

**BOSTON  
LYRIC  
OPERA**

# OMAR

Music by Rhiannon Giddens & Michael Abels

Libretto by Rhiannon Giddens

Conductor Michael Ellis Ingram

Director Kaneza Schaal

**MAY 4-7** | Emerson Cutler  
Majestic Theatre



**BRADLEY VERNATTER**

*Stanford Calderwood  
General Director & CEO*

**DAVID ANGUS**

*Music Director*

**JOHN CONKLIN**

**VIMBAYI KAZIBONI**

**NINA YOSHIDA NELSEN**

*Artistic Advisors*

## STAY FOR THE TALKBACK

Please keep your seat to dive deeper into the musical experience with a half-hour discussion immediately following each performance.



**MAY 4**

Ashleigh Gordon,  
Castle of Our  
Skins Artistic &  
Executive Director;  
professional violist.



**MAY 6**

Ala Alryyes, PhD  
Associate Professor  
Queens College, CUNY  
2011 translation of Omar  
ibn Said's *Life*, entitled:  
*A Muslim American Slave:*  
*The Life of Omar ibn Said.*



**MAY 7**

Morgan Beckford,  
Director of  
Community Connects,  
Silk Road Project;  
professional singer.

## PROGRAM CONTENTS

Welcome .....	1
Mission, Vision, & Values .....	2
BLO's Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Access .....	3
Deconstructing Opera: <i>Omar</i> .....	4
Board of Directors .....	5
In Memoriam .....	6
Creative Team & Cast .....	8
Synopsis .....	10
Composer Notes .....	12
Meet the Artists .....	13
Learn more about <i>Omar</i> .....	21
Artistic & Production Personnel .....	22
Acknowledgments .....	24
About BLO & Staff .....	25
Donors .....	26
Institutional Partners .....	28
Venue Information .....	33

# WELCOME



The operatic stage is full of captivating stories about the human experience, such as those that opened our Season in *Romeo & Juliet* and *La bohème* to BLO's production of *Champion: An Opera in Jazz* by Terence Blanchard last year. In each of these instances, the operatic medium breathes life into stories that can be experienced in new and meaningful ways. This opera offers a poignant tale to join this roster — the story of Omar ibn Said.

Omar was an extraordinary individual, and what makes Omar's story singular is that he tells his story in his own words. Through his writing, the only known surviving autobiographical account of American slavery written in Arabic, Omar has given us an intimate and unedited account of his life and faith. His story is a potent reminder that art gives voice to those whose stories might otherwise go unheard and reminds us that opera makes us kinder, wiser, and more empathic human beings.

When BLO undertook the co-commissioning of this opera, we recognized the role our art form could play in reflecting on this period of our shared American history and in honoring Omar's strength and spirituality. Closing out the 2022/23 Mainstage Season with *Omar* is a fitting choice for BLO after a remarkable year, where we brought four unique operas to the stage that span the very best of the art form, from beloved classics to premieres like this presentation.

I hope you'll join us for BLO happenings this summer, including: our youth presentation of *Hansel & Gretel* at the Boston Public Library; to *The Wanderer's Tethering*, our collaboration between Boston poet laureate Porsha Olayiwola, Boston-based composer Mason Byne and Castle of Our Skins; the return of BLO Street Stage; and more, including our upcoming 2023/24 Season and return to the Emerson Colonial Theatre for a new production of *Madama Butterfly*.

On behalf of the Company, thank you for joining us for this performance and for supporting Boston Lyric Opera.

Bradley Vernatter | *Stanford Calderwood General Director & CEO*



ELIZABETH FRIAR

From left: Emmett G. Price III, Bradley Vernatter, Cierra Byrd, Rhiannon Giddens, Brianna J. Robinson, and Brendon Shapiro at BLO's Deconstructing Opera: *Omar*, presented at GBH.



## UPCOMING BLO EVENTS

---

**May 25**

OPERA NIGHT at the  
Boston Public Library

---

**June 18**

THE WANDERER'S  
TETHERING

*See page 7.*

---

**June 2023**

PRIMA EVENT

*Become an email insider!*

*See page 23.*

---

**August 25**

CONCERT IN THE  
COURTYARD at the  
Boston Public Library

---

**September 14-24**

MADAMA BUTTERFLY  
at the Emerson Colonial  
Theatre

---

**For additional details  
and event times, visit  
[blo.org/events](https://blo.org/events)**

## MISSION, VISION, VALUES

Boston Lyric Opera's new mission, vision, and values were created with the extensive participation of the leadership team and staff of the Company and represent the first time the organization has adopted a clear set of shared values to guide the work of our team.

### Mission

**Boston Lyric Opera inspires, entertains, and connects communities through compelling opera performances, programs, and gatherings.**

### Vision

To create operatic moments that enrich everyday life.

### Values

**BOLDNESS** | We tell evocative stories through music and drama on a large scale and in unexpected settings. We celebrate the rich history of opera and promote adventurousness, which advances the art form, accesses our imaginations, and inspires new thinking.

**CONNECTION** | We nurture a vital ecosystem of relationships and exchanges that elevate the human experience and impact people. These connections are the force that strengthens us and our communities.

**COLLABORATION** | Opera is deeply interconnected storytelling, music, and design on an ambitious level that requires many people's artistry, technical skill, passion, participation, and support. We nurture creative people and partnerships that are diverse in thinking and experiences, and we provide structure and support for everyone to thrive.

**LEARNING** | We seek opportunities to learn new ideas and expand our minds, which drives progress. We create time and space to listen, engage, and grow together.

**BELONGING** | We are committed to storytelling that reflects a wide variety of perspectives and identities and invites everyone to participate. We create welcoming and accessible spaces that celebrate the uniqueness of our communities.

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, & ACCESSIBILITY

To fulfill our mission, we must engage people of all backgrounds — meaningfully and respectfully — throughout our organization. For Boston Lyric Opera, advancing the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility is a moral priority and a necessity for our success. As adopted by the Board in the 2021/22 Season, we commit to becoming a more diverse and inclusive organization and fostering healthy, vital communities. To that end, this work underscores all that we do and is embedded in our strategic priorities.

We recognize that this work will take time, intentional actions, and accountability from our Board, employees, artists, patrons, and community. We commit to embracing individuals of all backgrounds and identities.

Opera has the power to speak the truth, broaden perspectives, and invite empathy. We acknowledge that the history of operas and those engaged in opera has not always been diverse or inclusive. We believe that we can address the necessary changes for opera to evolve and thrive.

DIVERSITY EQUITY INCLUSION ACCESSIBILITY

### OUR DEIA VALUES

- We acknowledge and appreciate the inherent human rights of all individuals without discrimination.
- We believe that our work must be based on mutual respect.
- We aim to examine our actions so that we may act without bias based on the differences we encounter during our work.
- We aspire to listen to, learn from, and seek diversity among the voices that join us in our work.



For more information, scan  
the QR code or visit us at:  
[BLO.org/deia](https://blo.org/deia)

## BLO'S DECONSTRUCTING OPERA: OMAR

"How do we tell our story in a way that acknowledges the bad stuff, but also acknowledges all of the beauty?"

– Rhiannon Giddens in conversation with Emmett G. Price III about the New England premiere of *Omar*.



**BOSTON  
LYRIC  
OPERA**

**GBH**



◀ SCAN TO WATCH THE CONVERSATION

## A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



On behalf of BLO's Board of Directors and Board of Advisors, I welcome you to the Company's production of *Omar*. This extraordinary work, with music by Rhiannon Giddens and Michael Abels, and a libretto by Ms. Giddens, tells a riveting story — one that compels us to reflect on the dignity and unique value embodied in each member of the human family, and the horror of slavery that denies dignity and value to the enslaved person.

In bringing *Omar* to this stage, BLO again reinforces its commitment to introduce new works, to listen to and amplify voices that need to be heard, to broaden perspectives, and to invite empathy. As you engage with this work, we invite you to walk with the characters, to enter into the story, and to feel the power of the music and the words of *Omar's* journey.

This art form is ideally suited to storytelling. Using words and music, movement and drama, all driven forward by the unique medium that is the unamplified human voice, opera weaves these elements together as a seamless whole and in a manner that transcends other art forms. As BLO tells new stories, as it draws on the deep reservoir of traditional works and invites us to see ourselves in these stories, we fulfill our mission to our community.

As we close this season, we do so mindful that our work as a Company expands beyond the theater. The Artist Classroom Visits program brings our singers, musicians, and teaching artists into schools and other venues in Greater Boston. In those classrooms, we share the beauty of opera and the creativity that undergirds it with young people, many of whom also take part in the school-based Create Your Own Opera Program. Recently, the College of the Holy Cross, through the gracious invitation of its President and fellow BLO Director Vincent Rougeau, welcomed BLO to the wonderful new Prior Performing Arts Center for a program featuring selections from *Omar*, offering an opportunity to bring the story and music to a wider audience.

On behalf of the Company, thank you for your presence at this performance and thank you for supporting Boston Lyric Opera.

Michael J. Puzo | Chair, Board of Directors

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Chair**  
Michael J. Puzo

**Vice-Chair**  
Miguel de Bragança

**Treasurer**  
Susan W. Jacobs

**Clerk**  
Dr. Irving H. Plotkin

**Stanford Calderwood  
General Director  
& CEO**  
Bradley Vernatter,  
*Ex Officio*

Catherine Bassick  
Linda Cabot Black  
Willa Bodman  
Alicia Cooney

Wayne Davis  
Alan Dynner  
Andrew Eisenberg  
Timothy Fulham  
Mimi Hewlett  
Lisa Hillenbrand  
Amelia Welt Katzen  
Maria J. Krokidas  
Abigail B. Mason  
Anne M. Morgan  
A. Neil Pappalardo  
E. Lee Perry<sup>o</sup>  
Vincent D. Rougeau  
David W. Scudder  
Ray Stata  
George Yip

### BOARD OF ADVISORS

**Co-Chairs**  
Russell Lopez  
Lawrence St. Clair  
Lydia Kenton Walsh

James Ackerman  
Richard M. Burnes, Jr.  
Ellie Cabot  
Carol Deane  
Larry DeVito  
JoAnne Walton  
Dickinson  
Laura Dike  
David Hoffman  
Kathleen Hull  
Amy Hunter  
Ernest Jacob  
Louise Johnson  
Ellen Kaplan

Lynne Levitsky  
Anita Loscalzo  
M. Lynne Markus  
Kathryn McDaniel  
Jillian McGrath  
Kate Meany  
Jo Frances Meyer  
Jane Pisciotto Papa  
Samuel Parkinson  
*Sabbatical 22/23*  
Dr. John William  
Poduska, Sr.  
Susanne Potts  
Stephen Ricci  
Carl Rosenberg  
Allison Ryder  
Simone Santiago  
Alex Senchak

Tricia Swift  
Wynne Szeto  
Frank Tempesta  
Richard Trant  
Amy Tsurumi  
Lydia Kenton Walsh  
Robert Walsh  
Yin-Yin Wang  
Peter J. Wender  
Tania Zouikin

**EMERITI**  
Steven P. Akin  
J.P. Barger  
Horace H. Irvine II<sup>o</sup>  
Sherif A. Nada

<sup>o</sup> Deceased  
As of April 1, 2023

# In Memoriam

Boston Lyric Opera celebrates the lives and musical passion of patrons whom we lost this year. They contributed to the Company, the City, and the art form in extraordinary ways.



## E. LEE PERRY

It is with deep sadness and heavy hearts that we bid goodbye to our friend, opera lover, and dedicated BLO Director, **E. Lee Perry**. Lee served on BLO's Board since 1992. Over the years, he has been a friend to everyone at BLO and to many in the national opera community.

We remember his warmth, joyful spirit, and how he cherished our art form.

## *BLO Remembers with Fondness*

Paul Gilbert  
Sandra Hoffman  
John Moriarty  
Robert Osteen

Millie Perkins  
E. Lee Perry  
Sandra Pollack  
Roger Saunders

Marie Louise Scudder  
Lise Striar  
Paul Ward White

**John Moriarty** was celebrated throughout Boston and beyond for his many musical gifts which he shared unstintingly, including as official accompanist for the Metropolitan Opera New England Regional Auditions for 50+ years. Locally, John had near lifelong associations with New England Conservatory and Boston Conservatory.

**Sandy Pollack** joined the BLO Board of Directors in 1995, serving until 2008. Alongside her late husband Herb, Sandy was a stalwart supporter of Boston Lyric Opera and the arts in Boston. She brought a very special light to BLO.

**Marie Louise Scudder** was a lifelong music lover who supported the Company enthusiastically and generously, alongside her husband David. ML's constant presence is greatly missed.



# BOSTON LYRIC OPERA

## THE WANDERER'S TETHERING

SUMMER CONCERT

A musical and spoken  
word performance  
collaboration.



### FEATURING

ARTISTS FROM BLO & CASTLE OF OUR SKINS

### HIBERNIAN HALL

184 DUDLEY ST #200,  
BOSTON, MA 02119

SUNDAY, JUNE 18

4:00PM | [BLO.ORG/EVENTS](https://blo.org/events)

PRESENTED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



Merrill Family  
Charitable Foundation



PAY  
WHAT  
YOU  
LIKE

# OMAR

Music by  
RHIANNON GIDDENS  
& MICHAEL ABELS

Libretto by  
RHIANNON GIDDENS

Published by and presented with  
permission of Subito Music Corporation

*Sung in English with English surtitles*

David Angus, BLO Music Director  
2022/23 Season Sponsor  
*Linda Cabot Black*

## PERFORMANCES

THU, MAY 4, 2023 | 7:30PM

SAT, MAY 6, 2023 | 7:30PM

SUN, MAY 7, 2023 | 3PM

Performance time is approximately  
2 hours, 15 minutes with one intermission.

EMERSON CUTLER  
MAJESTIC THEATRE  
219 Tremont Street  
Boston, MA 02116

\*Boston Lyric Opera Debut

†Boston Lyric Opera Jane and Steven Akin  
Emerging Artist

‡Boston Lyric Opera Jane and Steven Akin  
Emerging Artist Alum

## CREATIVE TEAM

Conductor  
**MICHAEL ELLIS INGRAM**

Director  
**KANEZA SCHAAL**

Production Designer  
**CHRISTOPHER MYER**

Set Designer  
**AMY RUBIN**

Costume Designers  
**APRIL HICKMAN**  
**MICHELINE RUSSELL-BROWN**

Lighting Designer  
**LUCRECIA BRICENO**

Lighting Co-Designer  
**ALEJANDRO FAJARDO**

Video Designer  
**JOSHUA HIGGASON**

Wig & Makeup Designer  
**FRANDRESHA HALL**

Choreographer  
**KIARA BENN**

Intimacy Director  
**JACKIE DAVIS**

Boston Lyric Opera Orchestra  
**ANNIE RABBAT** *Orchestra Leader*

Chorus Director  
**BRETT HODGDON**†

Rehearsal Coach/Accompanist  
**BRENDON SHAPIRO**‡

Stage Manager  
**MIKE JANNEY**

## CAST

Omar

**JAMEZ MCCORKLE**

Fatima, Omar's Mother

**CIERRA BYRD**

James Owen/Johnson

**DANIEL OKULITCH**

Julie

**LAUREN MICHELLE**

Auctioneer/Taylor

**NEAL FERREIRA†**

Eliza, Owen's Daughter

**EMMA SORENSON‡**

Katie Ellen/The Caller

**CATHERINE ANNE DANIEL**

Abdul, Omar's Brother/Abe

**NICHOLAS LAGESSE†**

Amadou/Renty

**FRED C. VANNESS JR.†**

Suleiman/Townsperson 1

**CHRISTON CARNEY**

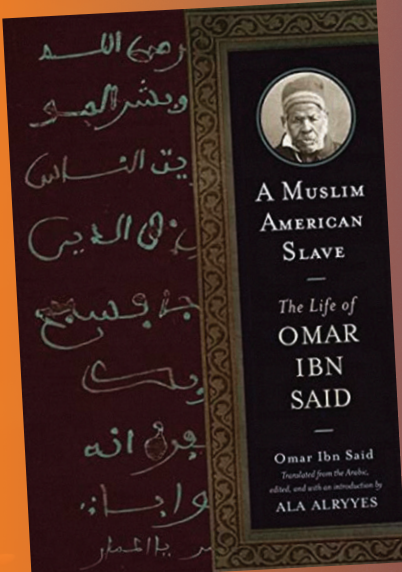
Olufemi

**CHRISTOPHER HUMBERT JR.**

Ancestral Dancer

**KIARA BENN**

*Omar* is co-produced by Spoleto Festival USA and Carolina Performing Arts at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and co-commissioned by LA Opera, Spoleto Festival USA, Carolina Performing Arts, Boston Lyric Opera, San Francisco Opera, and Lyric Opera of Chicago.




## FROM HIS OWN WORDS

*Omar* is inspired by Dr. Ala Alryyes' translation of Omar ibn Said's autobiography in his book *A Muslim American Slave: The Life of Omar ibn Said*.

**LEARN MORE & ORDER**

Published by University of Wisconsin Press, 2011; [uwpress.wisc.edu](http://uwpress.wisc.edu)



## ACT I

*Futa Toro, Senegal, 1807.* Omar ibn Said reads the Qur'an. In the background, the villagers and Omar's mother pray to Allah, asking for guidance and assistance. Slavers have been pillaging the region, and Omar's brother, convinced that an agreement will secure peace, negotiates with them. While Omar prefers to leave his fate in Allah's hands, his brother is determined to control his destiny, and he leaves to talk to the slavers. Suddenly, the village is raided, and Omar's brother discovers that he has been deceived. Slavers overrun the village and begin taking villagers prisoner. In the chaos, Omar is separated from his family, and his mother is murdered. Omar is dragged away to a slave ship.

*The Middle Passage.* Omar is shackled with imprisoned men in the hold of a cargo ship. They do not speak the same language and struggle to introduce themselves. Unsanitary and inhumane conditions in the cargo hold have caused disease and death. Meanwhile, the two white slavers watch over the prisoners, concerned about the impact of the high death rate on their future profits.

*The Slave Market, Charleston, South Carolina.* Julie, an enslaved woman, is dragged into the market for sale by a white kidnapper. She plans to escape him at the market and return to the Owens' plantation in Fayetteville. At the market, she encounters Omar, but he cannot understand her English. Undeterred, she tells Omar that if he were to escape, he should find Master James Owen in Fayetteville. The auction begins, and a family is separated. When Omar goes up for auction, he notices that Julie has gotten free of her bonds. To create a diversion, Omar falls to his knees and prays loudly, giving Julie a chance to escape. However, doing so makes Omar less desirable, and he is sold to Johnson, a plantation owner.

*Johnson's plantation.* Enslaved workers chatter about the newcomer, Omar — he doesn't seem to be fit for working on the plantation. Johnson demonstrates his vicious temperament, striking a worker. He yells at Omar in an attempt to bully him into submission, but from Omar's perspective, the

words are garbled; Omar cannot understand him. Finally, Johnson sends Omar to pick cotton in the fields. Omar hesitantly responds.

*Five months later.* The spirit of Omar's mother encourages Omar to pray to Allah and reminds him of Julie's recommendation. Exhausted and distraught by his terrible life on the Johnson plantation, Omar flees in search of Fayetteville.

## ACT II

*Fayetteville County Jail.* Omar has been captured and brought to the county jail. The chorus swirls with questions about Omar: Who owns him? Who let him get away? Omar prays and writes on the jail's walls, capturing the attention of the daughter of plantation owner James Owen. Calling his writing "magic," she encourages Owen to purchase Omar. Owen is fascinated by Omar's religious piety and believes Omar can be converted to Christianity.

*Owen's plantation.* Katie Ellen, one of the enslaved workers on the plantation, is surprised that Julie came back. Owen introduces Omar to the other enslaved people, and they welcome him. Seeing that all is well, Owen takes his leave. Omar thanks Allah for guiding him to Fayetteville, and he is reunited with Julie. She reveals that her father had worn a cap like his and had prayed to the same god. But her father has been sold down the river, and she holds on "to memories, to histories, to feelings."

*Owen's study.* Omar is summoned and accompanied by Katie Ellen and Julie to Owen's study. Owen and Taylor, a visitor from the North, discuss the prospect of converting Omar to Christianity. Owen gives Omar a Bible written in Arabic, and he and Taylor begin to coach Omar on writing the Lord's Prayer. Instead, Omar defiantly expresses his desire to go home in Arabic.

*Later that day, Owen's plantation.* Omar sits alone under a tree reading the Arabic Bible. He reflects on his life, thinks of his mother, and asks for forgiveness in Arabic. In the final scene, Julie is amazed that Omar can read and write. She encourages him to write a book to tell his story, and her suggestion is seconded by Omar's mother. In writing, Omar gives praise for the beauty of the world: Allah flows through his pen.

---

Allison Chu is a PhD candidate in music history at Yale University. Her research focuses on the intersection of identity and opera in the twenty-first century.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2022/23  
JANE AND STEVEN AKIN EMERGING ARTISTS  
ON A FANTASTIC SEASON



**Brianna J.  
Robinson**  
*Soprano*



**Fred C.  
VanNess, Jr.**  
*Tenor*



**Junhan  
Choi**  
*Baritone*



**Nicholas  
LaGesse**  
*Baritone*

## I Cannot Write My Life

Islam, Arabic, and Slavery in Omar ibn Said's America

By Mbaye Lo, Carl W. Ernst

Mbaye Lo and Carl W. Ernst weave fresh and accurate translations of Omar ibn Said's eighteen surviving writings, for the first time identifying his quotations from Islamic theological texts, correcting many distortions, and providing the fullest possible account of his life and significance.

MBAYE LO is associate professor of the practice of Asian and Middle Eastern studies and international comparative studies at Duke University.

CARL W. ERNST is William R. Kenan Jr. Distinguished Professor Emeritus at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

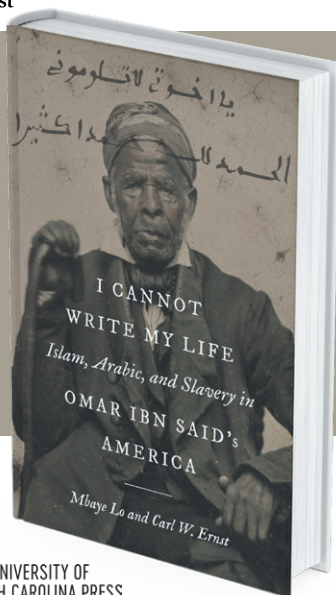
In the Islamic Civilization and Muslim Networks Series

**PRE-ORDER NOW**  
[www.uncpress.org](http://www.uncpress.org)  
1-800-848-6224

Use code  
01UNCP30  
at checkout for  
30% discount

Available August 2023 | \$24.95 | paperback  
978-1-4696-7467-4

 THE UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTH CAROLINA PRESS



**OMAR** is at once a story of one man and of many. He is himself, trying to understand the shape his life has taken; he is the enslaved Muslim (of which there were so many more than we will ever know) seeking his community in any way he can; he is the eternal outsider. The fractured yet steadfast nature of the culture that formed around the members of the African diaspora struggling for survival in the Americas wraps around his journey, as I have envisioned it; the anonymous voices of the countless Black musical creators from my musical lineage are shot through a score that is nevertheless firmly situated at a crossroads of the folk and western classical traditions. Who was Omar? We will never really know.

*This Omar is merely one of a thousand different possible interpretations of his writings and what we know of his life. Nevertheless, I heard an echo of his*

voice reaching out to me over the centuries — I felt the spirits rise in me with every word written and every note composed. I felt a connection to a time that I cannot easily imagine; a time that tested the ancestors, gave no quarter, and took an unfathomable strength of spirit to survive. I hope this is merely the beginning of the artistic renderings of this remarkable man — let this be not the last operatic word on Omar, but merely the first. And I am honored it is so.

– Rhiannon Giddens  
Co-Composer & Librettist

**OMAR** is the story of one man’s physical and spiritual journey, as told from veiled references in his own autobiography and interpreted through Rhiannon Giddens’ moving libretto. Musically, the piece shows as many influences as the many cultures it flows through, from the music of Senegal and the broader Muslim diaspora to the earliest melody transcribed from enslaved people in North America, to spirituals, bluegrass, Protestant hymns, Gershwin, and even a touch of Wagner. The chorus plays a prominent, active role in the work, as a way to center it in a Black community that is multifaceted and real. These diverse elements are unified via the use of a traditional orchestral palette and immensely singable vocal lines.

– Michael Abels  
Co-Composer



ERIC SCHWABEL

EBRU YILDIZ



## CREATIVE TEAM



**Rhiannon Giddens |**  
*Composer & Librettist*

The acclaimed musician Rhiannon Giddens uses her art to excavate the past and reveal bold truths about our present. A MacArthur “Genius Grant” recipient, Giddens co-founded the Grammy Award-winning Carolina Chocolate Drops, and she has been nominated for six additional Grammys for her work as a soloist and collaborator. She was most recently nominated for her collaboration with multi-instrumentalist Francesco Turrisi, *there is no Other* (2019). Giddens’ forthcoming album, *They’re Calling Me Home*, is a 12-track album, recorded with Turrisi in Ireland during the recent lockdown; it speaks of the longing for the comfort of home as well as the metaphorical “call home” of death, which has been a tragic reality for so many during the COVID-19 crisis. Giddens’ life-long mission is to lift up people whose contributions to American musical history have previously been erased, and to work toward a more accurate understanding of the country’s musical origins. *Pitchfork* has said of her work, “few artists are so fearless and so ravenous in their exploration,” and *Smithsonian Magazine* calls her “an electrifying artist who brings alive the memories of forgotten predecessors, white and black.” Among her many diverse career highlights, Giddens has performed for the Obamas at the White House, served as a Carnegie Hall *Perspectives* curator, and received an inaugural Legacy of Americana Award from Nashville’s National Museum of African American History in partnership with the Americana Music Association. Her critical acclaim includes in-depth profiles by CBS *Sunday Morning*, the *New York Times*, the *New Yorker*, and NPR’s *Fresh Air*, among many others. Giddens is featured in Ken Burns’ *Country Music* series, which aired on PBS in 2019, where she speaks about the African American origins of country music. She is also a member of the band Our Native Daughters with three other black female banjo players, Leyla McCalla, Allison Russell, and Amythyst Kiah, and co-produced their debut album *Songs of Our Native Daughters* (2019), which tells stories of historic black womanhood and survival. Named Artistic Director of Silkroad in 2020, Giddens is developing a number of new programs for the organization, including one inspired by the history

of the American transcontinental railroad and the cultures and music of its builders. She recently wrote the music for an original ballet, *Lucy Negro Redux*, for Nashville Ballet (premiered in 2019), and the libretto and music for an original opera, *Omar*, based on the autobiography of the enslaved man Omar ibn Said for the Spoleto USA Festival (premiering in 2022). As an actor, Giddens had a featured role on the television series *Nashville*.



**Michael Abels |** *Composer*

Michael Abels is a two-time Emmy-nominated composer of music for film, media and the concert hall, often incorporating elements of folk, classical and bluegrass music. He is known for his genre-defying scores for the Jordan Peele films *Get Out* and *Us*, for which Abels won a World Soundtrack Award, the Jerry Goldsmith Award, a Critics Choice nomination, and multiple critics awards. The hip-hop influenced score for *Us* was short-listed for the Oscar, and was even named “Score of the Decade” by *The Wrap*. Other recent media projects include the films *Bad Education*, *Nightbooks*, *Fake Famous*, and the docu-series *Allen v. Farrow*. Current releases include *Beauty* which premiered at the Tribeca Festival and is now streaming on Netflix, and *Breaking* (formerly *892*) which premiered at Sundance and opened in theaters in August of 2022. Abels’ third collaboration with Jordan Peele, *Nope*, opened in theaters in July of 2022. Abels’ creative output also includes many concert works, including *At War With Ourselves* for the Kronos Quartet, *Isolation Variation* for Hilary Hahn, and the opera *Omar* co-composed with Grammy-winning singer/songwriter Rhiannon Giddens, which opened at Los Angeles Opera in October 2022. His scores have been performed by the New York Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony, the Los Angeles Master Chorale and many others. Some of these pieces are available on the Cedille label, including *Delights & Dances* and *Winged Creatures*. Current commissions include a work for the National Symphony, and a guitar concerto for Grammy-nominated artist Mak Grgic. Abels is co-founder of the Composers Diversity Collective, an advocacy group to increase visibility of composers of color in film, gaming and streaming media. His compositions include the one-act opera *Homies and Popz*, with a libretto by Bernardo Solano, commissioned by LA

## MEET THE ARTISTS

Opera and premiered in 2000. Born in Phoenix, Arizona, Michael Abels attended the University of Southern California where he studied with James Hopkins and Robert Linn. Later on in his collegiate career, he studied West African music with Alfred Ladzekpo at the California Institute for the Arts. He currently serves as Director of Music for New Roads School in Santa Monica.



### **Michael Ellis Ingram | Conductor**

Michael Ellis Ingram is a conductor and educator based in Hamburg, Germany. He led the Collegium Musicum Leipzig and served as Kapellmeister of two of the nation's oldest orchestras: the Loh-Orchester Sondershausen (est. 1600) and the Mecklenburgische Staatskapelle Schwerin (est. 1563). Mr. Ingram has collaborated with composers Peter Ruzicka, Steven Kazuo Takasugi, and Dominick Argento, bringing contemporary classical music to new audiences in a variety of non-traditional venues, including a cathedral, a vaudeville theater, a foundry, a yacht club, a salt mine, and a zoo. As a music educator, Mr. Ingram has taught at the conservatories of Leipzig and Dresden and at The Salzburg Institute of Religion, Culture & the Arts. He currently teaches conducting at the Hochschule für Musik & Theater Hamburg. Mr. Ingram's interests extend far beyond the realm of music. He has published poetry and prose, lectured on literature, race, film, and theology, and moderated for NPR member station KBIA. In his free time, he can be found folding origami in a windowsill or standing in quiet contemplation of a bronze sculpture. Highlights of Mr. Ingram's 2022/23 season include *Porgy and Bess* (Des Moines Metro Opera), *Carmen* (Portland Opera), *The Sleeping Beauty* (Compagnie Illicite Bayonne), and *Aida* (Barclays Arena Hamburg).



### **Kaneza Schaal | Director**

Kaneza Schaal works in theater, opera, and film, and is based in New York City. Schaal's work has shown in diverse contexts, from NYC galleries, to courtyards in Vietnam, to East African amphitheatres, to European opera houses, to Egyptian theater festivals, to US public housing, to rural auditoriums in the UAE. By creating performances that speak many formal, cultural, historical, aesthetic, and experiential languages, she seeks expansive audiences. Domestically, her work has

shown at Brooklyn Academy of Music, LA Philharmonic, The Shed, The Kennedy Center, Walker Arts Center, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Los Angeles Opera, The New Victory Theater, and New Orleans Center for Contemporary Art. Schaal has received a Guggenheim Fellowship, Herb Alpert Award, United States Artists Fellowship, SOROS Art Migration and Public Space Fellowship, Ford Foundation Art For Justice Bearing Witness Award, and a Creative Capital Award.



### **Christopher Myers | Production Designer**

Award-winning illustrator Christopher Myers has collaborated with Kaneza Schaal on works including *GO FORTH*, premiering to great acclaim as part of PS122's COIL 2015; and *Cartography*, which premiered at The Kennedy Center in 2019. He is the son of acclaimed author Walter Dean Myers. In 1998, the two collaborated on *Harlem*, which was named a Caldecott Honor Book as well as a Coretta Scott King Honor Book. Myers' solo effort, *Black Cat*, was also a Coretta Scott King Honor Book. His most recent books include *Firebird*, written by Misty Copeland; *Jake Makes a World*, written by Sharifa Rhodes-Pitts; and *My Pen*, written by himself. The Kennedy Center has adapted three of Myers' books to the stage for young audiences. His sculptural work has been shown at PSI-MoMA, Contrasts Gallery in Shanghai, and the Sundance Film Festival. Most recently, Myers was included in the Prospect Biennial in New Orleans, where he and his collaborators, the Propeller Group, organized a funeral march that went from Saigon to the Lower Ninth Ward.



### **Amy Rubin | Set Designer**

Amy Rubin is a designer of environments for opera, theater, and dance. Recent designs include *Omar*, LA Opera/Spoletto Festival USA; *The Snowy Day*, Houston Grand Opera; *Blue*, Michigan Opera Theatre; *Aging Magician*, San Diego Opera; *Lucy*, Audible Theater; *Most Happy*, Williamstown Theatre Festival; *Octet*, Signature Theatre; *Gloria: A Life*, A.R.T./Daryl Roth Theatre; *Miles for Mary*, Playwrights Horizons; and *Acquanetta*, Bard College/Prototype Festival. Rubin's work has been featured at American Repertory Theater, McCarter Theatre



Center, La Jolla Playhouse, Walker Arts Center, MassMoCA, Z Space, The Kimmel Center, and numerous TED Talks.



**April Hickman** | *Costume Designer*

April M. Hickman recently earned a Master of Fine Arts in costume design from the Yale School of Drama, where she designed costumes for productions including *Hamlet*, *Pivot*, *Seven Spots on the Sun*, *In the Palm of the Giant*, *Slave Play*, and four plays for the school's Dwight/Edgewood Project. Elsewhere, she has designed costumes for Theatre Squared, Yale Cabaret, and C1Media's short film *The Promotion*, for which she was nominated for Best Costume Design at the LA International Film Festival Indie Short Fest. She has also worked with major regional companies, including Yale Repertory Theatre, Goodman Theatre, and Arena Stage.



**Micheline Russell-Brown** | *Costume Designer*

Trained as a modern dancer and choreographer, Micheline Russell-Brown has always had a deep love for her work as a costume and design professional. She began her wardrobe career at the Roundabout Theatre Company and then the Metropolitan Opera after a recommendation from her mentor at Bard College. From the Met, she moved on to Broadway, working backstage for several years at *Rent*. After making a career in theatre, Russell-Brown shifted to film and television and has worked on productions such as *The Sopranos*, *Flight of the Conchords*, *Damages*, *The Good Wife*, and *The Good Fight*. Always missing the pulse of live theatre, Russell-Brown is thrilled to be returning to the wings of the stage. She lives in Brooklyn with her wife and two children, forever dreaming up ways to better dress her family.



**Lucrecia Briceno** | *Lighting Designer*

Lucrecia Briceno is a Peruvian artist currently based in Brooklyn. Much of her work has been in association with artists developing innovative and original pieces. Her work includes theatre, opera, puppetry, and dance, as well as collaborations in several non-performance projects. Her designs have been presented at such venues as Spoleto Festival USA, The Public Theater, Oxford Playhouse (UK), Arena

Stage, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Dallas Theater Center, BAM (Fisher), The Kennedy Center, The Atlas Performing Arts Center, Berlind Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, La Mama ETC, Birmingham Repertory Theatre (UK), Culture Project, Pregones Theatre/PRTT, Intar Theatre, HERE Arts Center, Soho Rep, Ohio Theatre, and Irondale Center, among many others. Internationally, her work has been seen in Caracas, Peru; Turkey; Scotland; Seoul, South Korea; Bogotá, Colombia; Norway; and England. Her design work for *Crime and Punishment* was part of the Venezuelan delegation for the 2015 Prague Quadrennial. She is an associate artist with The Civilians; co-artistic director of Anonymous Ensemble, a device ensemble that creates new theater, performance media, and live film; and resident designer with Pregones Theater/PRTT and LaMicro Theater. She has also been a guest artist/lecturer at NYU, JMU, Princeton University, Hunter College, and the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú. She received her Master of Fine Arts from the NYU Tisch School of the Arts and is a member of 829.



**Alejandro Fajardo** | *Lighting Co-Designer*

Alejandro Fajardo is a Colombian lighting designer based in Lenapehoking/Brooklyn. Fajardo strongly believes that art and imagination can help guide our communities through the current crises we face and build a new future that centers community care and growth. His recent credits include regional theater (Two River Theatre, Trinity Repertory Company, St. Ann's Warehouse), opera (*Omar* at Spoleto Festival USA, Bard Music Festival), dance performances (MICHİYAYA Dance; Kafka Collective; Danspace Project, Inc.), and performance festivals, including NYC Free — a month-long performance festival at Little Island Park — and Fall for Dance Festival at New York City Center. Fajardo also designs escape, theatrical immersive, site lighting for music, fashion shows, and other commercial events.



**Joshua Higgason** | *Video Designer*

Joshua Higgason is a video, lighting, scenic, and interactive designer for theater, opera, concerts, and live performances. Recent projects include *Hansel and Gretel* (projections), Teatro alla Scala;

## MEET THE ARTISTS

*King Arthur* (projections), Staatsoper Berlin; *The Threepenny Opera* (projections), Salzburg Festival; *Control (Five Landscapes for Orchestra)* (video, scenic), Utah Symphony; Ira Glass' *Seven Things I've Learned* tour (projections); *Persona* (video and lighting), Beth Morrison Projects; Sufjan Stevens' *Carrie and Lowell* tour 2015 (video); Radiolab's *Apocalyptic* tour (video, scenic, lighting); *Powder Her Face* (video), New York City Opera; and *The Ambassador* (video), Brooklyn Academy of Music. He has designed and consulted for The Builders Association, Big Dance Theater, MoMA, Mass MoCA, Theatre for One/Christine Jones, The Windmill Factory, and TED. He teaches design at MIT.



**Frandresha Hall |**  
*Wig & Makeup Designer*

Frandresha "Brie" Hall is an Atlanta native who has been specializing in hair and makeup for film, television, theatre, and celebrities for over 17 years. She began working with Atlanta Opera in 2015 for their production of *La bohème*. She quickly grew to become a Hair and Makeup Department Head and now Designer. Her theatre works include *Pagliacci*, *Kaiser of Atlantis*, *Carmen*, and *The Threepenny Opera*. She is proud to have this production of *Omar* be her design debut with Boston Lyric Opera. Her film and television credits include *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*, National Geographic's *Genius*, the Aretha Franklin biopic *Respect*, *Dear Evan Hansen*, *Young Rock*, and *Black Lightning*.



**Kiara Benn |** *Choreography/  
Ancestral Dancer*

Kiara Benn is a movement artist and producer pursuing a career in the realm of creative direction. Benn attended Wesleyan University, where she received the Dancelink Fellowship (2019-2020) and was awarded a grant to intern with Whitney Biennial Artist Brendan Fernandes. Benn assisted with his movement-based installations at The Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago and at Wesleyan's Zilkha Gallery. Benn danced with Brooklyn youth company Dancewave, where she danced in works by Kyle Abraham, Camille A. Brown, Andrea Miller of Gallim Dance, and more, including performances at renowned venues like The Pocantico Center and

Jacob's Pillow. Benn has produced three choreographic pieces: "Will You Reminisce For Me?", "tempo take me...", and "excuse me while I take up space". Benn's artistry often explores the question of how music serves as a portal to privately experienced memories and triggers our bodies to move in ways that reference the past.



**Jackie Davis |** *Intimacy Director*

Jackie Davis is an actor, director, choreographer, and intimacy director/advocate working in theater, film, and television. Recent intimacy direction credits include: *The Inheritance, Parts 1 and 2*, Trinity Repertory Company; *A Silhouette of a Silhouette*, The Wilbury Theatre Group; *References to Salvador Dali Make Me Hot*, Brown/Trinity MFA; and *Incels and Other Myths*, Boston Playwrights' Theatre. Recent acting credits include: Shirley Chisolm, *The Inferior Sex*; Margaret, *The Inheritance, Part 2*; and Jasmine, *Fairview*, Trinity Repertory Company. Recent directing credits include: *AntigonX*, The Wilbury Theatre Group; and *Race*, Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theater. Davis can be seen as abolitionist Susan Robbins in the Columbia Pictures film *Little Women*.

## CAST



**Cierra Byrd |**  
*Fatima, Omar's Mother*

Cierra Byrd is a mezzo-soprano from Ohio now in her third year in the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program. She made her Met debut as Bertha in Terence Blanchard's *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* during the 2021/22 season. Later that season, she participated in the annual Lindemann Program recital series held at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts and performed in the City Parks Foundation's SummerStage recitals. During the Met's 2022/23 season, she will sing a *Woman of Crete* in *Idomeneo* and cover the role of Sister Mathilde in *Dialogues des Carmélites*. Recent operatic appearances include the *Governess* in *The Queen of Spades* at Des Moines Metro Opera, *Lady Catherine De Bourgh* in the stage premiere of Kirke Mechem's *Pride and Prejudice* at Peabody Opera Theatre, and the *Witch* in *Hänsel und Gretel* at Opera Saratoga. On the concert stage, she

# GET CLOSER TO THE OPERA YOU LOVE



NILE SCOTT PHOTOGRAPHY

David Angus conducts BLO's 2022 production of *Romeo & Juliet*. Featuring Vanessa Becerra and Ricardo Garcia as the title characters.



## SCAN TO DONATE NOW

To learn more about joining our community of supporters, please call or visit us at:

617.702.8975  
BLO.org/give

## SUPPORT BLO

Play a starring role of your own. Make your gift today to support beloved classics, daring premieres, and a new generation of artists and audiences.

- Donations directly impact the core facets of BLO: community & education programs, new works, and increasing opera accessibility.
- BLO puts on creative, outside-the-box productions that attract thousands of operagoers and reach hundreds of students through our education initiatives each year.



**Keep Up With Us:** Sign up for BLO's e-newsletter, *The Downbeat*, at [BLO.org/](https://BLO.org/) community to learn about special offers and upcoming events, along with new articles and interviews on our blog, *In the Wings*.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA: @BostonLyricOpera



## MEET THE ARTISTS

has been a featured soloist in Mahler's *Symphony No. 3* with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Marin Alsop. Notable accolades include the Legacy Award from the National Opera Association's Carolyn Bailey Argento Vocal Competition, being named a finalist in Opera Ebony's Benjamin Matthews Vocal Competition, second prize in the Peabody Conservatory's Vocal Studies Song Competition, and the Peabody Artist Excellence Award. She is an alumna of Des Moines Metro Opera's apprentice artist program and Opera Saratoga's young artist program. She holds degrees from Ohio State University and the Peabody Conservatory at Johns Hopkins University, where she studied with legendary mezzo-soprano Denyce Graves. *Cierra Byrd's participation in the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program is sponsored by The Elroy and Terry Krumholz Foundation. Cierra Byrd appears by kind permission of The Metropolitan Opera Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.*



**Christon Carney** |  
*Suleiman/Townsperson 1*

Christon Carney, a native of Nashville, TN, received his Master of Music degree in vocal performance from the New England Conservatory and his Bachelor of Music in music education from Lipscomb University. He debuted in Nashville Opera's production of *La Traviata* as Giuseppe and has gone on to perform with the Boston Lyric Opera, singing various roles in the chorus. He has performed as a concert soloist with the Rhode Island Civic Chorale and Orchestra, Nashville Symphony, Nashville's Heimermann Chorale, and has over a decade of choral experience participating in vocal ensembles, premiering new works, and as a soloist. He has received honors from several organizations, including the prestigious ABRSM Diploma in Voice and recognition as a finalist in the Alltech Vocal Scholarship Competition. Carney is also a compelling recitalist, performing programs for the Music at Trinity music series, College of the Holy Cross, Mechanics Hall's Concerts Plus series, and many others. He has worked as a paid singer and section leader at many religious organizations, including the Parish of All Saints (Worcester, MA). He is currently the education and outreach coordinator at the prestigious Mechanics Hall and managing director of the Many Voices Mechanics Hall Youth Singers.



**Catherine Anne Daniel** |  
*Katie Ellen/The Caller*

Career highlights for Ms. Daniel include: singing Emelda Griffiths in Grammy Award-winner Terence

Blanchard's opera *Champion* with Opéra de Montréal, debuting Klytaemnestra in Edmonton Opera's production of *Elektra*, singing Elisabetta in Knoxville Opera's production of Donizetti's *Maria Stuarda*, and debuting at Carnegie Hall as a soloist in Haydn's *Mass in Time of War*. Ms. Daniel made her Opera Tampa debut in *Carmen* singing the title role in 2020. Ms. Daniel studied voice with coloratura soprano Tracy Dahl at the University of Manitoba. She was a member of the Atelier lyrique de l'Opéra de Montréal, and later became a member of the Opera Studio Nederlands in Amsterdam.



**Neal Ferreira** | *Auctioneer/Taylor*

Neal Ferreira is a nationally recognized lyric tenor known for his cultivated vocalism and eloquent expression. He recently appeared with the Boston

Youth Symphony Orchestra at Symphony Hall as Tamino in *The Magic Flute*, and with Emmanuel Music as Macheath in Benjamin Britten's *The Beggar's Opera*. The tenor made his Carnegie Hall debut in the spring of 2022 with the Boston Symphony Orchestra as Ein Soldat in *Wozzeck* under the baton of Maestro Andris Nelsons. A much sought-after interpreter of new music, Mr. Ferreira made his European debut in the spring of 2021 as Laertes in the world premiere of Joseph Summer's *Hamlet* with State Opera Rousse (Bulgaria). Ferreira enjoyed a successful performance as the Visitor in Boston Lyric Opera's production of Philip Glass' *In the Penal Colony*. The tenor has also been featured on the premiere recordings of Charles Wuorinen's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* (BMOP/sound), Joseph Summer's *The Tempest* (Albany Records), Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco's *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Odyssey Opera), and James MacMillan's *Clemency* (BIS Records). Ferreira has also appeared with Florida Grand Opera, The Glimmerglass Festival, Opera Colorado, Virginia Opera, Anchorage Opera, Syracuse Opera, American Repertory Theater, Boston Modern Orchestra Project, and Guerilla Opera. He is a proud student of internationally renowned tenor Frank Lopardo.


**Christopher Humbert Jr. | *Olufemi***

Bass-baritone Christopher Humbert Jr. hails from Akron, Ohio and has performed throughout the United States. He was a featured soloist in Minnesota Orchestra's Listening Project, in which he performed Eleanor Alberga's *The Soul's Expression* and Margaret Bonds' *Spirituals*. Humbert was selected to join Opera Theatre of Saint Louis during in 2020 as a Gerdine Young Artist and featured on St. Louis, Missouri's Channel 9 for the inaugural "Songs for St. Louis" televised concert series. He is a frequent oratorio and concert soloist. Recent repertoire includes *Ein Feste Burg ist unser Gott* (Bach), *Matthäus-Passion* (Schütz), *Johannes-Passion* (Bach), and *Messiah* (Händel). In spring 2023, Humbert was the bass soloist in Mozart's *Requiem* with the Erie Philharmonic. He made his Carnegie Hall debut as a soloist in Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem* (Manhattan Concert Productions). Humbert was recently named a winner of the St. Louis District of the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition. Other competition credits include first place in Opera Guild of Dayton's Tri-State Vocal Competition (2019) and multiple classical music and musical theater awards from the National Association of Teachers of Singing. He has since joined the Benenson Young Artist Program (Palm Beach Opera) and made his professional debut as Zuniga in *Carmen* under the baton of Anetolli Allemandi, alongside operatic inspirations like J'Nai Bridges and Rihab Chaieb. He is currently pursuing an M.M. in opera performance at Boston Conservatory and is a graduate of the Capital University Conservatory of Music. Humbert will join the Ryan Opera Center (Lyric Opera of Chicago) for the 2023/24 season.


**Nicholas LaGesse |**

*Abdul, Omar's Brother/Abe*

Baritone Nicholas LaGesse most recently starred as Sheriff Danny Loewe (Count Danilo), *The Merry Widow*, Pacific Opera Project. During his 2015 season, he debuted as Jameson in the critically acclaimed, revolving-location production of *Hopscotch* with The Industry in Los Angeles. LaGesse has also starred as Harlequin, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Pacific Opera Project. Previous roles include Demetrius, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; Zuniga, *Carmen*;

Ottone, *L'incoronazione di Poppea*; Claudio, *Agrippina*; Jupiter, *Orpheus and the Underworld*; and Marquis de la Force, *Dialogues des Carmélites*. He has been honored as a finalist in the Palm Springs Opera Guild Competition, as the winner of the Chicago Chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) Competition, and was a Bella Voce award recipient in the Bel Canto Foundation Competition. In addition to his musical endeavors, LaGesse is equally skilled in the world of Latin dance. He has trained with The Omambo Dance Project (winners of the 2014 and 2015 World Latin Dance Competition) and also danced with the companies Clave y Tumbao and Bachata Caliente in Los Angeles. He previously was on the dance faculty of Soho Dance Los Angeles, where he taught bachata and studied under former world champion Raul Santiago. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Northwestern University, a Master of Music from UCLA, and has also trained at Marlena Malas' summer voice institute at the Chautauqua Institution.


**Jamez McCorkle | *Omar***

An innate musician and trained pianist, tenor Jamez McCorkle made headlines after his critically acclaimed appearance in the world premiere of Rhiannon Giddens' *Omar* at Spoleto Festival USA in 2022, which has led to debuts in the title role with LA Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, and Carolina Performing Arts. This season, McCorkle returns to the Bayerische Staatsoper as Duke of Cornwall in *Lear*, to Spoleto Festival for an innovative new project, and joins Trondheim Symphony Orchestra for Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*, conducted by Han-Na Chang. McCorkle looks forward to upcoming debuts with San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Hamburg State Opera, the Royal Danish Theatre, and Glyndebourne Opera. Recent role highlights include Telemaco, *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*, Theatre Basel; Omar ibn Said, *Omar* (world premiere), Spoleto Festival; Duke of Cornwall, *Lear*, Bayerische Staatsoper; Peter the Honeyman, *Porgy and Bess*, Metropolitan Opera; Tamino, *Die Zauberflöte*, Kentucky Opera; Lensky, *Eugene Onegin*, Michigan Opera Theatre and Spoleto Festival; and Leonard Woolfe, *The Hours* (concert premiere), Philadelphia Orchestra, under the baton of Yannick Nézet-Séguin. McCorkle also recently sang Britten's

## MEET THE ARTISTS

*War Requiem* with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with Spoleto Festival. A graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music, McCorkle is an alumnus of the Mannes School of Music and Loyola University New Orleans. He was a member of the International Opera Studio in Zurich and a Young Artist with the Salzburg Festival in 2017. McCorkle was a finalist in the Neue Stimmen competition in 2019 and has won awards and competitions including the George London Competition, Sullivan Foundation, Bravo! Opera Competition, National Opera Association Vocal Competition, and the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions (Gulf Coast Region).



### **Lauren Michelle | Julie**

Soprano Lauren Michelle is an internationally recognized opera singer. Some of her notable roles include Susanna, *Le nozze di Figaro*; Musetta,

*La bohème*, Helena, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Lauretta, *Gianni Schicchi*. She has performed at Covent Garden, Vienna State Opera, La Scala Theatre, Carnegie Hall, and more. Earlier this season, she joined Boston Lyric Opera's production of *La bohème* as Mimì. She sang in concert under the baton of Plácido Domingo at LA Opera and made her debut with Washington National Opera to critical acclaim alongside Eric Owens. She was a prizewinner of the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition and has been awarded first prize in both the Lotte Lenya Competition and the Marcello Giordani International Vocal Competition. She is a graduate of UCLA and The Julliard School.



### **Daniel Okulitch |**

*James Owen/Johnson*

Bass-baritone Daniel Okulitch has earned international acclaim for his portrayal of the Mozart roles of Don

Giovanni, Count Almaviva, Figaro, and Leporello, which he has performed with LA Opera, Santa Fe Opera, and Dallas Opera. He recently made house debuts as Don Giovanni, *Don Giovanni*, Bolshoi Theatre; and Count Almaviva, *Le nozze di Figaro*, Opernhaus Zürich. This season, he returns to *Don Giovanni* with Teatro Udine. Okulitch has created several principal characters, notably Ennis del Mar, *Brokeback Mountain*, Teatro Real; Seth Brundle, *The*

*Fly*, Théâtre de Châtelet and LA Opera; Mark Rutland, *Marnie*, English National Opera; and LBJ, *JFK*, Fort Worth Opera and Opéra de Montréal. He recently debuted as The Protector, *Written on Skin*, Opéra de Montréal, and further explored George Benjamin's work in *Lessons in Love and Violence* at Gran Teatre del Liceu. This season sees Okulitch in *Omar* with LA Opera, Carolina Performing Arts, and Boston Lyric Opera. He also reprises the role of Beck, *Everest*, The Barbican Centre. Okulitch recently appeared as the bass soloist in Handel's *Messiah*, Houston Symphony Orchestra; Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*, Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra; and Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem*, Charlotte Symphony Orchestra. This season, he sings Mendelssohn's *Elijah* for the first time with Symphony Nova Scotia. Okulitch's first solo recording, *The New American Art Song*, was released on GPR Records in 2011. He can further be heard in recordings of Chausson's *Le Roi Arthus* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Pasatieri's *Frau Margot*, and DiChiera's *Cyrano*.



### **Emma Sorenson |**

*Eliza, Owen's Daughter*

Mezzo-soprano Emma Sorenson is a Chicago-based singer who in 2020 was named winner of the Kansas

City District Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, and semi-finalist in the Lotte Lenya Competition presented by the Kurt Weill Foundation. Ms. Sorenson is known for a capturing stage presence and striking vocal quality. For the 2022/23 season, Ms. Sorenson returns to the chorus of *The Lyric Opera of Chicago* as a full-time ensemble member. Recent roles include Alto Soloist in Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with South Bend Symphony, Nicklausse in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* with Union Avenue Opera, and Sandman in *Hänsel und Gretel* with The Lyric Opera of Chicago.



### **Fred C. VanNess Jr. |**

*Amadou/Renty*

Boston-based tenor Fred C. VanNess, Jr. is a native of Kinder, Louisiana. Recently, he appeared as Russell

Davenport in Dan Shore's acclaimed new opera *Freedom Ride*, presented in a co-production by MassOpera and Chicago Opera Theater. Other engagements include Voltaire/Pangloss, *Candide*,

Opera del West; Don Ottavio, *Don Giovanni*, Toronto Summer Opera and MassOpera; Don José, *Carmen*, NEMPAC Opera Project; and Rodolfo, *La bohème*, Longwood Opera. VanNess is a member of Castle of our Skins, an organization dedicated to celebrating Black artistry through music. He was the tenor soloist in the world premiere of Samuel Beebe's *Remember the Sea*, Castle of our Skins; and the tenor quartet soloist in the world premiere of Geoffrey Gibbs' *Tide Flowers*, University of Rhode Island Artist Series. He sang in several solo recitals with Lake Charles Symphony, Salem Philharmonic, and Coushatta Casino Resort. Other notable performances include *Schöpfungsmesse*, Concord Chorale; *Judas*

*Maccabeus*, Handel by Candlelight; and *Messiah*, Tremont Baptist Church. VanNess has developed and performed two one-man shows. His most recent show, *When I Think of Home...*, premiered at McNeese State University, following the success of his first show, *Beethoven to Broadway*, at the Larcom Theatre in Beverly, Massachusetts. VanNess received his Graduate Performance Diploma from the Longy School of Music and his Master of Music from Louisiana State University. He was awarded first place for the North Shore Star, presented by the North Shore Music Theatre and The Beverly Rotary Club. He is also a recipient of The Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana Career Grant.

LEARN MORE ABOUT OMAR



**The Divine Pen:  
Omar ibn Said and  
the Power of the  
Written Word**  
by Jennifer J. Yanco, PhD



**Omar and  
the Memory  
of Slavery**  
by Lucy Caplan



**Reading Between  
the Lines: A Case for  
an Operatic Omar**  
by Allison Chu



From left: Detail from the painting *The Divine Pen*, by Senegalese calligrapher Yelimane Fall, c. 2007. Scene from *Omar and Jamez McCorkle* in *Omar*, production photos courtesy of William Struhs | Spoleto Festival USA.

# ARTISTIC & PRODUCTION PERSONNEL

## PRODUCTION STAFF

Mike Janney *Stage Manager*  
Ian Andrew Askew *Assistant Stage Director*  
Carmen Catherine Alfaro *Assistant Stage Manager*  
Una Rafferty *Assistant Stage Manager*  
Natalie Main *Stage Management Production Assistant*  
Michael Gottke *Lighting Director*  
Matt Cost *Assistant Lighting Designer*  
Melinda Abreu *Wig-Makeup Artist*  
Frاندresha Hall *Wig & Makeup Artist*  
Natalia St Jean *Surttitle Creator & Operator*

## PRODUCTION CREW

Brian Willis *Head Production Carpenter*  
Weston Lant *First Assistant Production Carpenter*  
Michael Geoghagan *Second Assistant Production Carpenter*  
Brendan Ritchie *Head Rigger*  
Kirt Kaminski *Head Production Electrician*  
Jake Seibert *Lighting Programmer*  
Donald King *First Assistant Production Electrician*  
Maxx Finn *Second Assistant Production Electrician*  
Shawn Higgins *Second Assistant Production Electrician*  
Emily Picot *Head of Production Properties*  
David Picot *First Assistant of Production Properties*  
Bryan Ritchie *Head of Production Audio*  
Joshua DeChristopher *First Assistant Production Audio*  
Chris Norman *Head Production Video*  
Anthony Norman *First Assistant Production Video*  
David Orlando *Video Programmer*  
Dianna Reardon *Wardrobe Supervisor*  
Melinda Skocik *First Assistant Wardrobe*

## MUSIC STAFF

Nicholas Brown *Music Librarian & Orchestra Contractor*

## CHOIR A

**Sopranos**  
Melynda Davis  
Ashley Victoria Jones *Soloist*  
Kay Patterson *Soloist*  
Brianna J. Robinson† *Soloist*

**Altos**  
Kendra Faith Beasley  
Isabel Randall  
Arielle Rogers-Wilkey *Soloist*  
Madison Smith *Soloist*

**Tenors**  
Christon Carney *Soloist*  
Daon Drisdorn *Soloist*  
Joel Edwards *Soloist*  
Fred C. VanNess Jr.† *Soloist*

**Basses**  
Gift Anyagwochu  
Keith Brinkley *Soloist*  
Todd McNeel *Soloist*  
Ron Williams *Soloist*

## CHOIR B

**Sopranos**  
Alisa Cassola  
Marie McCarville

**Altos**  
Jaime Korkos  
Katherine Maysek

**Tenors**  
Ethan Bremner *Soloist*  
Christopher Maher

**Basses**  
Scott Ballantine *Soloist*  
Michael Galvin *Soloist*  
Andrew Stack *Soloist*

## COVERS

Kendra Faith Beasley *Fatima/Katie Ellen/Caller*  
Ethan Bremner *Auctioneer/Taylor*  
Christopher Humbert Jr. *Abdul/Abe*  
Jaime Korkos *Eliza*  
Andy Papas *Owen/Johnson*  
Brianna J. Robinson† *Julie*  
Fred C. VanNess Jr.† *Omar*

## UNIONS

The artists and stage managers employed on these productions are members of the American Guild of Musical Artists. All musicians are members of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada.

Many of the scenic, costume, and lighting designers are members of United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE). Stagehands are represented by Local #11 of IATSE. Wardrobe crew are represented by Local #764 of IATSE.

BLO is a member of OPERA America, the national service organization for opera in the US and Canada.



THE NATIONAL OPERA CENTER  
AMERICA



## ORCHESTRA

### Violin I

Annie Rabbat  
*Orchestra Leader*  
Heidi Braun-Hill  
Jodi Hagen  
Zenas Hsu  
Yeolim Nam  
Christine Vitale

### Violin II

Sarah Atwood *Principal*  
Stacey Alden  
Robert Curtis  
Colin Davis  
Rohan Gregory

### Viola

Kenneth Stalberg  
*Principal*  
David Feltner  
Donna Jerome  
Don Krishnaswami

### Cello

Steven Laven  
*Acting Principal*  
Jing Li  
Jan Pfeiffer-Rios

### Double Bass

Robert Lynam *Principal*  
Barry Boettger

### Flute

Ann Bobo  
*Acting Principal*  
Iva Milch

## DANCERS

Victoria L. Awkward  
Jay Breen  
Elmer Martinez  
Theophile Victoria

### Oboe

Nancy Dimock *Principal*  
Grace Shryock

### Clarinet

Jan Halloran *Principal*  
Nicholas Brown

### Bassoon

Rachel Juszcak  
*Acting Principal*  
Margaret Phillips

### French Horn

Clark Matthews  
*Acting Principal*  
Dirk Hillyer

### Trumpet

Bruce Hall *Principal*  
Jesse Levine

### Trombone

Robert Couture *Principal*  
Hans Bohn  
Cameron Owen

### Timpani

Jeffrey Fischer *Principal*

### Percussion

Nancy Smith  
*Acting Principal*  
William Manley  
Gregory Simonds

### Harp

Ina Zdorovetchi *Principal*

### Piano

Brendon Shapiro

## SUPERNUMERARIES

Leah Charles *Billy*  
Firo Oliva Ridge *Billy*  
*Understudy*



Advocate Creativity.

**ACTIVATE YOUR ADVOCACY POWER  
FOR ARTS AND CULTURE,  
JOIN CALLS TO ACTION,  
AND STAY UP TO DATE ON SECTOR  
ANNOUNCEMENTS**

 @MASSCREATIVE

 @MASSCREATIVE

 @MASSCREATIVEORG

 MASSCREATIVE



#CREATIVEMA #ARTSANDCULTUREFORMA  
#POWEROF CULTURE #MAPOLI



**prima**  
BLO's Social Group for  
Young Arts Lovers

**UNDER 45 AND INTERESTED IN  
SOCIALIZING WITH FELLOW  
OPERA LOVERS?**

LEARN MORE

**BECOME AN  
EMAIL INSIDER!**



† Boston Lyric Opera Jane and Steven Akin Emerging Artist

‡ Boston Lyric Opera Jane and Steven Akin Emerging Artist Alum

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Boston Lyric Opera extends its gratitude to the following vendors, partners, individuals, community organizations, and school partners for their extraordinary courtesy in making our recent seasons possible:

4Wall Entertainment | Rui Alves,  
Mike Texeira  
Acentech, Inc. | Carl Rosenberg,  
Ben Markham  
Allison Voth  
American Repertory Theater  
Artists For Humanity  
Arts Connect International  
Arts Consulting Group  
ArtsBoston  
Ball Square Films | Kathy Wittman  
BOCA Systems  
Boston Center for the Arts  
Boston Children's Museum  
Boston Conservatory at  
Berklee College of Music  
Boston Properties  
Boston Public Library  
Boston Public Schools Visual &  
Performing Arts Office  
Brewster & EasCare Ambulance  
Service | Gen Norton  
C3 Commercial Construction  
Consulting, Inc. | Doug Anderson  
Capron Lighting & Sound Co. |  
Jeff Antonellis, Ryan Frost  
Cartage America | Tim Riley  
Charcoalblue, LLP | Andy Hayles,  
Gary Sparkes, John Owens  
Churchill Living, Furnished  
Apartments | Fraidy Goldenberg  
Citius Printing & Graphics |  
George Perry  
Commonwealth Shakespeare  
Company  
Constangy, Brooks, Smith &  
Prophete, LLP | Andrew Eisenberg,  
Will Krasnow  
Costume Works, Inc. | Liz Perlman  
Creative Financial Staffing |  
Ruth Douglas, Joanne Baranofsky  
Devon Lumber  
Dynamix, Inc.  
East Cambridge Piano |  
James Nicoloro  
EBS, Employee Benefit Solutions  
Emerson College | David Howse,  
Bonnie Baggesen  
Emmanuel Music  
Fly Over the City  
Furnished Quarters |  
Suzanne Blocker, Annette Clement  
HallKeen Management |  
Jennifer Zarrella, Randy Pelletier  
Harbor One Bank  
Huntington Theatre Company  
Horwitz & Company | Barry Horwitz  
HUB International  
Dr. Hyeouk Chris Hahm  
IATSE Local #11 JACET |  
Colleen Glynn  
Immersive Music  
InnoPsych, Inc. |  
Dr. Charmain Jackman  
Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción  
Islamic Society of Boston  
Cultural Center  
James J. Myers  
Janet Buecker  
Jayne's Flowers, Inc.  
JCA Arts Marketing  
Jim Jenson  
JKJ Retirement Services | Ben Hall,  
Jack McDonald  
Liza Voll Photography  
Louis A. Gentile Piano Service  
Martha Sloan Felch  
Massachusetts Bay Transportation  
Authority  
Massachusetts Department of  
Conservation and Recreation  
MBTA  
Megan Gilron | Staging Research  
Midway Artist Studios  
Mike Marchetti  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston  
Myles Standish Business  
Condominiums  
NEPS Primary Freight  
New England Conservatory of Music  
New England Restrooms |  
Nicole Antonucci  
Nile Scott Studios  
Olivia Moon | Half Asian Lens  
P & C Consulting | Amy Allen  
Production Advantage  
ProPrint Boston  
R. Scott Reedy  
Raber Umphenour  
Resilient Philanthropy |  
Richard Russell  
Robert Silman Associates Structural  
Engineers | Ben Rosenberg,  
Steven Au Yeung  
Rose Kennedy Greenway |  
Keelin Caldwell  
Rosebrand, Inc.  
Ryder Transportation  
Sentinel Group | Denise Roney  
Sew What, Inc. | Andrea Fraser  
Seyfarth Shaw, LLP | Brian Michaelis  
Spectrum Concessions  
Subito Music Corporation  
Tarlow, Breed, Hart & Rodgers, P.C. |  
Michael Radin  
TDF | Theatre Development Fund  
Tessitura  
The Flanigan Company  
The Foundry, Cambridge  
The HYM Investment Group  
The Trustees  
Timothy Hamilton  
Toshiba Corp. | Cheryl Hayford,  
Todd Tweedie  
Thrive Networks | Kim Shactman,  
Andres Vargas  
United Staging & Rigging |  
Eric Frishman  
Vantage Technology Consulting  
Group | Geoffrey Tritsch  
VOICES Boston  
Wetherbee Creative |  
Wendy Wetherbee  
WGBH  
YW Boston |  
Anouska Bhattacharyya

Now in its 46<sup>th</sup> Season, Boston Lyric Opera's programming remains faithful to tradition while exploring new ground, building audiences, and creating new ways to enhance the opera-going experience.

Since its founding in 1976, Boston Lyric Opera continues to celebrate opera through innovative productions and public programming. BLO has produced world and US premieres, commissions, and co-productions of note, ranging from live stage productions to films streamed worldwide on its online platform, operabox.tv.

BLO has partnered with organizations such as Covent Garden, San Francisco Opera, Detroit Opera, and more, and continues to be a destination for leading artists, conductors, directors, and designers from around the world.

Alongside its mainstage programming, BLO artists in our Jane & Steven Akin Emerging Artists initiative work to hone their craft and prepare for the next step in their careers while taking part in BLO's wide-reaching community programming and education initiatives that introduce opera to new audiences across generations.

BLO launched a new five-year strategic plan in 2022, prioritizing four strategic pillars: Programming, Community, Space, and Leadership alongside a renewed commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Accessibility.

BLO employs nearly 500 artists and creative professionals annually — vocalists, instrumentalists, artisans, stagehands, costumers, scenic designers, administrators, and beyond. The Company is proud to play a significant and meaningful role in Boston's vibrant arts community.

### LEADERSHIP

Bradley Vernatter *Stanford Calderwood*  
General Director & Chief Executive Officer  
David Angus *Music Director*  
John Conklin *Artistic Advisor*  
Vimbayi Kaziboni *Artistic Advisor*  
Nina Yoshida Nelsen *Artistic Advisor*

### ARTISTIC & PRODUCTION

Lisa Hanson *Senior Director of Producing Operations*  
Ben Richter *Artistic Senior Manager*  
Michael Costa *Production Manager*  
David Orlando *Assistant Production Manager*  
Kimberly Sabio *Artistic Coordinator*  
Liam Tait *Operations Coordinator*  
Jaclyn Cleary *Payroll/Accounting Associate*  
Jessica Johnson Brock *Costing Consultant*

### FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

David Tompkins *Chief Operating Officer*  
Lizabeth Malanga *Senior Director of Administration*  
Ebony Bell *Executive Administrator*  
Nancy McDonald *Senior Manager, Operations*  
Michelle Rawding *Financial Analyst*  
Aileen Leon-Echeverria *Administrative Manager*  
Ally Bennett *COVID Compliance Supervisor*  
Kailey Bennett *COVID Compliance Supervisor*  
Loren Graziano *COVID Compliance Supervisor*  
Eleni Stratigos *COVID Compliance Supervisor*  
Kira Weaver *COVID Compliance Supervisor*

### PHILANTHROPY

Yong-Hee Silver *Chief Philanthropy Officer*  
Ishan Johnson *Deputy Chief Philanthropy Officer*  
Sarah B. Blume *Director of Major Gifts*  
Sean Meyers *Associate Director of Philanthropy*  
Amy Advocat *Grantwriter*

### PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Sara O'Brien *Senior Director of Public Engagement*  
Rebecca Kirk *Director of Community & Learning*  
Julia Propp *Director of Marketing & Sales*  
Roxanna Myhrum *Event Producer*  
Zane Burden *Audience Services Manager*  
Ryan Cannister *Marketing & Communications Manager*  
Hannah Cassell *Audience Development Manager*  
V Brancazio *Public Programming Coordinator*  
Jeanna Heezen *Marketing Coordinator*  
Kay Steele *Youth Program Coordinator*  
Lauren Florek *Patron Services Associate*  
Jon-Michael Taylor *Audience Services Associate*  
Patricia Au *Resident Teaching Artist*  
Kalee Burrows *Resident Teaching Artist*  
Lydia Jane Graeff *Resident Teaching Artist*

JMK PR *Public Relations*  
Incontrera Consulting *Social Media*  
Leapfrog Arts *Graphic Design*  
Mouth Media *Website*  
RADAR *Nonprofit Solutions*

## DONORS

We are honored to recognize our donors who generously support Boston Lyric Opera. We are deeply grateful for the following contributions made to BLO between July 1, 2021 and April 1, 2023.

**FRIENDS OF BLO** | The largest community of supporters of Boston Lyric Opera. Members enjoy exclusive opportunities to explore opera and engage with others who share their passion through benefits such as invitations to Deconstructing Opera Salons, backstage tours, final dress rehearsals, and more.

**ORFEO SOCIETY** | Members gain behind-the-scenes access to BLO Artists and Creative Team members, while providing direct support to bring opera to our stages and communities.

**GOLDOVSKY SOCIETY** | Membership is given in recognition of those who have made a provision in a will, living trust, deferred gift plan, or retirement plan that will benefit BLO.

**For more information or to become a member, please call Sarah B. Blume at 617.702.8974.**

### CRESCENDO (\$100,000+)

Linda Cabot Black\*§†  
Willa & Taylor Bodman\*†  
The Boston Foundation  
Gerard & Sherryl Cohen  
Constangy, Brooks, Smith & Prophete, LLP  
Alicia M. Cooney & Stephen Quigley\*§  
The Cricket Foundation  
Wayne Davis & Ann Merrifield\*§  
Andrew L. Eisenberg\*†  
Mr. & Mrs. Amos B. Hostetter, Jr.  
Linda Cabot Black Foundation  
The Montrone Family

Mr. & Mrs. E. Lee Perry\*††  
William & Helen Pounds  
David W. Scudder\*§†  
Mr. & Mrs. Ray Stata\*  
Miss Wallace Minot Leonard Foundation

### VIVACE (\$50,000 - \$99,999)

Anonymous  
Rick Burnes\*§  
Miguel & Suki de Braganca\*  
Susan W. Jacobs\*§†  
Karen Johansen † & Gardner Hendrie  
Christine & Michael Puzo\*§  
Stephen & Geraldine Ricci\*  
Wendy Shattuck & Sam Plimpton

### PRESTO (\$25,000 - \$49,999)

Katie & Paul Bутtenwieser  
Mr. Mark H. Dalzell  
John H. Deknatel & Carol M. Taylor  
Mr. & Mrs. Timothy & Jessica Donohue\*  
Alan & Lisa Dynner\*§  
Mimi Hewlett\*§  
Ms. Amelia Katzen\*  
Abigail B. Mason\*§  
Anne M. Morgan\*†  
Lise Olney & Tim Fulham\*†  
Mr. & Mrs. A. Neil Pappalardo\*  
Allison Ryder & David Jones\*

### ALLEGRO (\$10,000 - \$24,999)

Catherine Bassick\*  
Ms. Ellen Cabot\*  
Mr. John Conklin  
Susan Denison  
Laura Dike & Vaughn Miller\*  
Estate of Emily C. Hood†  
Kathryn G. Freed, *in memory of Dean & Patti Freed*§  
Kathleen Hull\*  
Ernest Jacob\*  
Ellen & Robert Kaplan\*§  
Maria Krokidas & Bruce Bullen\*†  
Joe & Pam LoDato§  
Dr. Joseph & Mrs. Anita Loscalzo\*  
Mr. Joseph Mari  
Mattina R. Proctor Foundation  
Merrill Family Charitable Foundation  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Olney III  
Jane PisciottoI Papa\*†

Janet & Irv Plotkin\*§  
Dr. & Mrs. John William Poduska, Sr.\*  
John & Susanne Potts\*  
Mr. & Mrs. Vincent & Robin Rougeau\*†  
Rumena & Alex Senchak\*†  
Larry & Beverly St. Clair\*  
Ms. Tricia Swift\*†  
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Tempesta\*  
Mr. Richard Trant\*  
Bradley Vernatter  
Dr. Robert Walsh & Lydia Kenton Walsh\*  
George & Moira Yip\*  
Ms. Tania Zouikun\*§

### ADAGIO (\$5,000 - \$9,999)

Anonymous (5)  
Sam & Nancy Altschuler  
Michael Barza & Judith Robinson§

Drs. Susan E. Bennett & Gerald B. Pier  
Dr. David Campbell  
Nancy & Laury Coolidge  
Ms. RoAnn Costin  
Mr. Lawrence M. DeVito\*§  
Ms. JoAnne Dickinson  
Robert Eastman\*§†  
Dr. Kurt D. Gress & Mr. Samuel Y. Parkinson\*  
Kathy & Ron Groves  
Graham & Ann Gund  
Mr. Keith Higgins  
Lisa Hillenbrand\*  
David Hoffman & Deborah Friedman\*†  
Morton Hoffman, *in Loving Memory of Sandy Hoffman*†  
Amy Hunter & Steven Maguire\*§  
Mr. & Mrs. George & Lisa Ireland

Ms. Louise Johnson\*  
Dr. Jordan S. Ruboy  
Charitable Fund§†  
Milling Kinard  
Dr. Maydee G. Lande, *in memory  
of her father*  
Drs. Lynne & Sidney Levitsky\*  
Ms. M. Lynne Markus\*§  
Kathryn McDaniel\*†  
Jillian C. McGrath\*  
Kate Meany\*  
Jo Frances Meyer\*†  
Gregory E. Moore &  
Wynne W. Szeto\*  
Shari & Christopher Noe  
Mr. Winfield Perry, *in memory of  
Shirley & Kenneth Perry*  
William & Lia Poorvu  
Suzanne & Peter Read§  
Mr. Carl Rosenberg\*  
Simone Santiago\*  
Stephen & Peg Senturia  
Andrew Sherman & Russ Lopez\*§  
Yong-Hee Silver  
Dr. Nelson Thaemert &  
Mr. Brian Gokoy  
Ms. Amy Tsurumi\*  
Peter Wender\*§  
**GRAZIOSO (\$3,000 - \$4,999)**  
John & Molly Beard  
Ms. Kathleen Boyce  
Ms. Mei Po Cheung  
Marjorie B. & Martin Cohn  
Mr. & Mrs. Dozier Gardner  
Jody & Tom Gill  
Dr. Alfred Goldberg &  
Dr. Joan Goldberg  
Nick & Marjorie Greville  
David Kirk  
Dick & Nadine Lindzen  
Frank Porcelli  
Deborah Rose  
David Shukis & Susan Blair  
R. S. Steinberg  
Mr. Andrew Szentgyorgyi  
**PRODUCER (\$1,500 - \$2,999)**  
Mr. Bernard Aserkoff  
Amy Bernar  
Jane Biondi  
Edmund & Betsy Cabot  
Charitable Foundation  
Drs. Martin Elvis &  
Giuseppina Fabbiano§

Mr. & Mrs. Ron Feinstein  
Nathaniel & Nancy Gardiner  
David Golan & Laura Green  
Dr. Charles Haffajee  
Mr. & Mrs. John Henn  
Art & Eloise Hodges  
Mr. Matthew Hurley  
Eva R. Karger§  
Janika & George LeMaitre  
Jane & Jeffrey Marshall  
Ms. Janet Offensend  
The Honorable & Mrs. Lawrence  
Perera, *in Honor of Michael &  
Christine Puzo*  
Melinda & James Rabb  
Lise & Myles Striar†  
Ernst Ter Haar  
Albert & Judith Zabin  
**PARTNER (\$500 - \$1,499)**  
Anonymous (9)  
Jane & Steven Akin  
Mr. Peter Ambler &  
Ms. Lindsay Miller  
Assurant Inc.  
Bank of America  
Ms. Ann Beha &  
Mr. Robert A. Radloff  
John Belchers  
Nina & Donald Berk  
Nancy Berkowitz  
Leonard & Jane Bernstein  
Dorothy & Hale Bradt  
Ms. Jane Carr & Mr. Andrew Hertig  
Gene & Lloyd Dahmen  
Mr. Belden Daniels  
Sharon Daniels  
Anne Lyons Dolan, *in Memory of  
Susan Eastman*§  
Mr. Mark Donohoe  
Willis & Zach Durant-Emmons  
Ms. Beatrice Fay  
Mr. Lloyd Fillion  
Colleen Flanigan  
Christopher & Hilary Gabrieli  
Mrs. G. Peabody Gardner, *in Honor  
of Mr. & Mrs. E Lee Perry*  
Laurie Gould &  
Stephen Ansolabehere  
Eric Grosse  
Mr. Joseph Hammer§  
Mr. & Mrs. James J. Harper  
Dr. Robert Henry  
Fred Hoppin

Mr. & Mrs. C. Bruce Johnstone,  
*in Honor of Steve & Jane Akin*  
Adrian Jones  
Ms. Elizabeth Kastner  
Stan & Sandy Keller  
Jonathan & Deborah Kolb  
Ms. Lucy LaFleche  
Pam Lassiter  
Jeffrey Lotz  
Peter Madsen & Timothy Linehan  
Drew Maletz  
Mr. Roy Maletz  
Ms. Virginia Meany  
Hugh Munoz  
Mary & Sherif Nada\*§  
Prof. Suzanne P. Ogden  
OPERA America  
Pamela E. Pinsky Memorial at  
the Silicon Valley Community  
Foundation†  
Mr. William Pananos  
Mr. Eugene Papa  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard S. Perkins, Jr.†  
Finley & Patricia Perry  
Mr. Gene Pokorny  
Mr. & Mrs. Patrick & Ute Prevost  
Jim & Sandy Righter  
Ms. Patricia Rosenblatt  
Max Russell  
Mr. Michael Schaefer  
Arah Schuur  
Dr. & Mrs. R. Michael Scott  
Sayre Sheldon  
Michael Skatrud  
Mr. & Mrs. James R. Sloane  
Mr. John Stevens &  
Ms. Virginia McIntyre  
Campbell Steward  
Tee Taggart & Jack Turner  
Diane C. Tillotson  
David Tompkins  
Andrea Urban  
Kelda Vernerter  
Mr. B. K. Waldrop  
Mr. & Mrs. Walter H. Weld  
Mr. Jerry Wheelock &  
Elizabeth Wood  
Ms. Mary Wolfson  
Mr. & Ms. Douglas Woodlock  
**CONTRIBUTOR (\$250 - \$499)**  
Anonymous (3)  
Mr. Mark Anderson  
Mrs. Margarete Arndt

Kathleen Beckman  
Dr. Paul Bleicher &  
Dr. Julia Greenstein  
Dr. & Mrs. Stuart R. Bless  
Sarah B. Blume  
C. Anthony Broh &  
Jennifer L. Hochschild  
Thomas Burger & Andree Robert  
Nancy Carey  
Ms. Mary Chamberlain  
Ms. Ann Chiacchieri  
Rachel & Thomas Claflin  
Mr. Lawrence Cohen  
Peter & Patricia Cooper  
Mr. Eugene Cox  
Curiosity Foundation  
Mr. Paul Curtis  
James Dalsimer  
Ms. Victoria Danberg  
Ms. Catharine-Mary Donovan  
Marie-Pierre & Michael Ellmann  
Bill & Susan Elsbree  
Jack Fabiano & Noel McCoy  
Donald Freedman  
Prof. James A. Glazier

Donald Goldstein  
Ms. Susan N Goodwin  
Lesli Gordon  
Sylvia Hammer  
Ms. Christine G. Hannon  
Jacqueline G. Haslett EdD  
Mrs. George Hatsopoulos  
Elinore C. Kagan &  
Herbert M. Kagan  
Jason Knutson  
Robert W. Kruszyna  
Heather A. Laplante  
Mr. Merrill Mack  
Maeve Markey & John Greene  
James & Caroline McCloy  
Margaret McDormand, in Memory  
of Anna Elizabeth McDormand  
Dr. Harold Michlewitz  
Dr. & Mrs. Douglas Moore  
Stephen Murray  
Mr. Fred Nagle  
Robert † & Carolyn Osteen  
Ms. Diane Ota  
Mr. & Mrs. Roy & Jean Perkinson  
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Rapoport

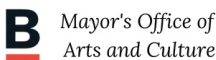
R. Lynn Rardin & Lynne A. O'Connell  
Ronni Reich & Noah Stern Weber  
Barbara & Terry Reideler  
Mr. Jack Reynolds  
Alan Rogers  
Rafael M Sámano  
Mr. Frank Santangelo  
Ms. Jean Scarrow  
David Sears & Janet Stein  
Varda & Israel Shaked  
Samuel Shamoon  
Elizabeth Sikorovsky  
John & Mary Tarvin  
Ann B. Teixeira  
Steve Walch & Linda Williams  
Linda & Harvey Weiner  
Mr. & Mrs. Jerome Weinstein  
Ms. Jennifer Yanco

\* Board Member  
† Lyric Circle Member  
§ Goldovsky Society Member  
‡ Deceased

---

## INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS

Boston Lyric Opera's production of *Omar* is supported in part by The Amphion Foundation, The Aaron Copland Fund for Music, and by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts. The 2022/23 season is supported in part by the Cabot Family Charitable Trust, the Hamilton Company Charitable Foundation, the Virginia Wellington Cabot Foundation, the Reopen Creative Boston Fund, administered by the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture, and Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.



**DIGITAL SOUP** is a collective of LGBTQIA + BIPOC Boston based artists creating inclusive spaces to share public performative works, multimedia art, video, sound and music.

FOLLOW US @digital\_soup

**DIGITAL SOUP**



# sad and...

An evening of art by Dunamis' 2023 Emerging Artist Fellows and opening night of Dunamis' **Grow With Us** Exhibit

**Featuring work by:**

Tanvi Shah 🍷 Shelley Polanco 🍷 Jude Torres  
Jacquinn Sinclair 🍷 Susanna Turner

**Sunday  
May 7**

Gallery opens at 4 pm  
Live show starts at 5 pm

15 Channel Center St.  
Suite 103 Boston, MA

**DUNAMIS**<sub>Co</sub>  
DunamisBoston.org/EAF

## Cultural Equity Learning Community

Summer 2023 Cohort

**Registration Now Open!**

The Cultural Equity Learning Community (CELC) is a 12-session, self-paced, anti-racism training course with wrap around supports open to arts and culture sector workers committed to intersectional justice. The CELC is a program of Arts Connect International produced by HipStory with generous support from Mass Cultural Council.

learn more and join today at  
[bit.ly/celc2023](https://bit.ly/celc2023)

**Mass Cultural Council**

# Boston Early Music Festival

A CELEBRATION OF  
**WOMEN**  
JUNE 4–11, 2023

*“A constant delight  
of anticipation.”*

—THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Join us for North America’s premier celebration of Early Music, a weeklong extravaganza of GRAMMY-winning OPERA, lively and engaging CONCERTS, and so much more—right in the heart of Boston!

Learn more at  
**BEMF.org**

DESMAREST’S

## CIRCE

■ CENTERPIECE OPERA

JUNE 4, 7, 9 & 11, 2023

*Emerson Cutler Majestic Theatre, Boston, MA*

**FULLY STAGED NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE!**

When divine sorceress Circe welcomes Ulisse and his companions to her island home, the forces of love, magic, and fate threaten to ensnare them all.

FRANCESCA CACCINI’S

## Alcina

Enjoy the first opera by a woman composer, a brilliant, witty entertainment depicting a struggle between illusion and destiny.

■ CHAMBER OPERA

JUNE 10, 2023

*Boston, MA*

JUNE 23 & 24, 2023

*Great Barrington, MA*

JUNE 25, 2023

*Katonah, NY*



**THE BANKS**  
*Fresh Boston*

**WE'LL SAVE YOU A SEAT  
AFTER THE SHOW**

Get 15% off your meal with a same-day show ticket

Join us for seafare and seafaring spirits in the heart of Boston  
406 Stuart Street, Boston, MA 02116 | [www.thebanksboston.com](http://www.thebanksboston.com)

**BISTRO**  
*du Midi*

*Treat yourself  
to Boston's best  
Bistro*

15% off your meal with a same-day opera ticket

*a five minute walk from the theatre*  
272 Boylston Street, off the Public Gardens | [www.bistrodumidi.com](http://www.bistrodumidi.com)

**MIDDAY MOVEMENT**  
MIDDAY MOVEMENT ORGANIZATION

Cultivating a new generation of dance leaders.

Looking for Professional Dance classes in Boston?  
**Come dance with MIDDAY MOVEMENT!**

Classes • Programs • Consultations • Community

Visit our website at [www.middaymovement.org](http://www.middaymovement.org)

**A SINCERE THANK YOU** to the members of **Boston Lyric Opera's Health Task Force for Opera Artists** for their tireless support over the past three seasons. With their expertise and guidance, BLO has been able to establish COVID-19 protocols that have allowed our staff and artists to work and stage productions and events like *Champion*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, and BLO's Street Stage.

We extend our utmost gratitude to our frontline workers for their effort in providing a safe work environment for BLO's administrative staff and artists.

### **Boston Lyric Opera's Health Task Force for Opera Artists**

Dr. Susan Bennett, M.D.  
Health Task Force Chair &  
BLO Consulting Physician,  
Mass General Brigham

Hans Bohn, Trombone

Dr. Erin Bromage, Ph.D.,  
Associate Professor of Biology,  
University of Massachusetts Dartmouth

Robert Couture, Trumpet

Dr. David Finn, M.D.  
Director of Executive Health,  
Mass General Brigham

Dr. David Hooper, M.D.  
Chief of the Infection Control Unit,  
Mass General Brigham

Dr. David Kanarek, M.D.  
Co-Director, Cardiopulmonary Exercise  
Lab, Mass General Brigham

Vanessa Schukis, Alto

Dr. Phillip Song, M.D.  
Chief of the Division of Laryngology,  
Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary

Alfred Walker, Bass-Baritone

**BOSTON  
LYRIC  
OPERA**



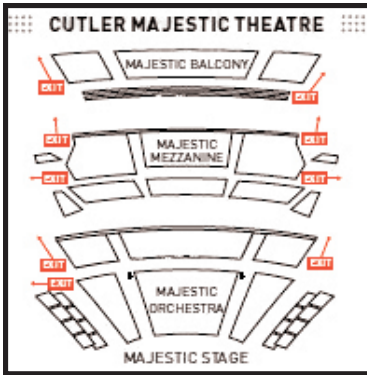
BLO Staff

## PERFORMANCE VENUE INFORMATION

All performances begin on time. To respect the enjoyment of others, BLO observes a no late seating policy. While we understand that traffic conditions, public transportation, weather, and other factors can have unexpected effects on your arrival, we wish to minimize disruptions for our seated patrons and for our artists on stage. Additionally, if you must leave during the performance, reentry may be prohibited.

As a courtesy to the artists and for the comfort of those around you, please turn off mobile phones, watch alarms, and other devices with audible signals prior to the start of the performance. The use of cameras or recording devices in the theater is strictly prohibited.

For BLO productions & subscriptions, visit [BLO.org](http://BLO.org) or call BLO Audience Services at 617.542.6772.



### EMERSON CUTLER MAJESTIC THEATER 219 Tremont Street, Boston | [artsemerson.org](http://artsemerson.org)



- There is no elevator access to the Mezzanine and Balcony.
- Restrooms are in the lower lobby accessible by elevator.
- There are 30+ stairs to reach the Mezzanine and 60+ stairs to reach the Balcony.

- Listening devices are available at the box office windows in the lobby.

**FIRE EXIT PLANS:** For your own safety, please take a moment to view the exits.



### HEALTH & SAFETY PROTOCOLS FOR OMAR

Moving forward, Emerson Cutler Majestic Theatre patrons will no longer be asked for proof of vaccination or a negative test.  
*Masking remains mandatory.*

For more information on Emerson's COVID policies, go to [artsemerson.org/visit/public-health](http://artsemerson.org/visit/public-health).

ALL I HAVE I GIVE FOR LOVE

**BOSTON  
LYRIC  
OPERA**

**2023/24 SEASON**

*Madama Butterfly*

*La Cenerentola (Cinderella)*

*The Anonymous Lover*

*Eurydice*

**DISCOVER  
NOW AT  
BLO.ORG**

