



# RISEYDE

A New Opera by Alice Shields



## --- a feminist retelling of Chaucer's "Troilus and Criseyde"

*The tragic beauty Criseyde is used by her family as a sexual trophy, a prize for political gain. In this new two-act chamber opera by Alice Shields, Criseyde emerges as a romantic heroine in a dramatic retelling --- from a woman's perspective -- of Chaucer's famous tale.*

*The libretto by medieval scholar Nancy Dean is a new Middle English resetting of Chaucer's tale, along with some of Boccaccio's Italian words that Chaucer deliberately didn't translate!*

### Criseyde's initial exposure to the public has begun:

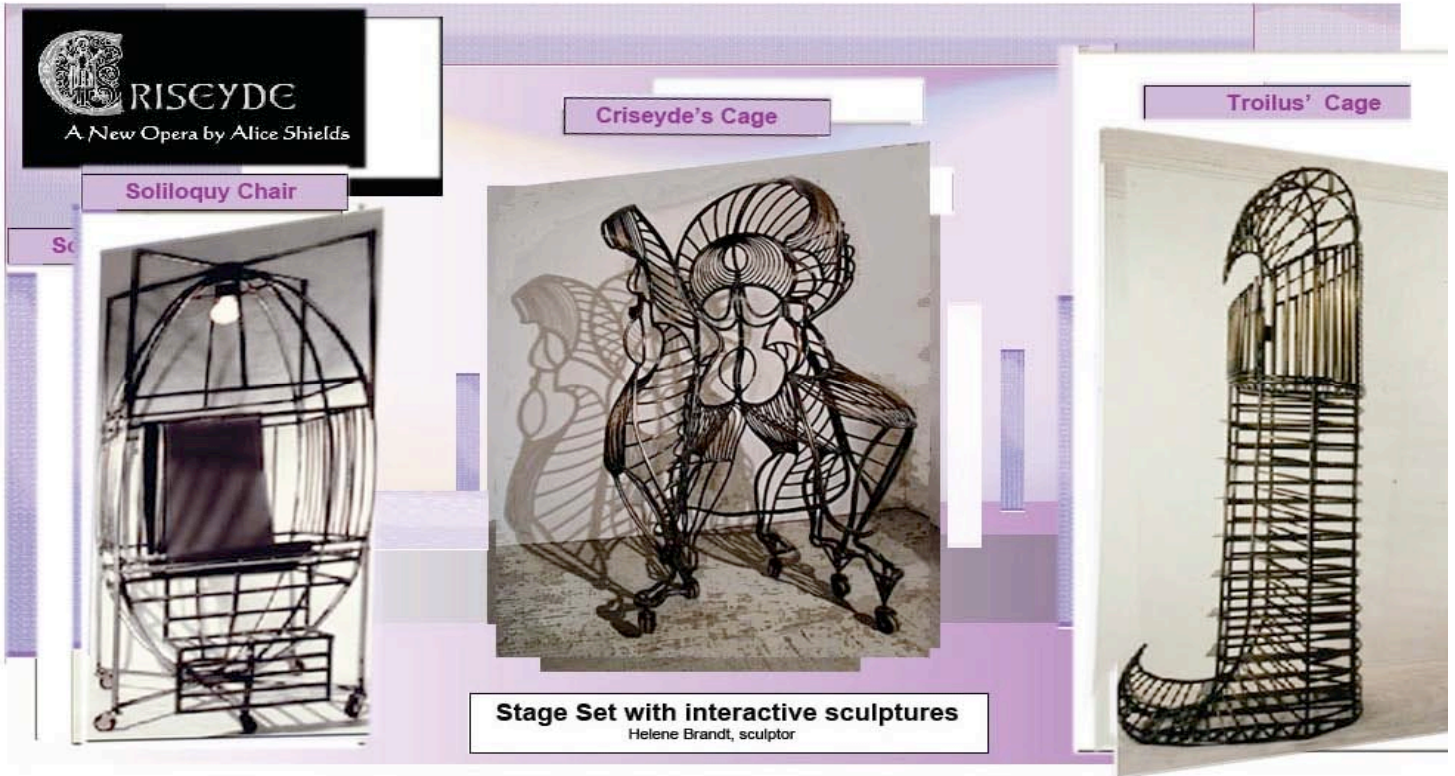
- **The Feminist Theory and Musicology 10 Symposium**, May 27, 2009  
Premiered Three Romantic Scenes from Criseyde in concert at the University of North Carolina –Greensboro.  
"...a truly masterful work. Moving." --- ASSOCIATED CONTENT, July 07, 2009
- **The New York City Opera VOX 2008 Festival**, May 11, 2008  
Performed scenes from Criseyde in concert with New York City Opera orchestra and singers at New York University's Skirball Center for the Performing Arts, conducted by David Wroe.
- **The American Virtuosi Opera Theater**, April 24, 2008  
Performed a concert of music from Criseyde at CUNY's Elebash Recital Hall, conducted by Kenneth Hamrick.
- **The New York Times** said of Criseyde at the New York City Opera:  
*"Female historical figures were also explored on Sunday with Alice Shields' Criseyde, a feminist interpretation of Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde. Nancy Dean's libretto offers a rare chance to hear Middle English sung... The melodic development and ornamentation of the intense, richly scored work reflect Ms. Shields' lengthy study of classical Indian raga."* --- THE NEW YORK TIMES, May 13, 2008
- **Upcoming Feature Article on Criseyde:**  
Journal of the International Association of Women in Music, Spring 2010 Issue.
- **Radio Interviews on Criseyde:**  
"Cat Radio Cafe", WBAI 99.5FM, New York City, upcoming Interview: May, 2010  
"Monday Afternoon Classics with Gandalf", WJFF 90.5FM, Radio Catskill, New York, Aug. 25, 2008  
"Cross-Cultural Poetics", KAOS 89.3FM, Olympia Community Radio, Washington, May 20 & Dec.5, 2008.
- **Join the Supporters of the opera Criseyde:**  
Join the Alice M. Ditson Fund of Columbia University, NYC Dept. of Cultural Affairs, Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust for Music, American Music Center, PatsyLu Fund for Women's Music Projects and donors Dr. Russell Palmeri and Dr. Carolyn MacGregor. Criseyde was originally commissioned by librettist and medieval scholar Dr. Nancy Dean. A tax-deductible donation may be made at <http://www.aliceshields.com>.

### What is happening with Criseyde right now, in March 2010?

**Criseyde is Awaiting Premiere and Developing Interactive Stage Art.** While exploring possibilities for new concerts and a premiere of the opera, composer Alice Shields is collaborating with sculptor Helene Brandt to develop possible uses of Brandt's cage sculptures as dramatic interactive scenery, along with new multimedia theatrical technology being developed for Criseyde by computer artist – electrical engineer Spencer Russell. These visual components will be made available to presenters of Criseyde as an option.

For more information: [info@aliceshields.com](mailto:info@aliceshields.com), or:

[www.criseyde.com](http://www.criseyde.com)



## OPTIONAL VISUAL ART FOR THE OPERA CRISEYDE

### Stage Sculptures: Cages by Helene Brandt

Stagings and concert performances of the opera Criseyde can feature the powerful theatrical sculpture of Helene Brandt. These physical cages refl—ect the psychological cages inhabited by each character in the drama. The cage motif can also be reflected in singers' costumes of bodices, gloves and armor, in space-age and transparent materials. The sculptor can also participate in educational programs on Criseyde.

*"I want to reduce the boundary between art and spectator. I want the audience to walk around and even get inside the sculptures, and to understand them both ."*

--- Helene Brandt

### New Multimedia Technology: Spencer Russell

Stagings and concert performances of the opera Criseyde can also include the dramatic shadow and lighting effects of computer artist-electrical engineer Spencer Russell. The lighting and shadows sometimes reflect the actual movements of the actors, and sometimes diverge from reality, revealing and augmenting the subtexts and power dynamics of Criseyde. In Criseyde the audience will see impossible effects, such as the pausing and warping of an actor's shadow.

**For more information about the opera Criseyde,  
—contact Alice Shields at:**

**[info@aliceshields.com](mailto:info@aliceshields.com)  
[www.criseyde.com](http://www.criseyde.com)**