

ORION JOHNSTONE

Composer-Lyricist / Director / Community Minister

(pronouns: they/he)

www.orionjohnstone.com

SELECTED CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:

Composer/Lyricist/Bookwriter, *Risk Hallelujah*

In Development, Musical Theater Factory Makers Cohort (2025-2027)

A vibrantly anti-empire musical about Jesus, featuring a cast of 13 Queer people (each of whom portray Jesus at some point)

Director, *RENT* by Jonathan Larson

NYU-Tisch Mainstage Production (2024)

A radical re-imagining honoring RENT's direct action roots, in connection with a council of Queer elders.

Composer/Arranger, *Scene Partners* by John J. Caswell Jr, directed by Rachel Chavkin

Production at the Vineyard Theater (2023)

Choral songs in the style of 80s pop hits.

Composer, *Hold*, co-conceived with Mei Ann Teo

Prelude Festival (2020)

A wordless choral piece to hold space for reflection, connection, and transformation.

Director, *All I Want Is To Be Happy Sometimes*, by Jacob Margaret Archer

Workshop at the Kennedy Center, M.F.A Playwrights' Week (2019)

A heartfelt play with an all-Trans team.

Composer/MD, *Light Shining In Buckinghamshire*, by Caryl Churchill, dir. Rachel Chavkin

Production at New York Theater Workshop (2018)

Access-centered original choral songs and hymns

Co-Director, *{my lingerie play}: THE CONCERT AND CALL TO ARMS!!!!!!!!!!*, by Diana Oh

Production at Rattlestick Playwrights Theater (2017)

A musical/punk concert/action staged in an effort to provide a safer, more courageous world

Director, *Mr. Transman*, by Kit Yan

Workshop through TransLab, 2018

A wild romp! An impolite workshop-pageant with unruly amounts of staging and dancing!

Music Supervisor/Contributing Composer, *Primer For a Failed Superpower*, dir. Rachel Chavkin

Production at Roulette in NYC (2017)

A concert/ritual of re-imagined protest songs from the past hundred years, performed by a 40-member intergenerational choir. In collaboration with the TEAM.

Composer/Music Director, *I'll Never Love Again*, by Clare Barron, dir. Michael Liebenluft

World Premiere at the Bushwick Starr (2016)

Expansive, access-centered, songs for choir and piano.

Composer/Music Director, *Eat And You Belong To Us*, by MJ Kaufman, dir. Michael Liebenluft

Workshop at the Lark Theater (2016)

Jaunty songs for choir, accordion, and wine glasses.

Assoc. Music Director, *War Horse* (First & Second Nat'l Tours)

Venues across the USA (2012-2014)

Composer/Lyricist/Performer, *Love Songs For the Rest of Us*, w/Jillian Quinn Buckley

Living rooms across the USA (2013)

An interactive house concert/conversation series around expanding the conversation about love and sex. For voices, ukulele, and various household percussion items.

Composer/Lyricist, *Sometimes In Prague*, directed by Joshua William Gelb.

Various productions including Polyphone Festival (2016), 3LD/Ice Factory (2011), Joe's Pub (2011), and the Tank (2010)

A film and a rock concert collide and explode into a dance party in celebration of basic human connection. Grunge/punk influenced music charted for electric guitars, bass, and drums.

Composer/Co-Creator, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* w/dir. Rachel Chavkin

Developmental residencies at Pace University (2012) and Montclair State University's New Works Initiative (2011)

A musical interrogation of how middle class Americans behold poverty, for upright bass, banjo, percussion, and choir.

Music Director/Arranger, *Peace* w/Taylor Mac and Rachel Chavkin

Target Margin's Aristophanic Laboratory at HERE Arts Center (2007)

An absurdist riff on the ancient Aritophanes play. For voices and banjo.

Composer/Lyricist, *Tully, In No Particular Order*, w/co-writer Joshua William Gelb

New York Musical Theater Festival (2007)

A chamber musical inspired by the ancient Queer erotic poetry of Catullus. Scored for flute, clarinet, bassoon, cello, piano, harp, and percussion.

**NYMF Honorable Mention for Excellence in Music*

Participant/Composer, The New Dramatists' Composer/Librettist Studio

New Dramatists (2006)

B.F.A. in Musical Theater Performance from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts

CAP21 (2005)