

# THE INNOCENTS

JOHN LANE and ALLEN OTTE

FILM TRAILER is [HERE](#).

WEBSITE: [www.the-innocents.com](http://www.the-innocents.com)

*"...spare, poignant drama..."* - Tom Keogh, *The Seattle Times*

*"As an exonerate myself, it was more impactful than I could have imagined. Seeing it, feeling it was everything."* - Anna Vasquez, Director of Outreach and Education, Innocence Project of Texas

## THE WORK

Now the subject of an award-winning documentary film, *The Innocents* is social justice advocacy through performance art. The work is an effort to delve deeply into the current issues surrounding the subject of wrongful imprisonment and exoneration, as well as a commitment to



connect with the communities in which it is performed. We have embraced our role as advocates through the realization that our work cuts to the emotional core of the human experience surrounding these issues.

Using a variety of found-object and home-made instruments, electronic soundscapes, and spoken texts, we have devised a one-hour dramatic soundscape comprised of at least seventeen tableaux which explore

aspects of the issues surrounding wrongful imprisonment and exoneration in the American criminal justice system: mistaken identity, incarceration, injustice, politics, psychology, and resilience. The texts spoken in the work are derived from a variety of

sources: various historic prison diaries/poetry, interrogation transcripts, Google autocomplete, Thomas Jefferson, Jax (a female prisoner in the Oklahoma State Prison system), Mark Godsey (former NY prosecutor, author of Blind Injustice), captured Chicago police scan chatter, among many other sources.



Some of the pieces are meant to be uncomfortable – a bit too long, momentarily chaotic and confusing, difficult to understand, provocative. Others are simple and direct: melodic and in familiar genres, lyrics recited to percussive accompaniment. Working on an

emotional level, our idea is to shine a light on this subject—as if through a prism—in hopes that various aspects surrounding it may briefly come into focus for each of us.

Art provides a platform for advocacy, affords us an opportunity to raise our voices in the name of something other than ourselves in an eloquent and hopefully memorable way. In the current socio-political landscape where we are confronted with the most egregious examples of the opposite, our offering wishes to prove the power of empathic engagement with issues that ultimately touch all of our lives.



### **SELECTED PERFORMANCE HISTORY**

Studio Z (St. Paul, MN), University of Michigan, University of Washington, Innocents Network Conference, University of North Texas, The Goat Farm (Atlanta, GA), The National Center for Civil and Human Rights (Atlanta, GA), Georgia State University, University of Georgia, Woody Guthrie Center (Tulsa, OK), Oberlin College, Kenyon College, Bowling Green State University, Texas A&M University, Oklahoma City University, University of Tulsa, University of Akron, Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Kent State University, University of Northern Alabama, Ohio University, Percussive Arts Society International Convention

### **PERFORMING SOCIAL JUSTICE RESIDENCIES AND WORKSHOPS**

Residencies may include any of the following activities:

- 1-hour concert performance
- Panel discussions, Q&A, or Lectures
- Composition workshops - working with students to create their own unique socio-politically inspired works
- Interdisciplinary discussions/creative workshops
- Percussion studio class demonstration/discussion

## **THE FILM**

**See the Trailer [HERE](#).**

The Innocents is now the subject of a feature-length documentary film by [Wojciech Lorenc](#). Wojciech is a media maker whose works span feature and short documentaries, narratives, online video, and interactive works such as apps and virtual reality games and experiences. His films received numerous awards, two Midwest Emmy nominations, and screened in over one hundred festivals in fifteen countries. His online works reached over 40 million viewers around the world. The Innocents has garnered the following awards and nominations:

- Official Selection: St. Louis International Film Festival
- Official Selection: Malibu Film Festival
- The Social Justice and Hope Award Winner, California Music Video & Film Awards
- Nominations for Best Documentary Feature, Documentary Director, Documentary Editing and Texas Feature - Austin Revolution Film Festival
- Best Feature Music Film or Documentary Nomination, California Music Video & Film Awards

## **ARTIST BIOS**

**John Lane** is an artist whose creative work and collaborations extend through percussion to poetry/spoken word and theater. As a performer, he has appeared on stages throughout the Americas, Australia, and Japan. He has recorded two albums: *The Landscape Scrolls* (Starkland Records, 2018), *TRIGGER: Artists Respond to Gun Violence* (Albany Records, 2021). John is the Professor of Percussion and Director of Percussion Studies at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas. [www.john-lane.com](http://www.john-lane.com)

**Allen Otte** was a cofounder of the Blackearth Percussion Group and of Percussion Group Cincinnati, and toured for decades throughout the world performing new and experimental music created for him and his colleagues in life-long creative friendships with composers including John Cage, Herbert Brün, Frederic Rzewski. Allen regularly presents his own creative work, often in residencies centered around the theme of performing social justice, and is the percussionist with the early music quartet Trobar Medieval. He is professor Emeritus, University of Cincinnati, and in 2017 was inducted into the International Percussive Arts Society Hall of Fame.