

## Douglas J. Cuomo

# Savage Winter

a music-theatre piece in one act  
text (Eng) adapted by Douglas J. Cuomo from the  
original poems by Wilhelm Müller

for tenor (amplified) and 3 on-stage musicians:  
trumpet (amplified, with improvisatory sections), piano (keyboards),  
electric guitar (with improvisatory sections), and electronics

Duration: ca. 75'

Developed by American Opera Projects

World Premiere: Pittsburgh Opera, February 17, 2018

### **DRAMA:**

Darkness. Suddenly a pin-head spot on a face in agony.

The light widens to reveal: A naked man crawling on his hands and knees, holding a bottle of Jack Daniels. We see he is in a cheap, run-down Motel room. Detritus everywhere. Pizza boxes, empty bottles and beer cans. Possibly some drug paraphernalia. Breaking Bad meets Samuel Beckett.

As the man starts to sing, we realize that here is someone at the end of his rope. Someone who must confront his demons and face up to everything he has done, and all he has lost, in his life. He is searching for forgiveness, enlightenment and atonement. He is holed up in the middle of nowhere. He looks out of the window. We see a desert landscape. He looks out another time. This time we see a snowy, winter landscape. Although grounded in reality, we realize we are also in an existential space.

The seventy five minute performance is tonally like a solo operatic "Long Days Journey Into Night", "King Lear" or Beckett's "Not I." A man in the aftermath of lost love for another man; Mr. Cuomo has altered the gender of the protagonist's love interest. A journey to a Dante-esque underworld. And possibly back, to redemption...

### **MUSIC:**

21st century art-song, acid jazz, punk energy, raw and emotional. Often hard-edged, at times lyrical. A tour de force for the tenor. The trumpet is the second solo voice in the score, interacting dramatically and musically with the singer. A wide range of techniques and colors in the score — electronic grooves and ambiances, contemporary classical piano, death metal guitar, improvisation and instrumental effects.

### **DOUGLAS J. CUOMO:**

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Has composed music for concert and theatrical stages, dance, television, and film. His works include the opera *Doubt*, with a libretto by John Patrick Shanley; the opera/oratorio *Arjuna's Dilemma*, premiered at the BAM Next Wave Festival; *Only Breath*, commissioned and performed by Maya Beiser, at The International Festival of Arts and Ideas, Ravinia, Carnegie Hall and others; *Black Diamond Express Train to Hell*, a double concerto for cello and sampler, commissioned by the American Composers Orchestra and The Orchestra of the Swan, premiered at Carnegie Hall; and *Kyrie*, commissioned and performed by Chanticleer. Work for television and film includes: themes for *Sex and The City*, *NOW* with Bill Moyers and *Wide Angle*, music for *Homicide: Life On The Street* and many others. Upcoming projects include a song cycle for Denyce Graves and the Romero Guitar Quartet; a companion piece to Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto No. 2* for The Orchestra of the Swan; and a piece celebrating the 15th anniversary of the chorus *Seraphic Fire*. [www.douglasjcuomo.com](http://www.douglasjcuomo.com)

*For more information, contact Norman Ryan at Schott Music at [norman.ryan@eamdc.com](mailto:norman.ryan@eamdc.com).*