

Philip Venables

(siehe unten für die Deutsche Fassung)

(Valid for 25/26 Season. Please do not edit without permission)

FULL VERSION

Philip Venables has been described as a “*composer of ferocious dramatic instincts*” and “*an arrestingly original musical personality*” by Alex Ross in The New Yorker and as “*one of the finest composers around*” by the Guardian. Philip’s output covers opera, music theatre, multimedia and text-based concert works, sound installation and chamber music, with a strong emphasis on storytelling. Next season sees the premiere of a new music theatre collaboration with Jennifer Walshe.

Philip’s most recent opera, *We Are The Lucky Ones* (Dutch National Opera, Ruhrtriennale) with director/dramatist Ted Huffman and playwright Nina Segal was premiered in March 2025 to 5-star reviews from the Dutch and international press, and was Critics’ Pick in the New York Times: “*an opera as compact and overwhelming as Wozzeck... a portrait of a generation told with compassion, wisdom and artfulness... the creators of “We Are the Lucky Ones” push the boundaries of opera.*”

In 2023, the music theatre work *The Faggots and their Friends Between Revolutions* (Manchester International Festival, Festival d’Aix-en-Provence, Bregenzer Festspiele, Southbank Centre, Holland Festival, Ruhrtriennale), with director/dramatist Ted Huffman, was acclaimed as “*irresistibly, unforgettably compelling*” by the Guardian and “*an astonishing feat of controlled chaos... Venables’ score is a delirious stylistic fantasia*” by the New York Times.

Philip’s second opera *Denis & Katya* (Opera Philadelphia, Music Theatre Wales, Opéra Orchestre National Montpellier), with director/dramatist Ted Huffman, won the 2019 Fedora Generali Prize for Opera and the 2020 Ivor Novello Award for Best Opera, was shortlisted for an International Opera Award, and was named by Operabase as one of the most performed new operas worldwide in the last decade. Critics have called it “*an intimate, haunting triumph*” (New York Times), “*a monumental, dramatically shattering event*” (Parterre Box), and “*the most brilliantly original operatic work I’ve seen in a decade... a sensitive, subtle and deeply questioning meditation on youth, voyeurism, and the age of social media*” (Musical America).

Philip’s first opera, *4.48 Psychosis* (Royal Opera, London), was the first ever permitted adaptation of any of British playwright Sarah Kane’s work. The opera won the 2016 UK Theatre Award for Opera, the 2017 Royal Philharmonic Society Award for Large-scale Composition and the 2017 British Composer Award for Stage Work, and was nominated for an Olivier Award and Sky Arts South Bank Award. Subsequent productions have happened in New York City (Prototype), Strasbourg (Opéra National du Rhin), Dresden (Semperoper) and Munich (Reaktorhalle / Bayerische Theaterakademie). Critics described it: “*A new brand of opera*” (The Times) “*rawly powerful and laceratingly honest*” (The Telegraph); “*A Gesamtkunstwerk of unbelievable intensity*” (Klassikfavori); “*he ambushes and refreshes an old art form.*” (The Observer); “*opening our eyes to what musical theatre is capable of*” (The Times Literary Supplement); “*one of the most exhilarating operas in years*” (The Spectator).

Recent concert works include *Answer Machine Tape, 1987*, based on the audio archive material from artist and AIDS activist David Wojnarowicz; *My Favourite Piece is the Goldberg Variations* (Text: Ted Huffman) and *Numbers 81–85 and 96–100* (Text: Simon

Howard). These works have been performed at festivals including HCMF, Time of Music, November Music, Festival d'Automne à Paris, Rainy Days, Klang Festival and Musica Festival Strasbourg. *Answer Machine Tape*, 1987 was shortlisted for an Ivors Classical Award in 2023.

Philip collaborates extensively in cross-media work, including with artist Douglas Gordon on *Bound to Hurt* (HAU Theater Berlin, Kampnagel Hamburg, Theater Basel), with drag/performance artist David Hoyle on *Illusions* (London Sinfonietta, UK New Music Biennial), and sound installation *Canal Street* (Manchester International Festival/ Manchester Camerata), with violinist Pekka Kuusisto on *Venables plays Bartók* (BBC Proms/BBC Symphony Orchestra); and with Mahogany Opera and Ted Huffman on a 'snappy opera' for children *The Big History of Little England*. Philip's debut album *Below the Belt* was released on NMC in 2018: "*unmissable... music of forensic clarity and visceral force – but also great tenderness and generosity*" (BBC Music Magazine).

Philip was featured composer at the 2021 Festival d'Automne à Paris, including a new large-scale sound installation for l'Église Saint-Eustache, and in the same season made their professional conducting début with the London Sinfonietta. Philip was a Yaddo Fellow in 2023, a MacDowell Fellow with Ted Huffman in 2017 and in the Opera Creation Workshop at Aix-en-Provence Festival in 2019. He studied at Cambridge University and then with Philip Cashian and David Sawyer at the Royal Academy of Music, which elected him as Associate (ARAM) in 2016 for their contribution to composition. Philip completed their doctorate in 2016 while Doctoral Composer in Residence at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and the Royal Opera House with Julian Philips and James Weeks.

Philip is represented by OWL Artist Management and published by Opera Edition and Ricordi Berlin.

www.philipvenables.com

MEDIUM VERSION

As a "*composer of ferocious dramatic instincts*" (Alex Ross, The New Yorker), Philip Venables' output covers opera, music theatre, multimedia and text-based concert works, sound installation and chamber music, with a strong emphasis on storytelling.

We Are The Lucky Ones (2025, Dutch National Opera, Ruhrtriennale), written with Ted Huffman and Nina Segal, received 5-star reviews the Dutch and international press, and was Critics' Pick in the New York Times who called it "*an opera as compact and overwhelming as Wozzeck*..." a portrait of a generation told with compassion, wisdom and artfulness."

The Faggots and their Friends Between Revolutions (2023, Manchester International Festival, Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, Bregenzer Festspiele, Ruhrtriennale, Southbank Centre, Holland Festival), with Ted Huffman, was acclaimed as "irresistibly, unforgettably compelling" by the Guardian and "*an astonishing feat of controlled chaos... Venables' score is a delirious stylistic fantasia*" by the New York Times.

Philip's second opera *Denis & Katya* (Opera Philadelphia, Music Theatre Wales, Opéra National Montpellier), with Ted Huffman, won the 2019 Fedora Generali Prize and an 2020 Ivor Novello Award, and was cited by Operabase as one of the most performed new operas worldwide in the last decade. Critics have called it "*an intimate, haunting triumph*" (New York Times) and "*a monumental, dramatically shattering event*" (Parterre Box).

Philip's first opera, *4.48 Psychosis* (Royal Opera, London), was the first ever permitted adaptation of British playwright Sarah Kane's work. The opera won a 2016 UK Theatre Award, a 2017 Royal Philharmonic Society Award and a 2017 British Composer Award, and was nominated for an Olivier Award and Sky Arts South Bank Award. Subsequent productions appeared in New York City, Strasbourg, Dresden and Munich. Critics described it as: "*rawly powerful and laceratingly honest*" (The Telegraph); "*A Gesamtkunstwerk of unbelievable intensity*" (Klassikfavori); "*opening our eyes to what musical theatre is capable of*" (The Times Literary Supplement); and "*one of the most exhilarating operas in years*" (The Spectator).

Philip collaborates extensively, including with artist Douglas Gordon on *Bound to Hurt* (HAU Theater Berlin, Kampnagel Hamburg, Theater Basel), with performance artist David Hoyle on *Illusions* (London Sinfonietta, UK New Music Biennial), and sound installation *Canal Street* (Manchester International Festival), with Andreas Borregaard on *My Favourite Piece is the Goldberg Variations* (Text: Ted Huffman), with Zubin Kanga and Simon Hendry on *Answer Machine Tape, 1987*, with violinist Pekka Kuusisto on *Venables plays Bartók* (BBC Proms/BBCSO); and with Mahogany Opera and Ted Huffman on a 'snappy opera' for children *The Big History of Little England*. Philip's debut album *Below the Belt* was released on NMC in 2018: "*unmissable... music of forensic clarity and visceral force – but also great tenderness and generosity*" (BBC Music Magazine).

Philip was featured composer at the 2021 Festival d'Automne à Paris, a Yaddo Fellow in 2023 and a MacDowell Fellow in 2017 and 2024. He studied at Cambridge University, the Royal Academy of Music, which elected him as Associate (ARAM) in 2016, and later as Doctoral Composer in Residence at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and the Royal Opera House.

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SHORT VERSION

Collaborative composer Philip Venables is described as "*an arrestingly original musical personality*" by Alex Ross in The New Yorker and as "*one of the finest composers around*" by The Guardian. Philip's work covers opera, music theatre and multimedia concert works, with a focus on storytelling.

Philip's previous music-theatre works, *4.48 Psychosis* (2016, text: Kane), *Denis & Katya* (2019, text: Huffman), *The Faggots and their Friends Between Revolutions* (2023, text: Huffman after Mitchell) and *We Are The Lucky Ones* (2025, text: Huffman & Segal), have been performed by leading companies in London, New York City, Paris, Amsterdam, Strasbourg, Manchester, Aix-en-Provence, Dresden, Philadelphia, Hannover and Montpellier. The operas have won the Fedora Prize, an RPS Award, and an Ivor Novello Award, as well as shortlisted nominations for an Olivier Award and South Bank Award. The Times branded *4.48 Psychosis* "a new brand of opera", Opera Today said *Denis & Katya* "*challenges the ear, the eye, and the soul to accept a wholly new hybrid form of operatic expression*" and The New York Times called *We Are The Lucky Ones* "*an opera as compact and overwhelming as Wozzeck.*"

Concert works include *Answer Machine Tape, 1987*; *My Favourite Piece is the Goldberg Variations* (Text: Ted Huffman); a series of pieces based on *Numbers* by poet Simon Howard; *Illusions* and *Canal Street* with drag/performance artist David Hoyle; and *Venables plays Bartók* with violinist Pekka Kuusisto for the BBC Proms. Philip's

album *Below the Belt* was released on NMC in 2018: “*music of forensic clarity and visceral force — but also great tenderness and generosity*” (BBC Music Magazine).

Philip studied at Cambridge University and the Royal Academy of Music London, who elected him Associate in 2016. He has been a fellow at Yaddo and MacDowell, and was Doctoral Composer in Residence with the Royal Opera Covent Garden and the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in 2014–2016.

www.philipvenables.com

Kurze Version auf Deutsch

Der kollaborative Komponist Philip Venables wurde von Alex Ross im New Yorker als eine „*fesselnde, originelle, musikalische Persönlichkeit*“ beschrieben und der Guardian nennt ihn „einen der besten Komponisten von heute“. Sein Werk umfasst Oper, Musiktheater und Multimedia-Konzertwerke, wobei der Schwerpunkt auf Storytelling liegt.

Philip Venables Musiktheaterwerke, *4.48 Psychosis* (2016, Text: Kane), *Denis & Katya* (2019, Text: Huffman), *The Faggots and their Friends Between Revolutions* (2023, Text: Huffman nach Mitchell) und *We Are The Lucky Ones* (2025, Text: Huffman & Segal), wurden von renommierten Ensembles unter anderem in London, New York City, Paris, Amsterdam, Straßburg, Manchester, Aix-en-Provence, Dresden, Philadelphia, Hannover und Montpellier aufgeführt. Die Opern gewannen den Fedora Prize, einen RPS Award und einen Ivor Novello Award und wurden für einen Olivier Award und einen South Bank Award nominiert. Die Times bezeichnete *4.48 Psychosis* als „eine neue Opernmarke“, Opera Today sagte, *Denis & Katya* „fordert das Ohr, das Auge und die Seele heraus, eine völlig neue hybride Form des Opernausdrucks zu akzeptieren“ und die New York Times nannte *We Are The Lucky Ones* „eine Oper so kompakt und überwältigend wie *Wozzeck*“.

Die Konzertwerken umfassen *Answer Machine Tape, 1987*; *My Favourite Piece is the Goldberg Variations* (Text: Ted Huffman); eine Werkreihe nach *Numbers* des Dichters Simon Howard basieren; *Illusions* und *Canal Street* mit dem Drag/Performance-Künstler David Hoyle; und *Venables plays Bartók* mit dem Geiger Pekka Kuusisto für die BBC Proms. Philips Debütalbum *Below the Belt* wurde 2018 bei NMC veröffentlicht: „eine Musik von forensischer Klarheit und viszeraler Kraft – aber auch von großer Zärtlichkeit und Großzügigkeit“ (BBC Music Magazine).

Philip studierte an der Cambridge University und an der Royal Academy of Music in London, die ihn 2016 zum Associate erhob. Er war MacDowell Fellow und Yaddo Fellow und war 2014–2016 Doctoral Composer in Residence an der Royal Opera Covent Garden und der Guildhall School of Music & Drama.

Philip wird von OWL Artist Management vertreten und von Opera Edition und Ricordi Berlin verlegt.

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