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## Thorns - Program Note

*Thorns* was commissioned for *Magdalene*, a chamber opera in 13 movements conceived by soprano Danielle Birrittella and director Zoe Aja Moore and premiered at the 2020 PROTOTYPE Festival in New York, NY.

*Magdalene* is wild meditation on transformation and desire scored by the collective voices of fourteen women. Set to Marie Howe's *Magdalene* poems, the opera invites an audience into the interior world of Mary Magdalene — enlarging her to cross time and space, she appears as a woman alive now, who strives to heal the unyielding split between the sacred and the sexual. Encountering her life in flashes – wandering through a hotel, lighting birthday candles, making love in the ocean – Magdalene finds transcendence in the mundane to finally become the subject of her own story.