

RINDE ECKERT – LIBRETTIST/DIRECTOR

Rinde Eckert, the 2009 recipient of The Alpert Award in the Arts for his contributions to Theatre and finalist for the 2007 Pulitzer Prize in Drama, is a writer, composer, performer and director. His Opera / New Music Theatre productions have toured throughout America, and to major festivals in Europe and Asia.

Eckert's career began as a writer/performer in the 1980's, writing librettos for Paul Dresher (*Pioneer, Power Failure, Slow Fire, Ravenshead*). Working subsequently with choreographers Margaret Jenkins and Sarah Shelton Mann, he began composing dance scores, including the evening-length *Woman, Window, Square* for The Margaret Jenkins Dance Company. Eckert began composing and performing his own music/theater pieces with *The Gardening of Thomas D*, his 1992 homage to Dante which was performed on tour in the United States and France. His staged works for solo performer include *An Idiot Divine, Romeo Sierra Tango and Quit This House*. He wrote *Shoot the Moving Things* and *Four Songs Lost in a Wall* for radio. Rinde Eckert's recent writing credits include *Horizon* (2007-08 Drama Desk Nominations: Best Play and Best Director, Lucille Lortel Award: "Unique Theatrical Experience"); *Orpheus X* (Pulitzer Prize nomination); *Highway Ulysses* and *Four Songs Lost in a Wall* (The American Academy of Arts and Letters 2005 Marc Blitzstein Award); *And God Created Great Whales* (OBIE Award: Best Performance, Drama Desk Nomination: "Unique Theatrical Experience"); and the two, one-act plays *An Idiot Divine*.

His work for the theater has been produced by American Repertory Theatre, The Foundry Theatre, Culture Project, Center Stage in Baltimore, Dobama Theatre Company and Berkeley Repertory Theater. Tony Taccone, Robert Woodruff, David Schweizer, Richard ET White and Ellen McLaughlin have directed his plays. Rinde Eckert has directed his own and others' plays and operas for The Asia Society, Juggernaut Theater, Opera Piccola and the Paul Dresher Ensemble.

Current writing and directing projects include: *The Schick Machine* with virtuoso percussionist Steven Schick in a solo-theater work composed/produced by Paul Dresher; *Slide* with composer/guitarist Steven Mackey and eighth blackbird debuts in June 2009 at the Ojai Festival and will tour nationally in 2010; and *Imaginary City* with So Percussion debuts in Fall 2009 at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. Previous new music collaborations include *Sound Stage* for the ensemble Zeitgeist, and Steven Mackey's oratorio *Dream House*. Mackey and Eckert are members of BIG FARM, the 4-person 'prog-rock' band. Rinde Eckert's uniquely eclectic music is available on the Intuition label in Germany and through Songline/Tonefield Productions. The critically acclaimed *Sandhills Reunion* (music by Jerry Granelli, text by Eckert) was released in 2005.

Following his success teaching a course in creativity at Princeton University in 2007, Eckert begins a 3-year residency in Spring 2009. He was the 2008 Granada Artist-in-Residence at the University of California at Davis Department of Theater and Dance where he wrote and directed *Fate and Spinoza*, and is currently in partnership with the University of Iowa to create, direct and perform in *Eye Piece*, a play exploring the loss of vision. Rinde Eckert lives in New York with his wife, Ellen McLaughlin, the playwright and actress.

http://www.rindeeckert.com/rinde/rinde_bio.html

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