

# Misha Penton



## ARTIST'S STATEMENT

---

My work resounds in expressionistic landscapes where elemental energies of wild places converge. The physicality of paint on canvas allows me a space to experience and share nature's dynamic, ever changing color worlds. I work with the poetics of movement, intuition, improvisation and play, and with a committed practice of awareness and a sensitivity to the unfolding creative process which, itself, crafts and reveals meaning. I hope to create works which honor and highlight the diminishing role of the inner life in an ever-fragmented, ever-exteriorized and overdriven world.

## ABBREVIATED BIOGRAPHY

---

**Misha Penton** is a painter, sound artist, contemporary classical singer, writer and media artist. Her visual artwork has been shown throughout the Southeast, and her paintings are in private collections in Houston, Austin, Fort Lauderdale, New York City, and New Orleans; her large-scale work, *untitled 2* was included as a winner of Lawndale Art Center's The Big Show (2004).

Misha's experimental vocal sound works have been featured in performance and installation at DiverseWorks Arts Space (Houston); the University of Houston Center for Choreography; with New Orleans contemporary dance company, Happensdance; at ActLab Studios (Austin); for The Olimpias, an international artists' collective and performance research series; at Goddard College (WA) and Bath Spa University (UK). Misha's professional performance affiliations include Houston Grand Opera; The Foundation for Modern Music (Houston); The Museum of Fine Arts Houston; Dallas Museum of Art; The University of Houston Center for Creative Work; Sam Houston State University School of Music; and The Rothko Chapel Houston.

Misha is one of Houston Press' 100 Creatives of 2011, and is named a 2012 finalist for Best Artistic Director by the Houston Press Theater Awards for her work as founder and artistic director of Divergence Vocal Theater, a Houston theatrical new music ensemble. As a performing artist and director, Misha has conceptualized, produced, and directed new chamber operas, reinventions of historic voice repertoire, music videos, and audio recording projects. Recent projects include *Anecdote of the Spirit*, an experimental work created for the Rothko Chapel; *Threshold*, a site specific experimental postopera created for a cavernous old rice factory in Houston; *Quatre* (Mallarmé), an audio collaboration with fellow composer Chris Becker inspired by the French avant-garde; and *The Medusa Project*, an experimental monodrama which premiered at The Women Composers Festival of Hartford.

Misha holds degrees in music (BA) and interdisciplinary arts (MFA) from Skidmore College and Goddard College, respectively.

# Misha Penton

Painter – Sound, Media & New Music Artist – Artistic Director

## EDUCATION

---

- 2005      MFA Interdisciplinary Arts – Goddard College – Seattle, WA
- 1999      BA Music – Skidmore College – Saratoga Springs, NY

## ARTISTIC LEADERSHIP

---

- 2008 - present      *Divergence Vocal Theater* – Founder, Artistic Director, Ensemble Lead Artist, Singer  
Divergence Vocal Theater is a company dedicated to collaborative, boundary-pushing performances featuring new chamber opera, new music and multi-performing arts.

## ACADEMIC & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

---

- 2014      *Artist in Residence* – Texas A&M University Theater Department – Guest Artist  
*Artist in Residence* – Sam Houston State University School of Music – Guest Artist
- 2012      “*Temporary Home*” a site-specific installation and artist talk – Goddard College, WA  
*Artist in Residence* – Lone Star College Montgomery Music Department – Conroe, TX
- 2009-11      *Houston Grand Opera Educational Outreach Teaching Artist*
- 2009-10      *Impulse Series, professional development for classical artists* – Artist Advisory Board – Houston, TX  
*Artist Advisory Board* - Spacetaker Artist Service Organization – Houston, TX
- 2009      *Maurice Amado Music Foundation Artist Residency* – Jewish Community Center – Houston, TX

## SCHOLARSHIPS, AWARDS, and GRANTS

---

- 2012      *Best Artistic Director Finalist* – Houston Press Theater Awards
- 2011      *Award* – Houston Press 100 Creatives of 2011
- 2004      *The Big Show Finalist* – Lawndale Art Center – for painting “Untitled 2”

## VOCAL SOUND ART COMPOSITION

---

# Misha Penton

Painter – Sound, Media & New Music Artist – Artistic Director

- 2012      *Temporary Home* – Goddard Collage, WA  
*Saturn* (Petra Kruppers, poet) – University of Michigan
- 2011      *Saturn* (Petra Kruppers, poet) – Bare Bones Butoh – San Francisco, CA  
*Saturn* (Petra Kruppers, poet) – Textsound (online audio poetry journal)
- 2010      *Liminal Space | Eurdice, part 2* (Megan M. Reily, installation) – ActLab Studios,  
Austin, TX
- 2008      *Memoirs of a Sisterhood* (Becky Valls, choreographer) – New Orleans  
Contemporary Arts Center
- 2007      *Memoirs of a Sisterhood* (Beky Valls, choreographer) – Diverseworks Artist  
Residency, Houston, TX
- 2005      *Hopscotch* (Toni Valle, choreographer) – Big Range Dance Festival, Houston, TX
- 2003      *Dreams & Slipstreams* (Jeanne Jaubert, choreographer) – Happensdance, New  
Orleans, LA