

Hyperopera Methodology

A through-composed opera

Cliff and Cleo are in their 90's.
Cliff gets sick and dies.
Cleo dies shortly thereafter.

The End

Couple Form

The story of Cliff and Cleo is the story of a couple that spans the entire 21st century.

The construction of the details of their life will unfold using improvisation and through-composition.

Cliff and Cleo will be played by 3 sets of performers.

Each pair will perform 3 decades of the couple's life.

In the following outline, the male performers will be represented by numbers, the females by letters

Couple 1A, 2B, and 3C

Composition

In this work, through the use of musical themes, composers will represent the interaction of cultural movements throughout the 21st century. This tapestry of societal consonance and dissonance will be woven together by investigating different cultural trends (X's), representing them through orchestration (Y's), and allowing them to overlap and play themselves out through the live improvisational interpretation of the performance orchestra.

The instrument of the performance orchestra will have at their disposal, 10 different motifs, one for each decade, which will serve as the fabric to be woven.

X= trend

Y=instrument

*= musical motif

	Couple 1A			Couple 2B			Couple 3C		
Decade:	10's	20's	30's	40's	50's	60's	70's	80's	90's
X1=Y1	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
X2=Y2	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
X3=Y3	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

Each Composer will:

- 1: Chose a different cultural trend.
- 2: Research the history and projections of this trend.
- 3: Develop a projective musical narrative consisting of one motif for each decade (9 total)
- 4: Meet with other composers to compare narratives.
- 5: Refine motives to:
 - A) Give a larger coherence to the arc
 - B) Give more interactive, improvisatory freedom in each decade.
- 6: Together, the composers will create 3 different choral pieces that will be sung by the each of the three couples (1A, 2B, 3C) at three different points in the opera.

Performance

1. Each performer will develop a personal vocabulary for their character. This vocabulary will be based on that performer's multimedia (or single medium) abilities.

- Example of Vocabularies

- A) Vocal palette
- B) Movement (gestures, shapes, actions)
- C) Objects
- D) Technology
- E) etc.

2. Over the course of the opera, these vocabularies will be ordered and synthesized to create a multidimensional COUPLE who will progress and change over the 3 sections of the century.

3. Using music as their context, and collaborating in a weekly improvisational setting with writers, composers, and choreographers, performers will develop a reservoir of motifs for their vocabulary

Each letter on the vocabulary list will have 3 motives associated with it. Having 3 for each letter will allow the performer the flexibility in a performance setting to choose from a dynamic selection of responses.

- Example of Vocabulary

□-----continuum-----□

A) Vocal qualities	1	2	3
B) Movements (body position)	1	2	3
C) Objects	1	2	3
D) Technology	1	2	3
E) etc.	1	2	3

Composition and Performance

X= Trend
 Y=Instrument
 *= Musical motif
 #= Performer motif

Couple 1A

Decade:	10's	20's	30's
---------	------	------	------

Orchestra:

(X1=Y1)	*	*	*
(X2=Y2)	*	*	*
(X3=Y3)	*	*	*

Performers:

A #(1,2,3)	A #(1,2,3)	A #(1,2,3)
B #(1,2,3)	B #(1,2,3)	B #(1,2,3)
C #(1,2,3)	C #(1,2,3)	C #(1,2,3)
D #(1,2,3)	D #(1,2,3)	D #(1,2,3)

Larger formal ideas:

- A) Decades can be placed artfully out of order.
- B) The three couple's stories can unfold in different locations throughout the building. While each couple never breaks character, there are long lulls in each couple's dramatic action which allows another couple to "pass by" and pick up the narrative. Like a living flashback/flashforward.

Rehearsal ideas:

- A) Members of the hyperopera bring in new improv exercises each week.
- B) Members bring in new motives (any medium) to try out each week.
- B) Motives, text, music, movement, created in rehearsal.