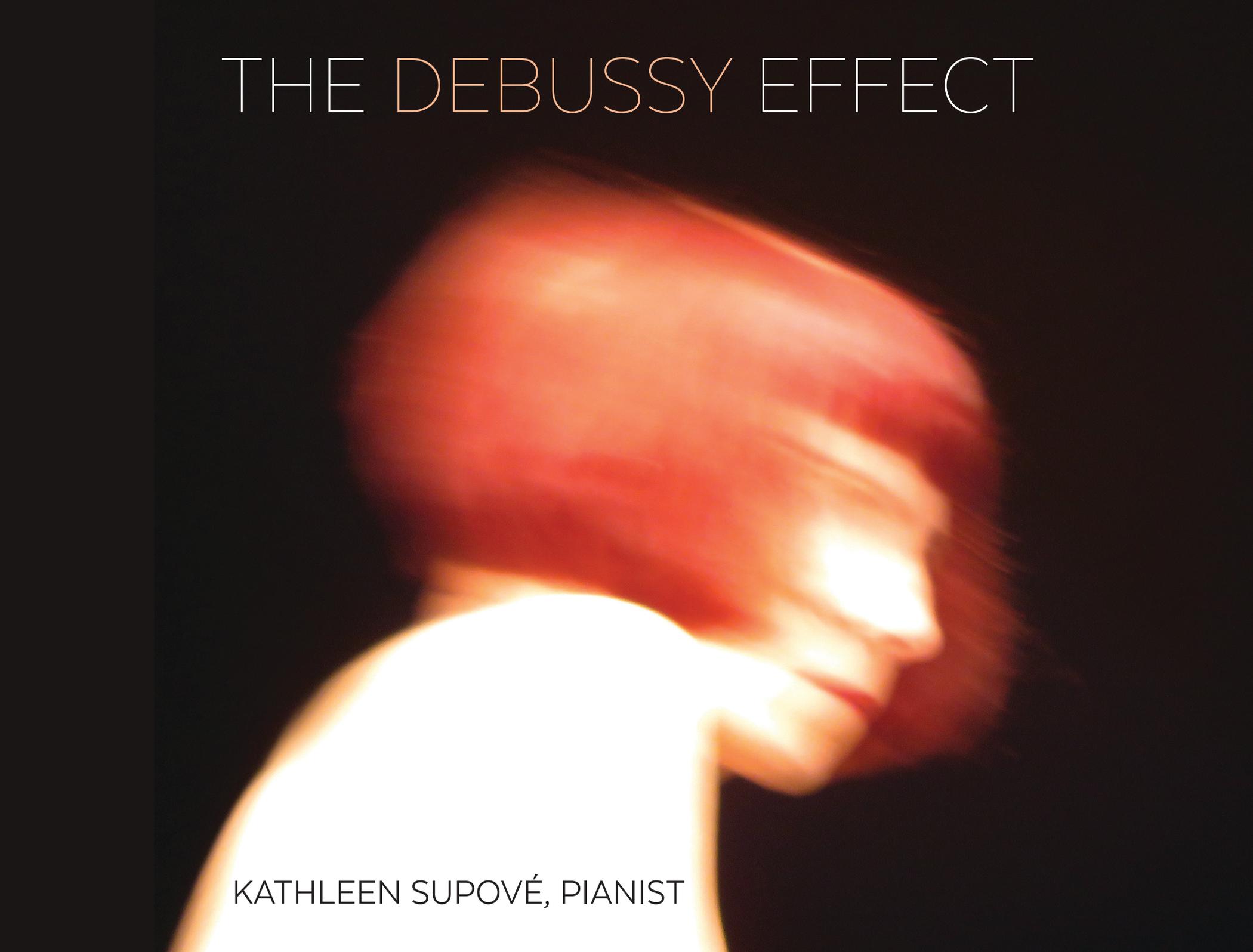


# THE DEBUSSY EFFECT

A blurred, artistic photograph of a person's head and shoulders in profile, illuminated with warm, reddish-orange light against a dark background. The image has a soft, out-of-focus quality, suggesting movement or a specific mood. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the contours of the face and neck.

KATHLEEN SUPOVÉ, PIANIST

What is it about Debussy that evokes such a reaction in audiences and musicians alike? Maybe it's their childhood memories of playing something from "Children's Corner"; maybe it's hearing "Claire de Lune" in a movie soundtrack; or maybe it's something deeper. There is a primal connection with those harmonies, one shared by people all over—when we hear his music in the concert hall, when we hear its traces in a Balinese gamelan, in baby boomer American rock music, in jazz harmonies, and elsewhere. His music seems to suggest a state of mind, too, envisioned in a very crystalline and personal way. We're each sure we've got the scoop on it, but each of us sees it differently!

Two things conspired to give me the idea for this project: the first was curating the "Music With A View" series at The Flea Theater in NYC. After each event, composers were interviewed and asked who their influences were. Of course, they ranged far and wide, across genres and cultures, but almost everyone mentioned Claude Debussy! The second was hearing and performing "The Other Piano", a work for solo piano and sound processing by Morton Subotnick. I often found myself thinking it sounded like something Debussy would have written had he been around in the 21st Century. I asked a select group of composers to write something for solo piano (with or without electronics) based, in some way, on Debussy, and to make a piece that would bring him into our century. You'll hear the musical responses on these 2 discs: they are teeming with inspiration and variety!

-Kathleen Supové



**KATHLEEN SUPOVÉ** is one of America's most acclaimed and versatile contemporary music pianists, constantly redefining what a pianist/keyboardist/performance artist is in today's world. Ms. Supové annually presents a series of solo concerts entitled **The Exploding Piano**. Through her numerous and varied commissioning projects, including **The Debussy Effect**, she has been a vital force in creating stunning, important works for the late 20th and early 21st century piano repertory. The Exploding Piano also uses electronics, theatrical elements, vocal rants, performance art, staging, and interdisciplinary collaboration. In 2012, Supové received the **John Cage Award** from the ASCAP Foundation for "the artistry and passion with which she performs, commissions, records, and champions the music of our time."

## DISC ONE

[1] <b>Storefront Diva: a dreamscape</b>	Joan La Barbara	16:03
[2] <b>Dr. Gradus vs. Rev. Powell</b>	Matt Marks	7:06
[3] <b>Layerings 3</b>	Eric Kenneth Malcolm Clark	9:07
[4] <b>What Remains Of A Rembrandt</b>	Randall Woolf	17:25

## DISC TWO

[1-4] <b>Shattered Apparitions of the Western Wind</b>	Annie Gosfield	
[1] Part 1		4:25
[2] Part 2		5:16
[3] Part 3		6:51
[4] Part 4		3:58
[5-7] <b>Cakewalking (Sorry Claude)</b>	Daniel Felsenfeld	
[5] I. Blandishments of the Young and Uniquely Handsome		1:44
[6] II. Icarus Chained		6:00
[7] III. Golliwogg Agonistes		3:25
[8] <b>La plus que plus que lente</b>	Jacob Cooper	15:20

All tracks Kathleen Supové, piano | disc 1: 1, 2, 4 & disc 2: 1-4: *piano and soundtrack*  
disc 1: 3: *piano and overdubbed piano* | disc 2: 5-7: *piano solo*; 8: *piano, soundtrack, and sound processing*

Produced, Engineered and Mastered by Sheldon Steiger

Assistant Engineers: Dan Wabno and Jacob Zonderman

Recorded at Hagman Hall, Western Connecticut State University (Yamaha CFX piano)



**Storefront Diva: a dreamscape** (2013, Revised 2015) JOAN LA BARBARA  
*for piano and sonic atmosphere*

Inspired by notations in Joseph Cornell's journals: "dream of Debussy playing piano as in a store seen through spacious window"; "bell maiden"; "water beyond one's depth"; "crows helter-skeltering ... raucous on the raw March air"; "rain ... coming down in sheets"; "large slices of snow"; "in a new night a comet flashed" and by Debussy's Prelude VI, I created a *sonic atmosphere*, blending bowed and plucked pianos, vocalizations, electronically modified and extended bells, breath, Tibetan cymbals, lapping water, cacophonous crows and surreal storms over which the pianist plays. Special thanks to Paul Geluso (Chief Recording Engineer, Dolan Studio, NYU) and Jacob Subotnick (sound design, remix engineer) for their assistance on the *sonic atmosphere* recordings.

Composer/performer JOAN LA BARBARA is renowned for her unique vocabulary of experimental and extended vocal techniques (her "signature sounds": multiphonics, circular singing, ululation, glottal clicks), influencing generations of composers and singers. Awards and prizes: Foundation for Contemporary Arts' John Cage Award (2016); DAAD-Berlin and Civitella Ranieri Artist Residencies; Guggenheim and 7 NEA Fellowships; numerous commissions for chamber ensembles, theater, orchestra, chorus, interactive technology; soundscores for dance, video and film, including electronic/vocal score for *Sesame Street*. Her multi-layered textural compositions have premiered at Festival d'Automne à Paris, Brisbane Biennial, Lincoln Center, MaerzMusik Berlin, Warsaw Autumn, Holland Festival and many other international venues. Exploring ways of immersing the audience in her music, La Barbara placed the American Composers Orchestra around and among the audience in Carnegie's Zankel Hall, building her sonic painting "*in solitude this fear is lived*", inspired by Agnes Martin's minimalist art. Artist faculty member of NYU and Mannes/The New School. [joanlabarbara.com](http://joanlabarbara.com)

### **Dr. Gradus vs. Rev. Powell** (2011) MATT MARKS

**Dr. Gradus vs. Rev. Powell** is a sort of imaginary battle between Claude Debussy and Robert Mitchum. Mitchum is masquerading as an evil man of faith, coal black clerical garb with tattooed knuckles, and Debussy is costumed as a sadistic doctor of bad piano habits (imagine broken sixteenth notes artfully scattered across his clean white smock). Throughout the battle the sober voice of Lillian Gish, from beyond the grave, entreats the two to come to a mutual understanding, discard their misplaced idealism, and lean on the everlasting arms.

MATT MARKS' work has been called "staggeringly creative" by the NY Times and "bright, catchy and continually turn[ing] Broadway clichés on their heads in surprising ways." by the LA Times. His *The Little Death: Vol. 1* was one of Time Out NY's Top Ten Classical albums of 2010 and had one of Huffington Post's Top Ten Alternative Art Songs of the Decade. Recent projects include his *Strip Mall* for the L.A. Philharmonic, *Bluetooth Islands* for the Brooklyn Philharmonic, a remix for Meredith Monk's latest album, and a live realization of The Dirty Projectors' album *The Getty Address*. Upcoming projects include his opera *Mata Hari: The Great Imitator* for the HERE Arts Center in NYC, a new album with the ensemble *Hotel Elephant*, and his spoken word opera *Velocirapture*. As a solo performer, Matt has appeared with the LA Philharmonic, Alarm Will Sound, and live on *This American Life*.

### **Layerings 3** (2013) ERIC KENNETH MALCOLM CLARK

My series of compositions exploring various methods of layering material is a direct evolution from my earlier set of work exploring sensory deprivation. I am fascinated by the (inexact) human condition as compared to technologically reproducible means (automata, computers, A.I.). In my series "Deprivation Music", I explored either sonic or visual means of large groups of people interpreting the same material, and the random divergences that would develop. My layerings compositions translate a similar exploration, minus any deprivation, to a soloist doing the same material in full, recorded and interpreted multiple times. Layerings 3 thus exhibits many different versions of the piano, in a way displaying several iterations of Kathleen Supové overlapped from different time periods,

which additively blur and create indeterminate harmonies and rhythmic textures.

Violinist and composer **ERIC KENNETH MALCOLM CLARK** (aka Eric KM Clark) is a specialist in new and experimental music. He has performed an eclectic range of music around the world, while his compositions have been noted as “an exhilarating and occasionally confounding exercise in divergence, confluence, and middle-finger merri-ment” (Signal to Noise). Based in Los Angeles, Eric is a member of the Kadima String Quartet, Gurrisonic, Dog Star Orchestra, and co-director of Southland Ensemble. He was a member of the genre-setting ensemble The California E.A.R. Unit for 6 years; and co-founded and co-directed the experimental arts venue *the wulf*. in 2008, co-directing the non-profit from 2008-2013. Eric’s composition teachers were Dr. Michael Longton (University of Victoria) and James Tenney (CalArts). [erickmclark.com](http://erickmclark.com)

### **What Remains Of A Rembrandt** (2011) **RANDALL WOOLF**

When i started this piece, I found myself rather pleurably lost in a meditation on the question “What does it mean to be like Debussy?” (the question of digitalness left aside for a moment). Debussy’s music is so striking and original, one can suggest it with just one chord or a few floating tones. But there are also more abstract ways of being “like Debussy”...by blending world music and early jazz with classical elements, by moving dreamily from one idea to the next, without logical connections, even by simply being mysterious. I think Debussy’s main contribution to music is just that, mystery. No other music manages to challenge our conceptions of order and form so well while continuing to be so beautiful and attractive. But what remains of a Debussy if you take away all of that?

**RANDALL WOOLF** studied composition privately with David Del Tredici, Joseph Maneri, and at Harvard, where he earned a Ph.D. He is a member of the Common Sense Composers Collective, and was the Composer/Mentor for the Brooklyn Philharmonic. In 1997 he composed a new ballet of “Where the Wild Things Are”, in collaboration with Maurice Sendak and Septime Webre. He works frequently with John Cale, notably on his score to “Ameri-

can Psycho". He has arranged over 40 of Cale's songs for orchestra, including the entire "Paris 1919" album, performed at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in January, 2013, and "Music For A New Society". His works have been performed by Kathleen Supové, Jennifer Choi, Timothy Fain, Mary Rowell, Todd Reynolds, Ethel, conductor and flutist Ransom Wilson, Tara O'Connor, Lindsey Goodman, the Brooklyn Philharmonic, Kronos Quartet, Turnmusic, Fulcrum Point, Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, Sonic Generator, Bang On A Can/SPIT Orchestra, American Composers Orchestra, NakedEye Ensemble, and others.

### **Shattered Apparitions of the Western Wind** (2013) ANNIE GOSFIELD

SAWW was inspired by the stormy Debussy prelude "What the West Wind Saw." Composed for piano with an accompanying electronic track, it incorporates altered fragments of the original prelude, coupled with on-site recordings of Hurricane Sandy, which struck New York City soon after I started composing the piece. These two sources are interwoven and electronically morphed, becoming hybrid sounds that meld the noisy, crackling energy of the storm with the prelude's tumultuous piano. The piece shifts between the acoustic and electronic realms, contrasting the eerie stillness of the eye of the hurricane with the violent force of the wind. It is also inspired by Kathleen Supové's dramatic, virtuosic style, and a dream of her duetting with a ghostly apparition of Debussy in the wake of the storm.

ANNIE GOSFIELD, whom the BBC called "A one woman Hadron collider" lives in New York City and works on the boundaries between notated and improvised music, electronic and acoustic sounds, refined timbres and noise. She composes for others and performs with her own group, taking her music on a path through festivals, factories, clubs, art spaces, and concert halls. Her most recent CD "Almost Truths and Open Deceptions" features a piece for piano and broken shortwave radio, a cello concerto, a 5-minute blast by her band, and music inspired by baseball and warped 78's. Annie's discography includes four portrait CD's on the Tzadik label. She often writes on the compositional process for the New York Times' series "The Score," and has been a fellow at the American Academy in Berlin, a composer in residence at The American Academy in Rome, and has taught composition at

Princeton, CalArts, and Mills College. [anniegosfield.com](http://anniegosfield.com)

## **Cakewalking (Sorry Claude)** (2013) DANIEL FELSENFELD

Cakewalking (Sorry Claude) was commissioned by and initiated by Kathleen Supovè, asking composers to take a look at Debussy and react in kind. My first instinct was to take the most obscure piece of the master and thereby demonstrate my deep knowledge; but I followed my latter instinct to pick the *least* obscure piece and have my way, and so I chose “Golliwog’s Cakewalk,” that charming but politically questionable piece so many students play. I decided to use the Debussy much like Debussy himself used, in that piece, Wagner’s *Tristan* prelude, a kind of shadow presence made occasionally (and, hopefully, hysterically) flesh. So the Cakewalk is done deep violence, but in the process I imagined a 21st-Century Golliwog put through his peregrinations and paces, until he comes out, at the end, somewhat more enlightened. And with this piece I am proud to join the ranks of so many composers who have written pieces for Kathy, a hero of us all.

Composer **Daniel Felsenfeld** (b.1970) has been commissioned and performed by Trinity Wall Street, Simone Dinnerstein, Two Sense, Metropolis Ensemble, American Opera Projects, Opera on Tap, NANOWorks Opera, Pasadena Opera, Great Noise Ensemble Da Capo Chamber Players, ACME, Transit, REDSHIFT, Blair McMillen, Lara Downes, Secret Opera, Alcyone Ensemble, Stephanie Mortimore, Parhelion Trio, Cabinet of Curiosities, New Gallery Concert Series at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, BAM, Kennedy Center, Trinity Wall Street, Le Poisson Rouge, Bargemusic, City Winery, Galapagos Art Space, The Stone, Jordan Hall, Duke University, Stanford University and Harvard University, and has collaborated with writers like Rick Moody, Robert Coover, Amanda Palmer, Will Eno, Brenda Shaughnessy; has worked with Jay-Z, The Roots, Keren Ann; and is the court composer for John Wesley Harding’s Cabinet of Wonders, the aco-founder of the New Music Gathering, and co-director of the Curiosity Cabinet. He is a curator at National Sawdust, and Trinity Wall Street; and a teacher at the Juilliard School and the New York Philharmonic. Raised in the outlying suburbs of Los Angeles, he lives in Brooklyn.

*“Committed as strongly to freshness as to intelligibility, Daniel Felsenfeld composes music that’s strong, unusual, intelligent, and considerably skilled.”*

– Composer John Corigliano

### **La plus que plus que lente** (2012) JACOB COOPER

This piece incorporates fragments from Debussy’s waltz *La plus que lente*, whose unique title translates directly as “the more than slow.” I process the source material in a variety of ways, but the most significant one is simply slowing it down—making it, one might say, “more than more than slow.”

JACOB COOPER’S compositions and multimedia works have garnered recognition throughout North America and Europe, appearing at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Disney Hall, the MATA Festival, and the Wordless Music concert series at the Miller Theater. Recent performers of his music include the Los Angeles Philharmonic New Music Group, Eighth Blackbird, the JACK Quartet, the Calder Quartet, Ensemble ACJW, and the Minnesota Orchestra. Lauded as “richly talented” (*The New York Times*) and “a maverick electronic song composer” (*The New Yorker*), Jacob has earned a Chamber Music America commissioning grant, a Charles Ives Scholarship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a Morton Gould award from ASCAP, and was the winner of the 2011 Carlsbad Music Festival competition. His song cycle *Silver Threads*, written for soprano Mellissa Hughes and electronic track, was released by Nonesuch Records in April 2014 to critical acclaim, and his opera *Timberbrit* has been featured on National Public Radio’s *All Things Considered*. [jacobcoopermusic.com](http://jacobcoopermusic.com)

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Liner notes written by the respective composers

Inside wallet: Photo by Aleksandar Kostic  
*Scenic Design by Marija Plavsic Kostic*  
*from a live performance of “Storefront Diva: a dreamscape” by Joan La Barbara at The Flea Theater, NYC*

Booklet cover: Photo by Jodi Stern  
*from a live Installation of “Storefront Diva: a dreamscape”*  
*by Joan La Barbara, Marija Plavsic Kostic, and Aleksandar Kostic*

**Kathleen Supové is a Yamaha Artist**

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