

HYPERMUSIC PROLOGUE: OPERA IN THE FIFTH DIMENSION

BY ELIZABETH CLINE / AUGUST 10, 2009

In *Hypermusic Prologue*, physicist Lisa Randall brings her theories of an extradimensional universe to the stage.

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The soprano (Charlotte Ellett) plays a composer who has reached a creative impasse and feels that her music is "missing pieces." The orchestra recreates the sound of her scribbling notes and crumpling sheet music.



The soprano questions the nature of reality, and the baritone (James Bobby) engages in a fast and sharp argument with her about a universe that "lies outside our perceptions."



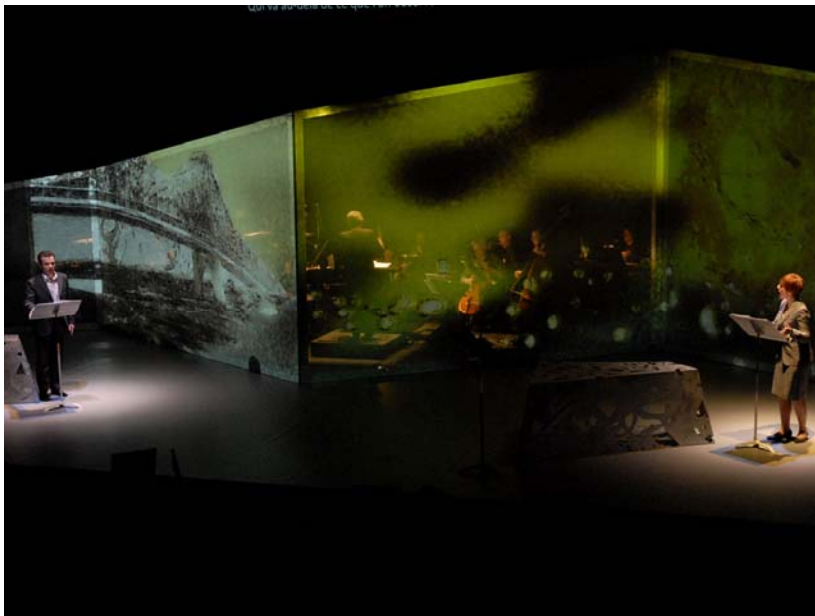
The baritone is smug and dismissive, singing that hidden dimensions "cannot exist!" Matthew Ritchie's projections show drab, industrial scenes, references to the old-fashioned Newtonian world the couple occupies.



The soprano, undeterred, begins to daydream about finding "new truths of our world." Parra's score grows more mysterious and otherworldly.



The soprano finds a doorway to the fifth dimension! As she moves into extradimensional space, the soprano's voice is electronically modulated and grows out of sync with the baritone.



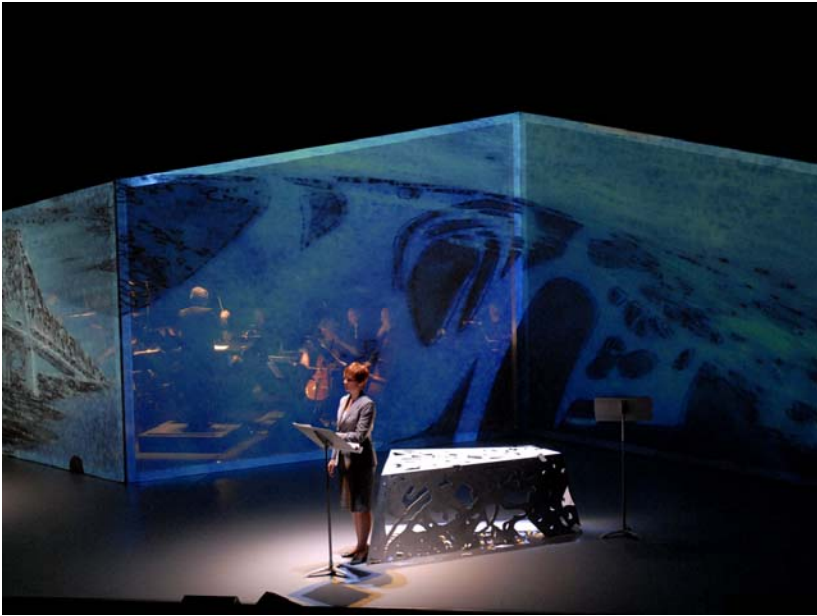
The soprano sees the "full extent of our universe," while the baritone is stuck in the four-dimensional world.



As the soprano moves further into the higher-dimensional universe, she discovers that the laws of physics are different and spacetime is dramatically warped. The baritone calls after her, "Your home is here! Your resolution is here!"



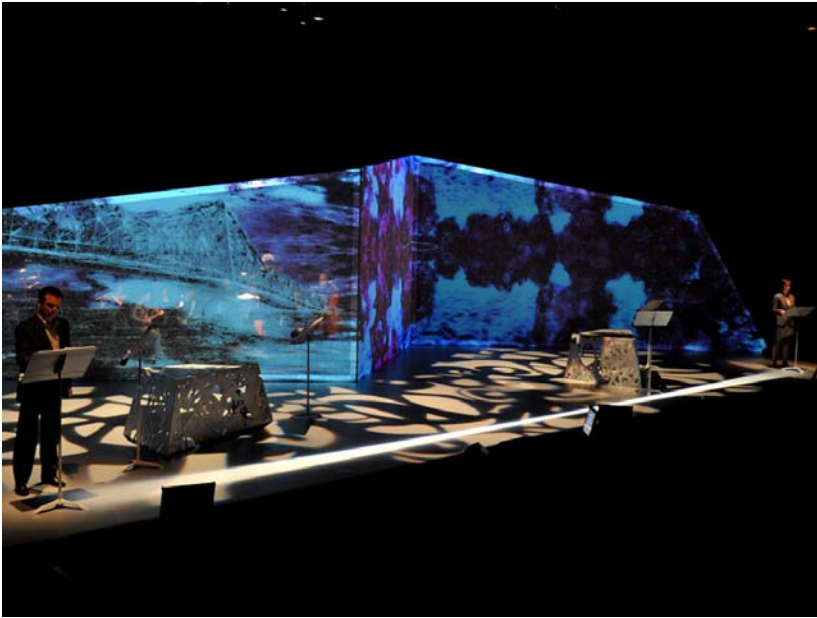
The soprano, wanting to truly understand her new reality, recites Randall and Raman Sundrum's equations describing the higher-dimensional universe. Parra electronically distorts Ellet's voice so that the equations sound like an invented language.



The soprano experiences the unification of the four forces of nature. Here, Parra takes the warped voice of the soprano in Plane IV.2 and applies a time-stretching and granulation effect to it.



The baritone is able to experience the fifth dimension for a "fleeting" moment, and he is awestruck. The soprano encourages him to "piece together the hints" of what he has experienced.



The pair are reconciled and the soprano hits her highest note of the opera (a high E). The baritone, now convinced of a universe beyond what we can observe, sings hopefully, "Another view? Hidden yet true?"