



**Composer Kitty Brazelton. Story and Libretto By George Plimpton
Dramaturg Director Grethe Barrett Holby**

"For the very young and the young at heart"

Where do animals go for answers on how to hop off the treadmill, reclaim their 'inner howl', or bust the vocabulary norm beyond 'Polly want a cracker?' Come along with Hamster, Goldfish, Dog, Frog, Turtle, Parrot and Horse as they visit wise Dr. Alfred J. McGee, for advice on how to solve their problems and improve their lives. ANIMAL TALES, written by George Plimpton and composed by Kitty Brazelton is a wacky, rambunctious and inspiring opera/musical about daring to be different, overcoming stereotypes and finding purpose and happiness in life.

LENGTH

Disney Length: 2 Acts, 2 hours including intermission

AGE GROUP

Family audiences, 5-105

CAST SIZE

8 Soloists plus Children's Chorus

2 Women

1 Soprano

1 Mezzo

6 Men

1 Boy Soprano

1 Tenor

2 Baritones (one a break dancer)

1 Bass-Baritone

1 Bass

CHILDREN'S CHORUS

10-30 pre-professional or from the community

INSTRUMENTATION

Touring version: Piano, Latin percussion, and DJ

Premiere version: Chamber Orchestra of 12

**Violin I (3), Violin II (3), Viola(2), Cello (2), Double-Bass (1),
Flute, Oboe, Basson, Guitar, Harp, Trumpet, Horn,
Clarinet, Latin percussion, and DJ Turntablist**

contact Grethe Barrett Holby

gbholby@ardeaarts.com 212-431-7039

WWW.ARDEAARTS.COM

WORLD CONCERT PREMIERE!



FRIDAY MARCH 25th 2017 @ 7:00PM

Jay & Linda Grunin Center for the Arts
Ocean County College, Toms River NJ

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ANIMAL TALES

A NEW OPERA MUSICAL



CREATIVE TEAM

GEORGE PLIMPTON (BOOK & LYRICS) A fearless adventurer into life's possibilities, George Plimpton was born in New York City in 1927, attended St. Bernard's School, Phillip Exeter Academy, Harvard University and King's College at Cambridge University in England. In 1953, Plimpton joined the influential literary journal *The Paris Review*, becoming its first editor-in-chief, a position he held until his death in 2003.

In his defining role as a participatory journalist, the ebullient Plimpton was famous for competing in professional sporting events and then writing from the point of view of an amateur. These events were recalled in his best-known book, *Paper Lion*. A further book, *Open Net*, saw him train as an ice hockey goalie with the Boston Bruins. Two anthologies of his articles and shorter works establish Plimpton as a master of the short form and lover of life's foibles: *The Best of Plimpton* (1990), and *The Man in the Flying Lawn Chair* (2004). *ANIMAL TALES* was his last major work, and was written expressly for Family Opera Initiative. He was an extraordinarily insightful collaborator and a joyous and inspiring team member. He died shortly after completing this script.

KITTY BRAZELTON (MUSIC) BRAZELTON rejoices in the keen expression she achieves by infusing vernacular American dialects into deep, complex structures. Her full-length opera, *Fireworks*, commissioned by Family Opera Initiative/AOP concerns an extraterrestrial discovering the 4th of July. She composes dynamic orchestral works - *Sleeping Out of Doors* (1998); piano concerto commissioned and premiered by conductor Kristjan Järvi's Absolute Ensemble. Chamber music credits: the N.Y.S.C.A. cyber-punk fantasia *5 Dreams*; marriage (premiered by her unique quartet, *WHAT IS IT LIKE TO BE A BAT?*; works for the Manhattan Brass Quintet and the California EAR Unit. Electronic compositions for pianist Kathleen Supové, duos *twisted tutu* and *Double Edge*, choreographers Jody Oberfelder and Gina Gibney, ensembles *Kitchen House Blend* and *Relâche*; operas with Grethe Barrett Holby. "Brazelton is a totalist composer, part of a generation that believes that there's more than one way to compose and that all musical genres are available for use, from high modernism to downtown funk." (Danny Felsenfeld, *Time Out New York*).

GRETHE BARRETT HOLBY (ORIGIN & DIRECTION) "Bringing opera into the 21st century" (NPR), Holby founded American Opera Projects (1988), Family Opera Initiative (1995) and Ardea Arts (2006) to foster provocative new works of music-theater and opera for today's diverse global community.

Collaborating with 20th century luminaries including Leonard Bernstein, Robert Wilson, Philip Glass, Gian Carlo Menotti, Lou Reed and Yusef Komunyakaa, she has directed and choreographed for The Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center Festival, Houston Grand Opera, La Scala, and US opera companies including Philadelphia, Toledo, North Carolina, Los Angeles, Michigan, and Anchorage. A Rockefeller fellow, she holds Bachelor and Master degrees from M.I.T.



"There is a lesson to be learned for the very young, or the young at heart - the gumption to get out and try one's wings... The main principle in doing this is what I thought I could bring to a children's opera - humor, light-heartedness, gaiety and imagination."

George Plimpton

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