

**Katie Gardner**

DPhil Student

Wolfson College, Oxford University (United Kingdom)

**The Technological Voice: Non-Human Voices in Contemporary Opera** (Paper)

Technological experimentation of the voice and body to represent a non-human identity is a growing trend in contemporary opera performance, ranging from the recent premiere of Søren Nils Eichberg's *Glare*, which has been coined a 'robot' opera, to holographic ventriloquism in ERRATICA's *Toujours et Près de Moi*. The voice is directly connected to the corporeal presence of the operatic performer, however, the music and its meaning is altered through the presence, or implied presence, of a technological non-human body produced from voice manipulation. By focusing on performed human actions representing a non-human entity, I will address the following questions: How is the non-human voice represented on the operatic stage? How does it interact with its human source as well as other human voices/bodies on stage? How does this affect the form and composition of experimental contemporary opera? This paper, supported by practical voice demonstrations, will analyze the incorporation of the technological voice in contemporary opera productions and propose how this performance practice is shifting the role of the voice in opera performance.

**Katie Lynn Gardner** is a doctoral student in Music at Wolfson College, University of Oxford. Her dissertation, *Perceptions of the Audiovisual Aerial Act in Modern Opera Spectacle*, examines the dramaturgic functions of the staged aerial body in opera performance. As a performance artist, Katie combines circus aerial arts, contemporary voice practices, and technology to reimagine classical voice repertoire. She has performed at REDCAT, The Hammer Museum, and Highways Performance Space in Los Angeles, CA and has held performance contracts with Walt Disney Entertainment. She received her MFA in Voice from California Institute of the Arts.