

### **Education**

- Master of Fine Arts (Composition), Princeton University (1995-1999)
- Master of Music (Composition), University of Toronto (1983-84)
- Bachelor of Music (Composition), University of Toronto (1979-83)

### **Awards**

- Johanna Metcalf Performing Arts Prize, 2019
- JUNO Award nomination, Best Classical Composition (*Breathe*), 2018
- Dora Mavor Moore Award nominations, Best Original Opera, 2009 and 2018
- Choral Canada, Outstanding Choral Work Award (*Open Road*), 2014
- Jules Léger Prize for Chamber Music, Canada Council, 2006
- Louis Applebaum Composition Award, Ontario Arts Foundation, 2005
- K. M. Hunter Music Award, Ontario Arts Council, 2003
- Selected work (*Fêtes de la Faim/Plainte*), ISCM World Music Days, Seoul, Korea, 1997

### **Grants & Fellowships**

- Chalmers Arts Fellowship, Ontario Arts Council, 2013
- Guggenheim Fellowship, 2000
- Opera.ca Canadian Opera Creation Program Professional Development Grant, 2004
- Toronto Arts Council grants, various, 1994 - 2021
- Canada Council Project Grants, various, 1990 - 2023
- Naumberg Fellowship, Princeton University, 1995-99

### **Commissions**

- Ontario Arts Council, various, 1991 - 2022
- Canada Council, various, 1992 - 2023
- CBC Radio, 2002, 1993, 1991
- Laidlaw Foundation, 1999 - 2005

### **Performances (selected)**

#### **Canada:**

**Ensembles:** Amici Chamber Players (2003), Arraymusic (1987, 1998, 2001), Aventa Ensemble (2011, 2013), Continuum Contemporary Music (1988 - 2011), Gallery Players (2000 - 2007), Soundstreams (2001 - 2013), Toca Loca (2005), Vancouver New Music Soc. (1991, 2013), Hemispheres (1992-95)

**Soloists:** **Piano:** Stephen Clarke (2000), Marc Couroux (1995), Eve Egoyan (2000, 2001), Jamie Parker (2005), Laurent Philippe (1993), Barbara Pritchard (1990); **Voice:** Barbara Hannigan (1991, 1993, 1997, 2004), Curtis Sullivan (1995), Measha Brüggergosman (2001), Patricia O'Callaghan (2005), Lawrence Wiliford (2012), Brett Polegato (2014); **Accordion:** Joseph Petric (2005); **Violin:** Mark Fewer (2001), Jacques Israelivitch (2006); **Percussion:** Beverley Johnston (2009)

**Choirs:** Elmer Iseler Singers (Toronto, 2002), University of Alberta Madrigal Singers (2001), Elora Festival Singers (2003, 2004), Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir (2002), Netherlands Chamber Choir (2005), Tafelmusik Chamber Choir (2012), Choir 21, Toronto (2013)

**Orchestras:** Esprit Orch. (1994), Kitchener-Waterloo Symph. Orch. (2005), New Jersey Symph. Orch. (1996), Toronto Symph. Orch. (2000), Victoria Symphony (2014), Vancouver Symphony (2018)

**Opera:** Queen of Puddings Music Theatre Company (1994, 1998-2000, 2009), Tapestry New Opera (2004, 2006, 2018), Toronto Masque Theatre (2004, 2007, 2013, 2017), Canadian Opera Company (2006, 2015), Vancouver Opera (2018)

**USA:** Bang On A Can All-Stars (New York, NY; 1999); Cassatt Quartet (Princeton, NJ; 1998); Composers Guild of New Jersey (Princeton, NJ; 1995); Composers' Ensemble (Princeton, NJ; 1995-99); Michigan Opera Theatre (Opera America New Works Showcase, Detroit, MI; 2005); Nancy Zeltsman, marimba (New York, NY, Boston, MA; 2001, 2009); Kathy Supové, piano (Princeton, NJ; 1997)

**Europe:** Asko Ensemble (Amsterdam, Netherlands, 2008); Ensemble Contrechamps de Genève (Abbaye de Royaumont, France; 1991); Ensemble Avant Garde (Seoul, Korea; 1997); Ives Ensemble (Amsterdam, Netherlands; 1994, 1996, 1997); Ixion Ensemble (London, UK; 1992); Tasmin Little, violin (London, UK; 1988); Nieuw Ensemble (Amsterdam & Rotterdam, Netherlands; 1992, 1993); John Snijders, piano (Amsterdam, Netherlands; 1995)

**Oceania:** 175 East (Auckland and Wellington, New Zealand; 2000); Stroma (Wellington, NZ, 2012)

### **Recordings**

*Wound Turned to Light: New Songs by James Rolfe.* Alex Samaras, Jeremy Dutcher, Andrew Adridge, voices, with Lara Dodds-Eden, piano. Redshift TK540, 2023.

*Breathe: Music for voices and early instruments,* Suzie LeBlanc, Alex Dobson, Monica Whicher, David Fallis, Toronto Consort, Toronto Masque Theatre, Larry Beckwith. Centrediscs CD 24517, 2017. Nominated for Juno Award, 2018.

*Drop,* on “*Fancies and Interludes*”, Christina Petrowska Quilico and Jacques Israelivitch, Centrediscs CMCCD 21315, 2015.

*Raw: Chamber music by James Rolfe (raW and 7 other chamber works),* Continuum Contemporary Music, Centrediscs CMCCD 16210, 2011.

*Oboe Quartet,* on “*Canadian Oboe Quartets*”, The Gallery Players of Niagara, GPN09001, 2009.

*Idiot Sorrow,* on “*Transatlantic Swing*”, John Snijders, piano. Hat[now]ART CD149, 2008.  
- Also on “*The View From Here*”, Barbara Pritchard, piano; Centrediscs CD 6298, 1998.

*Worry,* on “*String Theory*”, Mark Fewer, Violin; Rosemary Thomson, conductor. Eclectra CD ECCD-2074, 2006.

*Come lovely and soothing death and Three Songs,* on “*my soul, there is a country...*”, University of Alberta Madrigal Singers, Leonard Ratzlaff, conductor. Arktos CD200149, 2001.

### **Upcoming projects**

- *Wound Turned to Light*, CD of recent songs to Canadian poets, with Alex Samaras, Jeremy Dutcher, and Andrew Adridge, voices; Lara Dodds-Eden, piano; release Oct. 13, 2023
- *Passage* for solo piano, premiere 26 Nov. 2023, Dartmouth, NS
- *Pirate Party* for Canadian Children's Opera Company, with librettist Anna Chatterton, premiere May 2025, Toronto, ON
- New work for cello and piano, for Norm Adams & Barbara Pritchard, prem. TBA, Halifax, NS
- *Seven Things You Already Know*, for vocal quartet and early instruments, with writer André Alexis, for Soundstreams, Toronto, ON, premiere fall 2024
- *Penelope: A Ghost Opera*, libretto by Luke Hathaway, for Vocalypse; prem. 2024, Halifax, NS
- *Nigun*, for chamber ensemble, for Soundstreams, Toronto, ON, premiere 2025

### **Teaching, peer assessment, and volunteering**

Composition instructor (sessional), University of Toronto Faculty of Music, 2007 – present  
Composer mentor, Opera from Scratch Workshop, Vocalypse Prod., Halifax, NS, 2012 – present

Composer mentor: Tapestry Opera LibLab, Toronto, 2014; Soundstreams, 2018; Continuum, 2019  
Peer assessor: Canada Council for the Arts; Ontario Arts Council; Manitoba Arts Council  
President, Canadian League of Composers, 2007 – 2011; CLC National Council, 2005 – 2013

### **List of works (selected): James Rolfe**

#### **Solo works**

*Accordion Motel* (1993; accordion solo; 6 min.)  
*Four Alibis* (2022; piano; 20 min. 4 movements.)  
*Idiot Sorrow* (1990; piano; 12 min.)  
*Lilacs* (1999; piano; 12 min.)  
*Passage* (2023; piano; 20 min. 3 movements: 1. Roam; 2. Barcarolle; 3. Burble)  
*Sticky* (2009; solo marimba; 4 min. Pub. Edition Peters)  
*The Connection* (2001; words by Daniil Kharmis; solo marimbist who also recites; 10 min.)  
*Violin Motel* (1993; violin solo; 5 min.)

#### **Chamber music**

*And Then Grace* (1999; string trio; 12 min.)  
*As If* (2013; picc, ob, cl, bsn, hn, tpt, tbn, perc, hp, pno, 2 vlns, vla, vlc, CB; 15 min.)  
*Ask You Dance Me* (2008; picc, ob, b. cl, bsn, hn, tpt, tbn, perc, pno, 2 vlns, vla, vlc, CB; 14 min.)  
*Devilled Swan* (1995; perc., pno., vln., cb.; 7 min.)  
*Drop* (1999; violin and piano; 9 min.)  
*Freddy's Dead* (2005; piano, violin, cello; 3 min.)  
*Juggle* (2005; 2 oboes, cl., bass cl., bsn., contrabsn., 2 hns.; 11 min.)  
*Oboe Quartet* (2006; oboe, vln., vla., vlc.; 12 min.)  
*Railway Street* (1991; solo bass cl., perc., pno., vln., vlc., cb; 14 min.)  
*raW* (2003; piccolo, bass clarinet, piano, drum set, violin, cello; 12 min.)  
*Revenge! Revenge!!! Revenge!!!* (1995; cl., perc., pno., vlc.; 10 min.)  
*Squeeze* (1997; alto flute, clarinet, violin, viola, cello, piano; 8 min.)  
*Why You* (2013, 4 perc.; 12 min.)  
*Worry* (2001; violin and eight violoncelli; 10 min.)

#### **Chamber music with voice**

*Against Nature* (2016, song cycle, words by Alex Poch-Goldin; 2 bass-bar., vln., vlc., pno.; 60 min.)  
*Bird* (2005; composed with John Oswald; sopr. & ensemble 1111 1111 perc pno 1111; 5 min.)  
*Breathe* (2010; words by Hildegard von Bingen, Anna Chatterton, Antonio Scandello; 2 sopr., mezzo, recorder, violin, perc., chamber organ, lute; 19 min.)  
*Clinical Notes of the Bipolar Therapist* (2017; words by Steven Heighon; baritone, picc., bass cl., pno., perc., vln., vlc.; 17 min.)  
*Dust* (2003; words from Wilhelm Müller and Ecclesiastes; soprano and cello; 9 min.)  
*Fêtes de la Faim & Plainte* (1991; words by Arthur Rimbaud and Sappho; sopr., cl., fl., perc., pno., vln., vlc.; 7 & 5 min.)  
*Five and a Half Bridges* (2012, song cycle, words: André Alexis; sop., choir, oud, setar, perc, gamba; 14 min.)  
*Fresh Face* (2013; soprano, harp; 3 min.)  
*I Think We Are Angels* (2018; song cycle, words by Else Lasker-Schüler; translated into English by composer; sopr., mezzo, tenor, bari., accordion; 40 min.)  
*O Greenest Branch* (2019; words by Hildegard von Bingen, Ephraim of Bonn, and Chaim Nachman Bialik; soprano, chorus SSAA, perc., organ; 17 min.)  
*Phrases* (1991; words by Arthur Rimbaud; soprano, clarinet, piano; 14 min.)  
*Simon & Garfunkel & The Prophets Of Rage* (1993; voice, perc., pno.; 13 min.)  
*Six Songs* (2001; song cycle, words by Walt Whitman; soprano and string quartet; also arranged for mezzo soprano, and for mezzo or soprano with piano; 15 min.)

*Tango: Del Amor Imprevisto* (2011; text: F. G. Lorca; contralto, vln., bandoneon, pno., bass; 4 min.)  
*Three Lampman Songs* (2016; words by Archibald Lampman; soprano, vln., vlc., piano; 10 min.)  
*Winter* (2012; song cycle, words by Archibald Lampman; tenor and 8 vlc.; 4 songs; 13 min.)

### **Voice(s) and piano**

*After the Love at Victoria Street* (2021; words: Boyd Warren Chubbs; baritone or other voice, piano; 3 min.)  
*and then a second dream* (2021; words: Luciano Iacobelli; baritone or other voice, piano; 3'30")  
*Asleep In Her Arms* (2022; words: Stephen Morrissey; baritone or other voice, piano; 3'30")  
*Beloved* (2005; words: Dennis Lee; soprano, mezzo, & piano; 8 min.)  
*Bombastic* (2022; words: George Elliott Clarke; baritone or other voice, piano; 2'30")  
*Burning In This Midnight Dream* (2022; words: Louise B. Halfe; baritone or other voice, piano; 3'15")  
*Caeneus* (2022; words: Luke Hathaway; baritone or other voice, piano; 1'45")  
*For Ariva, Because I Love Her* (2022; words: Irving Layton; baritone or other voice, piano; 2'30")  
*For E. J. P.* (2021; words: Leonard Cohen; baritone or other voice, piano; 4'30")  
*Four Songs on Poems by Walt Whitman* (1990; bass voice, pno.; 16 min.)  
*Happy Happy* (2019; tenor and piano; 1 min.)  
*If You See Me Fall* (2022; words: Luke Hathaway; baritone or other voice, piano; 2'15")  
*Joyce Songs* (2009; sopr., mezzo, ten., bar.: 8 songs: 2 T, 2B, 2 TB, 2 SMTB; all with piano; 15 min.)  
*Last Paddle* (2020; words: Richard Sanger; baritone or other voice, piano; 6 min.)  
*Marigold* (2022; words: A. F. Moritz; baritone or other voice, piano; 4'30")  
*Minuet* (2021; words: Astrid Brunner; baritone or other voice, piano; 2 min.)  
*Moon* (2020; words: Choucri Paul Zemokhol; baritone or other voice, piano; 3'15")  
*Moths* (2013; song cycle, words: André Alexis; baritone or bass-baritone, piano; 13 min.)  
*Namesake* (2020; words: Giovanna Riccio; baritone or other voice, piano; 5 min.)  
*Nepewisivin / Shame* (2022; words: Louise B. Halfe; baritone or other voice, piano; 7 min.)  
*Phoenix IV* (2021; words: Bānoo Zan; baritone or other voice, piano; 2'45")  
*Prelude* (2021; words: Astrid Brunner; baritone or other voice, piano; 3 min.)  
*Set Me As A Seal* (2021; words: Song of Songs; mezzo (or alto) and baritone, piano; 2 min.)  
*Six Illuminations* (2003; words: Arthur Rimbaud; soprano & piano; 10 - 18 min.)  
*Songs of Joy* (2022; words: Psalm 126; mezzo (or alto) and baritone, piano; 2'30")  
*Spirit Tree* (2022; words: Anna Yin; baritone or other voice, piano; 3 min.)  
*Swipe* (2005; words: Anna Chatterton; soprano & piano; 6 min.)  
*The Desert* (2022; words: Gwendolyn MacEwen; baritone or other voice, piano; 3'30")  
*The Way Spring Jabs* (2022; words: Ayesha Chatterjee; baritone or other voice, piano; 2'30")  
*Three Songs for Young Singers* (2017: *New Kittens; I See; A Day at the Park*; sopr., pno.; 6 min.)  
*To the Poet* (2021; words: George Elliott Clarke; baritone or other voice, piano; 1'45")  
*v* (2021; words: Amatoritsero Ede; baritone or other voice, piano; 2'45")  
*Water* (2022; words: Gwendolyn MacEwen; baritone or other voice, piano; 3 min.)  
*Wound Turned to Light* (2021; words: Andrea Thompson; baritone or other voice, piano; 4 min.)

### **Orchestral music**

*Ears, Nose, & Throat* (1994; orchestra: 2222/22/2, pno/66442; 12 min.)  
*Flourish* (2005; solo accordion and orchestra (2222 4231 timp 2 perc str); 27 min.)  
*Hope* (2011; orchestra (2222 2221 timp 2 perc str) and choir; 8 min.)  
*Mechanical Danny* (2000; words by Dennis Lee; for children; narrator with orch. 2222, 2221, timp., 1 perc., strings; also arranged with orch. 1111 1110 timp. perc. str.; 22 min.)  
*Open Road* (2013; soprano, baritone, choir SATB, string orchestra; 15 min.)  
*Songs and Rounds* (2001; recorders (1 part, beginners) and orch. 2222, 2221, 1 perc., str.; 5 min.)

### **Choral music**

*Blind* (2006; words by Dennis Lee; choir SSAATTBB; 8 min.)  
*Come lovely and soothing death* (2000; words by Walt Whitman; choir SSAATTBB; 5 min.)

*Four Anthems for Four Seasons* (2003; words from the Bible; choir SSSAAT<sup>\*</sup>TBB; 11 min.)  
*Garden* (2011; words from the Song of Songs; choir SSAAT<sup>\*</sup>TBB; 6 min.)  
*Kadosh / Sanctus / Holy* (2019; choir SSAATTB with violoncello; 6 min.)  
*Lullaby* (2010; words by Amanda Jernigan; choir SSAA, marimba; 4 min.)  
*O that you would kiss me* (2001; words: Song of Solomon; double choir, each SSAAT<sup>\*</sup>TBB; 16 min.)  
*Open Road* (2013; words by Walt Whitman; soprano, baritone, choir SATB, string orchestra; 15 min.)  
*Shadows* (2016; words by D. H. Lawrence; choir SATB; 8 min.)  
*Three Songs* (1998; words by E. Pauline Johnson; four women's voices SSAA; 8 min.)  
*Two Hopeful Songs for Children's Choir* (2010; words: Dennis Lee; choir SSAA; 4 min. 30 sec.)  
*Under the Sun* (2002; words from Ecclesiastes; eight choirs, each SATB; 8 min.)  
*When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd* (2006; words by W. Whitman; choir SSAAT<sup>\*</sup>TBB; 13 min.)  
*Winter Songs* (2017; words: Archibald Lampman & Walt Whitman; brass band with choir SSAAT<sup>\*</sup>TBB; 11')

### **Operas and music theatre**

*Aeneas and Dido* (2007; chamber opera, words by André Alexis; 3 sopr., mezzo, bar.; recorder, oboe, violin, viola, cello, harpsichord, lute; 34 min.)  
*Beatrice Chancy* (1998; libretto by George Elliott Clarke; opera for 6 voices (2 sopr., mezzo, 2 bari., bass), 2 vln., vla., vlc., bass, pno., perc.; 100 min.)  
*Crush* (2015; libretto by Anna Chatterton; opera for 6 voices (2 sopr., mezzo, tenor, bari., bass-bari.), vln., vlc., pno.; 100 min.)  
*Elijah's Kite* (2005; opera for young audiences; words by Camyar Chai; 2 sop., mezzo, ten., bar., chorus of children, perc., elec. bass, keyboard; 35 min.)  
*Europa* (2014; chamber opera, words by Steven Heighon; sopr., bar.; baroque flute, 2 violins, viola da gamba, portative organ, lute; 21 min.)  
*Fire* (1999; words by André Alexis; four women's voices SSAA; 12 min.)  
*Inês* (2008; libretto by Paul Bentley; opera for 5 voices (sopr., mezzo, Fadista, 2 bass baritones), clarinet, violin, bass, piano, guitar; 100 min.)  
*Orpheus and Eurydice* (2004; words by André Alexis; opera for 3 sopr., alto, 2 tenors, baritone, bass, 2 recorders, 2 violins, 2 viola da gambas, cello, harpsichord, theorbo; 36 min.)  
*The Overcoat* (2018; libretto by Morris Panych; opera for 11 singers and 12 instruments; 110 min.)  
*Pirate Song* (2017; libretto by Anna Chatterton; solo soprano; 11 min.)  
*Rosa* (2004; words by Camyar Chai; opera for sopr., tenor, cl., vln., vlc., pno., & perc.; 14 min.)  
*Swoon* (2006; chamber opera, words by Anna Chatterton; 2 sopr., ten., bar.; orch. 1111 1110 2 perc. hp. 11111; 50 min.)