

*Car Crash Opera* chamber opera, 2006-07

Animation and Libretto by

Skip Battaglia

Music by

Michaela Eremitová and Jairo Duarte-López

Duration ca. 8 minutes.

*Car Crash Opera* was commissioned as the music score for a short film by renown animator and RIT Professor Skip Battaglia. The creation of the film required that the music be composed and recorded in advance. Knowing that the animation would take close to two years for its completion, we approached the music not only as a film score but also as a stand-alone composition. The music makes use of several musical styles in order to illustrate a different backdrop for each character or couple. Once we are familiar with the characters the story develops when two adolescents find themselves cut off the road by a careless amorous couple, they decide to start a chase that concludes with the inevitable collision of four cars. After the final crash the music attempts to depict images of horror, tragedy and mourning as the singers join as a choir of souls.

Michaela Eremitová & Jairo Duarte-López

*Synopsis of the film in the director's words:*

“This seven to eight minute animated film will be a cinematic homage to that paragon of American movie art forms ---the car crash film. But...this will be sung as an opera...with characters, flourishes, poignant interludes, orchestration, sound effects. [It] will be dramatically exaggerated, an over-the-top car crash to comment on all filmed car crashes, funny and tragic, graphically beautiful and kinetically terrifying, and more sublime than ironic. The soundtrack is meant to be as over-sized as the visual elements of the film...”

“There are to be four separate vehicles which meet in a traffic conflagration: 1st- a mother and young child delivering a birthday cake, 2nd- a portly contractor driving his farm pick up truck loaded with chickens as he smokes a cigar, 3rd- an amorous couple drinking and fondling, and 4th- two scattered teenage speedsters sharing their music from a single iPod.”

Skip Battaglia

## **Instrumentation**

Clarinet in A 1 (dbl. Eb Cl.)  
Clarinet in A 2 (dbl. Bass Cl.)  
Bass Clarinet 3  
Alto Saxophone in Eb

Trumpet in C  
Bass trombone

Perc. 1:        Marimba  
                 Cabaza  
                 Castanets  
                 Metal and Glass\*  
                 \*(to be crushed with a brick or anvil inside a plastic tub)

Perc. 2:        Vibraphone  
                 Castanets  
                 Susp. Cymbal 16"  
                 Brake Drum  
                 Triangle

Bass Drum (shared)

Piano

Soprano	<i>Mama</i>
Mezzo-Soprano	<i>Bambina, Princesa</i>
Tenor	<i>Odi, Trino</i>
Bass	<i>Rico, Guido</i>

Violin 1  
Violin 2  
Viola  
Cello  
Double Bass

Optional  
-chamber string ensemble  
-mixed chorus

Score in C

**Libretto by Skip Battaglia**

*Mama and Bambina,* Soft clouds  
the softest of clouds for our sky.  
Sweet cake  
the sweetest of cakes for Grandma's surprise.

*Guido* Hmm...Money blues  
Damn father clock  
Thud my beat beaten blues  
Ah! Pig smell clothes  
mud hay blood  
doo doo dah bah slop!

*Mama and Bambina,* Smooth road  
How gentle this bumps that bounce us this far!  
We sing our song together  
On our trip, in our car  
Soft clouds, na na na, sweet cake!

*Trino and Rico,* Cranking faster  
Hit those lines  
Bump that shoulder  
Screw those guys!

*Princessa and Odi,* Hot leatherette  
Smooth leather trim  
Big crank in your gear box.

*Trino and Rico,* Hot little baby  
We blow and flit  
Hard dick pussy  
Drives like shit!

*Princessa and Odi,* Fingernails grab my shift.

*Mama and Bambina,*  
Mama and Bambina  
Bambina and Ma...  
Oh, did I tell you, oh.  
You are so loud!  
We sing our song together  
On our trip, in our car.

*(superimposed)*

**Guido,**

Independent farmer

Isolated ham

Your concerns are not  
mine!

*(superimposed)*

**Trino and Rico,**

Ha! Huh ha ha ha

*Trino and Rico,*  
(*continue*)

Jump the signal  
swerve the junk  
Speed and shimmy  
Feel the funk!

*Princessa and Odi,*

Oh Baby!  
Hear the throbbing  
Feel the heat!  
Need you, want you, love you,  
Crush you,  
Split you,  
AAHHH!

(superimposed)

*Trino and Rico,*  
Ha! Huh ha ha ha  
Personal mirror  
See all 'round.  
No cops 'bout here  
Engine pounds,  
SHIT!

(superimposed)

*Mama,*  
Na na na  
na na na  
na na na...

*Mama and Bambina,*  
(*continue*)

... na na na  
Mama and Bambina  
*We sing our song, OYY!*

*Guido,*

Oh, your concerns are not mine  
Oh! shit, AAHH

*Choir of souls*

Oh oh oh  
No no no