

Evan L. Snyder — Statement of Purpose  
for the PhD in Composition at Princeton University

The experience which most directly incited my decision to apply to Princeton was the year I spent at Guildhall, as a part of their “Opera Makers” course—a year which reignited my desire to return to teaching and catalyzed my convictions that at least one similar program ought to exist in the United States. While a few training programs for American opera composers exist, all of them are extrascholastic—and it seems strange, in an era where new works are seeing a resurgence at every level, from the Metropolitan Opera to regional and even boutique opera companies, that to find dedicated student training in opera creation one must look overseas. Certainly, Guildhall’s program benefits greatly from its locale and professional ties; its relationship with the Royal Opera House and international body of graduate student singers allow it to extremely effectively simulate the experience of working within an international opera house. But, these same conditions could be met by any of a number of American universities or conservatories by partnering with nearby opera companies, collaborations which would be even more effective for the broader network of domestic opera companies that the States has to offer. I hope that in bringing my efforts in this vein to Princeton, that I might share my experience as a singer and as a composer in the musicodramatic, in working with text, and in writing for the voice—through which I hope to serve other composers as well as the wider scholarly community at Princeton.