spaces of niche culture and bonded with likeminded people, formed connections and realized that we were part of a hive mind that makes up its own stories reinterpreting the characters we love to find identity and representation.

Serenoid is a story born out of one of those spaces. Before it's a love story, it's a story about found family and overcoming isolation and loneliness, which is what online communities and its creative niche spaces like fan fiction culture helped many of us to do. The world is a rich and diverse place with space for all of us to learn from each other and we aim to reflect this in the stories we put on stage.

This project is generously supported by **PRS Foundation Women Make Music, Arts Council England, Help Musicians UK and Stichting De Zaaier Den Haag.**



To learn more about our cast, crew and orchestra, please visit our website:

<https://robinclaremusic.wixsite.com/serenoid>

Creatives, Cast and Ensemble

Libretto: Robin Fiedler & Wyatt Gaer

Idea: Siouxie Gagné

Music & Sound Design: Robin Fiedler

Conductor: Will Gardner

Director: Edie Bailey

Production: Robin Fiedler & Tête-à-Tête

Stage design & Lighting: Edie Bailey

Tech: David Salter/ Tête-à-Tête

Illustrations & Graphic Design: Wyatt Gaer

Costumes: Ben Henderson/Robin Fiedler

Hair & Make-up: Lidia Hughes-Rodríguez

Xaven: Victoria Oruwari (soprano)

Corrie: Taryn Surratt (mezzosoprano)

Merton: Philippe Eugusyene (baritone)

Violin I: Julia Mizuki Hart

Ghost Violin (recorded): Anna Victoria Marquéz

Violin II: Angelika Stangl

Viola: Nicole Stefani

Violoncello: Cameron Smith

Piano: Lance Mok

Clarinet: Poppy Beddoe

Bassoon: Daria Phillips/Amy Thompson

Chorus: Vicki Stilwell (soprano), Miranda Ostler (alto), Daisy Rushton (tenor), Vivek Haria (bass)

Many thanks also to the many people outside of the production without whom this could never have happened, specifically:

Anne Tickell, who provided most of the beautiful set pieces from her house and hosted Robin and Philippe for the time of the production,

As well as Heide Fiedler, Calliope Tsoupaki, Martijn Padding, Pete Harden, Zygmund de Somogyi, Lily Baker and Alam Hernández Ramírez