

## **ABSTRACT**

**CREATIVE PROJECT:** The Prince, An Opera in One Act: An Analysis of the Compositional Process

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**DEGREE:** Master of Music

**COLLEGE:** Fine Arts

**DATE:** May 2023

**PAGES:** 30

*The Prince: An Opera in One Act*, scored from a libretto by Jakob Harding, is a loose adaptation of Niccolò Machiavelli's 16<sup>th</sup>-century political treatise of the same name. My Creative Project, partially fulfilling the requirements for a Master of Music degree in Composition, comprises the first act of this four-act work. The libretto follows the president of an unnamed Western nation who embodies the harsh authoritative traits of rulers in the sixteenth century. Aiding in his administration is a cabinet of advisors and employees that, while assisting the president with his governance, also have their own agendas that they will pursue, even if they run counter to that of the president. The cast consists of the President Oliver Lewis, Vice President Maxine, Press Secretary Nicholas, National Security Advisor Lucius, and Secretary to the President Catrina. This cabal of characters is faced with a national crisis that, exacerbated by their ill-thought-out decisions, quickly grows out of their control into domestic unrest. The work is written for five vocalists; a soprano, a mezzo-soprano, two tenors, and a baritone, each of whom may play side characters along with their main roles. The work also includes ten

instrumentalists; flute, Bb clarinet, Eb alto saxophone, two French horns in F, tuba, piano, and two percussionists which together play snare drum, bass drum, xylophone, and vibraphone. The piece uses specific key centers and pitch collections to portray the moral and political stances of each cabinet member, musically pitting them against each other as the characters on stage engage in heated policy arguments.