On Michael Roth's THE WEB OPERA:

It's like watching through a keyhole — except this is a cyber keyhole.

The new online musical "The Web Opera," by Michael Roth, spells out the horrific dangers of snooping and cyber-bullying in the digital universe. It's a Millennial's plot of hubris and nemesis, based on a true story of a college student who, having just come out, committed suicide after he realized his roommate and some friends had live-streamed him while on a date.

First of all, "The Web Opera" is a first. It was created to be an online production and not for the stage. Roth's music veers from haunting underscore to bubbling sung conversations to reflecting the protagonist's gut-wrenching betrayal by his friends — all painting a gripping and incredibly intimate scenario that keeps us all glued to the screen.

Secondly, it's literally in your face, because the singers faces are in yours, but they don't know it. As they type their chats, you are the screen. Where this work departs from standard opera compositional structure is that there's no "park and bark" – those moments when the action stands still and a soloist opines through an aria that is meant to be a stand-alone song that can be excerpted.

Roth's opera is a carefully woven fabric that envelops the listener, but inveigles that listener to jump head-first into a whole new paradigm of what opera can be.

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—Alexandra Ivanoff,
freelance arts journalist
New York Times, Bachtrack.com,
Time Out magazine
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