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(MONO)

William Bolcom **Medusa** | *Julia Mintzer, soprano*

Ronald Perera **The White Whale** | *Michael Chioldi, baritone*

Carlisle Floyd **Flower and Hawk** | *Sarah Coburn, soprano*

February 21, 2026, 8 pm | Jordan Hall | Gil Rose Conductor

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Music and Libretto by Gian Carlo Menotti

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THREE MONODRAMAS. ONE NIGHT.

William Bolcom **Medusa** | *Julia Mintzer, soprano*

Ronald Perera **The White Whale** | *Michael Chioldi, baritone*

Carlisle Floyd **Flower and Hawk** | *Sarah Coburn, soprano*

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ODYSSEY
OPERA

MONO e MONO e (MONO)

THREE MONODRAMAS. ONE NIGHT.

February 21st, 2026 8PM

Jordan Hall at New England Conservatory

Medusa by William Bolcom (1938 -)

Julia Mintzer, soprano

INTERMISSION

The White Whale by Ronald Perera (1941-2023)

Michael Chioldi, baritone

BRIEF PAUSE

Flower and Hawk by Carlisle Floyd (1926-2021)

Sarah Coburn, soprano

Conducted by Gil Rose, Artistic Director

This performance is approximately 140 minutes.

Thank you to our underwriters: Paul Bittenwieser Foundation, the Ronald C. Perera Family, and an anonymous donor.

Trigger warning: This performance references sensitive themes including sexual violence and suicide.

Printed texts (including large print editions) available.

Please find an usher or go to the CD table for more information.



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SYNOPSES

MEDUSA (2003) by William Bolcom

The creature Medusa has been a ubiquitous cultural symbol for millenia, enrapturing readers from Homer to Rick Riordan and preoccupying artists for even longer. Too hideous to look at, but a victim in her own rite, her slaughter is the most infamous facet of her life. This account from her own perspective emphasizes the crassness, the brutality, and the underlying complexity of the only mortal Gorgon.

THE WHITE WHALE (1982) by Ronald Perera

The libretto has been adapted by the composer from fragments of Ahab's soliloquy and dialogue in nine different chapters of *Moby Dick*, by Herman Melville. The four scenes of the work do not attempt to mirror Melville's continuous narrative. Instead they reflect some of the novel's greatest discontinuities by juxtaposing paradoxical aspects of Ahab's character in a radically compressed time frame.

FLOWER and HAWK (1972) by Carlisle Floyd

Flower and Hawk is based on the life of Eleanor of Aquitaine, arguably the greatest of the Middle Ages. In her long life of 82 years she was born the Duchess of Aquitaine and Countess of Poitou, became Queen of France through marriage to Louis VII, and later became Queen of England when she married Henry II.

The monodrama takes place in Salisbury Tower, where Eleanor has been a prisoner for nearly 16 years: Henry II had her confined there after she and her sons led an unsuccessful rebellion against him in France. Overcome by feelings of despair, abandonment, and betrayal, she relives memories of becoming the Queen of France, the many conflicts she endured with her two husbands, and her son Richard's death.

She finally releases herself from the guilt and self-doubt surrounding this tragic event of her son's death. She is able to re-assume her role as Queen when the tolling of the bells announces the death of Henry and her liberation from Salisbury Tower.

PROGRAM NOTES by Dr. Megan Stahl

As a genre, opera has long gravitated toward heightened psychological intensity in its musical narratives. From the title character's self-interrogation in Verdi's *Otello* to Judith's recognition of her fate as she opens the seventh door at the end of *Bluebeard's Castle*, some of the most emotionally impactful moments in opera's history occur when opulent spectacle gives way to the mechanics of the mind. It is from this human impulse to turn inward that the operatic monodrama—broadly defined as a composition written for a single voice—took shape. Traditionally, the monodrama is told from the protagonist's point of view and is grounded in an intimate exploration of the character's inner psyche. *Pygmalion*, with music by Georg Benda and a libretto by Friedrich Wilhelm Gotter, was the first work to be named a monodrama when it premiered in 1779. Through the subsequent century, composers increasingly embraced chamber-scale operas and monodramas as a way to probe personal turmoil rather than public display, mirroring a broader cultural fascination with the emerging psychoanalytic theories proposed by Sigmund Freud and his contemporaries. In 1909, Arnold Schoenberg carried the form further with his one-woman opera *Erwartung*, which unfolds entirely within the mind of its protagonist. Across the twentieth century, composers in the United States and Europe continued to expand the subgenre, using minimalist approaches to stage moral crises and trauma with an intimacy that stands in stark contrast to the grandiosity of traditional opera productions.

The three monodramas on tonight's bill are all compelling examples of the genre's intimate nature. Although drawn from vastly different source material—Greek mythology, American literature, and medieval history—*Medusa*, *The White Whale*, and *Flower and Hawk* share a striking preoccupation with the stories that we tell to justify power, as well as the danger of believing those stories too completely. Carlisle Floyd's *Flower and Hawk* dismantles the romanticized image of royal marriage, while William Bolcom's *Medusa* reclaims the humanity of a figure long reduced to monstrosity. Ronald Perera's *The White Whale* turns inward on one of America's most enduring epics, transforming a tale of adventure into a meditation on obsession and extremism. In all of these works, the original epic narrative is distilled into a concentrated character study, foregrounding interior conflict over external action. Each opera strips away the reassuring clarity of myth and legend to expose the psychological wreckage beneath familiar tales of heroism, destiny, and divine authority.

William Bolcom's *Medusa* (2003) is a bold and unsettling reimagining of one of Western mythology's most misunderstood figures: the Gorgon woman with snakes for hair whose gaze could turn a person to stone. In most traditional retellings of the Greek myth, the narrative centers on Perseus' journey to retrieve Medusa's head at the behest of King Polydectes. Along the way, Perseus receives help from multiple gods and ultimately slays Medusa; he then uses her severed head to turn obstacles in his path to stone as on his journey home. Bolcom's monodrama, however, shifts the focus away from Perseus' triumph and instead foregrounds Medusa's voice and her side of the story. Once a mortal woman, Medusa is violated by Poseidon in Athena's temple. Rather than punishing the perpetrator, Athena instead punishes Medusa out of jealousy, transforming her into a creature so hideous and feared that isolation becomes her fate. In *Medusa*, this transformation is not a spectacle of horror but a profound psychological rupture, one that exposes the cruelty embedded in mythic systems of justice.

Bolcom's score mirrors this destabilization of perspective in its ever-shifting musical styles, moving swiftly between haunting melody, incisive parody, and moments of raw emotional honesty. Though at its core *Medusa* is a psychological interrogation of violence and power, Bolcom's eclectic compositions combined with Arnold Weinstein's razor-sharp libretto produce a score that is darkly playful overall. As Jay Nordlinger, music critic for *The New Criterion*, wrote of the pair in 2003, "One nice thing about both Bill Bolcom and Arnold Weinstein is that they don't take themselves too seriously. They are serious artists, all right: but they are free of pretentiousness, and they know that a little fun is part of art, even high art." In many ways, the instances of levity provided by Weinstein's pithy couplets make the moments of Medusa's intense pain all the more affecting; through them we see in her hints of the humanity that she has been denied.

Despite its mythological setting, *Medusa* is strikingly resonant in our contemporary zeitgeist. Its themes, including the casual treatment of sexual violence and a societal impulse toward victim blaming, land with particular force at a time when women's accounts of trauma are still treated as suspect until thousands of documents surface to corroborate them. Bolcom's opera refuses the audience an unearned catharsis; instead, it leaves us with discomfort, asking us to sit with the consequences of the stories we inherit and repeat. By reclaiming Medusa's voice, the monodrama compels us to confront the cruelty and human cost that mythology so often smooths over. Like Medusa's gaze, Bolcom's demands that we face truths we would rather avoid, reminding us that looking away is its own kind of moral failure.

In *The White Whale* (1981), Ron Perera grapples with one of the most expansive and philosophically dense novels in American literature: Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*. Rather than attempting to replicate the novel's epic scale, Perera's internalizes the focus, probing the psychological and spiritual dimensions of Captain Ahab's fixation. The monodrama abandons chronological narrative, instead weaving together fragments of Ahab's dialogue drawn from nine chapters of Melville's text. As Perera explains in his published score, this structure is meant to "reflect some of the novel's greatest discontinuities by juxtaposing paradoxical aspects of Ahab's character in a radically compressed time frame." Ahab's pursuit thus becomes a closed psychological system, an endless loop of pain and vengeance that calcifies into unyielding obsession.

Perera's music reinforces this inward focus. The score is spare, atmospheric, and psychologically driven, generating formidable tension and texture within a compact single act. Vocal lines often unfold in tight, insistent patterns, echoing Ahab's circular thinking and the inescapability of his desire for vengeance. Silence plays a crucial role in the piece, allowing moments of doubt and reckoning to resonate with unsettling clarity. The push and pull between sound and silence draws us into Ahab's mind, leaving us trapped in its reverberations, unable to move forward or escape.

Central to the opera's dramatic power is its treatment of belief. Ahab's crusade is framed not merely as madness but as a kind of warped theology. He speaks in the language of destiny and righteousness, evoking Biblical allusions and Latin phrases to portray the whale as an embodiment of evil that must be destroyed. Perera does not present Ahab as a distant literary figure but as a recognizably human one: wounded, driven, and terrifyingly persuasive in convincing his crew that his feud is also theirs. By stripping *Moby-Dick* down to its psychological core, the opera confronts us with the dangers of mistaking obsession for purpose and vengeance for justice. *The White Whale* is not an adventure story; it is a moral reckoning.

Flower and Hawk (1972) by Carlisle Floyd is both a luminous and uncompromising meditation on love and power. The monodrama takes as its subject one of the most extraordinary figures of the Middle Ages, Eleanor of Aquitaine, whose remarkably long life of eighty-two years spanned most of the twelfth century. Eleanor was born the Duchess of Aquitaine and Countess of Poitou, but subsequently acquired two other titles that afforded her even greater power; she became Queen of France through her marriage to Louis VII, and then Queen of England upon her marriage Henry II. With the latter husband she produced two heirs that also hold a prominent place in history: King Richard, also known as Richard the Lionheart, and King John, whose unpopular reign led to the sealing of the Magna Carta.

The monodrama unfolds entirely in Salisbury Tower in England, where Eleanor has been imprisoned for fifteen years by her husband, Henry II, after she and her sons mounted an unsuccessful rebellion against him in France. Betrayed and abandoned, Eleanor has grown increasingly desperate during her years in the tower and begins to contemplate taking her own life. She tries to distract herself with recollections of past happiness, but her reminiscing is repeatedly interrupted by the agonizing memory of her son Richard's death. Over the course of the opera, Eleanor oscillates between reliving the vibrancy of her past and sinking into the deep sorrow of maternal loss, all the while trying not to succumb to the hopelessness of her present reality. This psychological tension is echoed in the title of the piece, which references Eleanor's seal, in which she is depicted as holding a hawk in one hand and a flower in the other. While we cannot know for sure why these symbols were chosen or what they were meant to signify, Floyd's pairing of these opposing images—one a bird of prey and the other a delicate bloom—reflects the duality of Eleanor's mental and emotional arc in the piece.

In a 1990 program note for a performance of *Flower and Hawk* at Baylor University, Floyd describes Eleanor as “a startlingly modern woman by today's standards, and a woman of vast sophistication, almost single-handedly exalting the status of women in Middle Ages society.” His assessment of the protagonist is borne out in his dramaturgical approach to the opera. Though rooted in medieval history, *Flower and Hawk* feels unmistakably modern, particularly in its interrogation of gendered power dynamics and the psychological toll of incarceration. The same is true of the innovative compositional style; musically, *Flower and Hawk* showcases Floyd's gift for marrying American lyricism with European operatic urgency. The score moves between lyrical expansiveness and biting rhythmic tension, juxtaposing Eleanor's reminiscences of her youth and unrealized possibility with the disillusionment that comes from recognizing the fragility of those moments. Floyd's interpretation of Eleanor resists the mythological certainty that often follows historical figures, exploring instead the private and deeply human war that has waged within Eleanor's mind for the past fifteen years.

Given the inherently intimate nature of monodrama as a form, it is not surprising that all three of these works evoke an atmosphere of confinement. Medusa's physical transformation and exile, Ahab's all-consuming need for revenge, and Eleanor's literal imprisonment function as outward expressions of a deeper psychological entrapment. The chamber-scale format intensifies this sense of enclosure; there are no exits and entrances, no other voices, and no distractions from the lone figure on stage. In dismantling the expansiveness typically associated with these narratives—and with opera more broadly—the focus shifts decisively to the psyche. *Medusa*, *The White Whale*, and *Flower and Hawk* ask us to listen closely to the individual voices trapped within their myths, reminding us that the most consequential battles are not waged on fields or seas, but within ourselves.



COMPOSERS

WILLIAM BOLCOM

National Medal of Arts, Pulitzer Prize, and GRAMMY® Award-winner William Bolcom (born May 26, 1938) is an American composer of keyboard, chamber, operatic, vocal, choral, band, and symphonic music. He is the

2021 winner of the Michael Ludwig Nemmers Prize in Music Composition, awarded by the Bienen School of Music at Northwestern University.

Born in Seattle, Washington, he began composition studies at the age of 11 with George Frederick McKay and John Verrall at the University of Washington while continuing piano lessons with Madame Berthe Poncy Jacobson. He later studied with Darius Milhaud at Mills College while working on his Master of Arts degree, with Leland Smith at Stanford University while working on his D.M.A., and with Olivier Messiaen and Milhaud at the Paris Conservatoire, where he received the 2ème Prix de Composition.

He joined the composition faculty of the University of Michigan's School of Music in 1973, was named the Ross Lee Finney Distinguished University Professor of Composition in 1994, and retired in 2008 after 35 years.

Bolcom won the Pulitzer Prize for music in 1988 for 12 New Etudes for Piano, and his setting of William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and Experience* on the Naxos label won four Grammy Awards in 2005.

As a pianist Bolcom has performed and recorded his own work frequently in collaboration with his wife and musical partner, mezzo-soprano Joan Morris. Their primary specialties in both concerts and recordings are cabaret songs (written with Joan Morris's voice in mind), show tunes, and American popular songs of the 20th century. They have recorded 25 albums together – *Autumn Leaves* was released in 2015.

As a composer, Bolcom has written four violin sonatas; nine symphonies; four operas (*McTeague*, *A View from the Bridge*, *A Wedding*, and *Dinner at Eight*), plus several musical theater operas; twelve string quartets; two film scores (*Hester Street* and *Illuminata*); incidental music for stage plays, including Arthur Miller's *Broken Glass*; fanfares and occasional pieces; and an extensive catalogue of chamber, choral, band, and vocal works. *McTeague*, *A View from the Bridge*, and *A Wedding* were commissioned by and premiered at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. *Dinner at Eight* was commissioned by and premiered at Minnesota Opera. The University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre and Dance Opera Department mounted four performances of it in November 2017 in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and the Wexford Festival Opera presented five performances in October and November 2018.

A November 2018, radio broadcast in Ireland with streaming across Europe was followed by a rebroadcast on BBC Radio 3 in the U.K. in March 2019.

Bolcom's setting of William Blake's *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, a full evening's work for soloists, choruses, and orchestra, culminated 25 years of work on the piece. The April 8, 2004, performance in the recently-renovated Hill Auditorium in Ann Arbor, Michigan, was recorded by Naxos. The CD won four GRAMMY® Awards in 2005: Best Choral Performance, Best Classical Contemporary Composition, Best Classical Album, and Producer of the Year, Classical. Leonard Slatkin conducted that performance as well as an earlier performance in Carnegie Hall.

Nine world premieres in 2018 of new Bolcom works commemorated his 80th year.



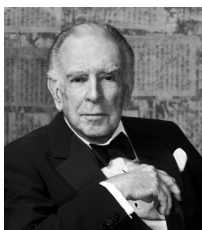
RONALD PERERA

Ronald Perera's (1941-2023) compositions include operas, song cycles, chamber, choral, and orchestral works, and several works for instruments or voices with electronic sounds. He was perhaps best known for his settings of texts by authors as diverse as Dickinson, Joyce, Grass, Sappho, Cummings, Shakespeare, St. Francis of Assisi, Melville, Ferlinghetti, and Updike.

Several major pieces are represented on compact disc. Reviewing CRI CD 796 for *Fanfare* magazine, critic John Story writes, "*Three Poems of Gunter Grass* is, quite simply, one of the most haunting works of the last 25 years." Reviewing *The Outermost House* on Albany Troy 314 he writes, "When he is on form, Ronald Perera is among the finest living combiners of words and music alive [sic]...The music is simply lovely."

Writing in the notes for the CD *Crossing the Meridian*, Steven Ledbetter, program annotator for the Boston Symphony Orchestra, writes "Ronald Perera's music is filled with color and imagery. This is as true of his purely instrumental music and his many vocal settings as it is of his works that add real-life sounds recorded on tape and of his synthesized electronic music. His vivid images are not designed to project some kind of pat program, but rather serve with great flexibility to underscore the emotional character of a work and of its changing emotional states, especially in settings of carefully chosen, strongly felt poetry."

Perera studied composition with Leon Kirchner at Harvard and electronic music with Gottfried Michael Koenig at the University of Utrecht. He also worked independently with Randall Thompson in choral music and with Mario Davidovsky in electronic music. He has received awards or fellowships from Harvard University, the Paderewski Fund, the Goethe Institute, the MacDowell Colony, the Artists Foundation of Massachusetts, the National Association of Teachers of Singing, the Bogliasco Foundation, Meet the Composer, the National Endowment for the Arts and ASCAP. In 1975 he co-edited *The Development and Practice of Electronic Music* for Prentice-Hall. His music is published by E.C. Schirmer (ECS Publishing), Boosey and Hawkes and Pear Tree Press Music Publishers, and is recorded on the Albany, Navona, CRI and Opus One labels.



CARLISLE FLOYD

Carlisle Floyd, the “Father of American Opera,” was one of the greatest composers and librettists of opera of the last century. Born in 1926, Floyd earned B.M. and M.M. degrees in piano and composition at Syracuse University. He began his teaching career in 1947 at Florida State University, remaining there until 1976, when he accepted the prestigious M. D. Anderson Professorship at the University of Houston. In addition, he was co-founder with David Gockley of the Houston Opera Studio, jointly created by the University of Houston and Houston Grand Opera.

Floyd first achieved national prominence with the New York premiere of his opera *Susannah* (1953–54) by the New York City Opera in 1956. In 1957 it won the New York Music Critics’ Circle Award and subsequently was chosen to be America’s official operatic entry at the 1958 Brussels World’s Fair.

His second opera, *Wuthering Heights*, premiered at Santa Fe Opera in 1958, and continues to have life decades later—a critically acclaimed recording, released by The Florentine Opera in June 2016 on Reference Recordings, was listed in *Opera News’* 10 Best Opera Recordings of 2016.

Based on the Steinbeck novella, *Of Mice and Men* (1969) is another of Floyd’s most performed works throughout the world. It was commissioned by the Ford Foundation and was given its premiere by the Seattle Opera in 1970.

Bilby’s Doll (1976) and *Willie Stark* (1981), were both commissioned and produced by the Houston Grand Opera, the latter in association with the Kennedy Center. A televised version of the world premiere production of *Willie Stark* opened WNET’s *Great Performances* series on the PBS network in September of 1981.

Cold Sassy Tree (2000), received its premiere at Houston Grand Opera in April 2000. Subsequently, it has been performed by Austin Lyric Opera, Central City Opera, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Opera Carolina, Opera Omaha, San Diego Opera, Utah Opera, and Atlanta Opera.

Floyd's most recent opera, *Prince of Players*, premiered in March 2016 as a chamber opera by the Houston Grand Opera. The world premiere live recording of the opera by Florentine Opera, Milwaukee Symphony, and William Boggs on Reference Recordings was nominated for two GRAMMY® Awards in 2021: Best Opera Recording and Best Contemporary Classical Composition.

His non-operatic works include the orchestral song cycle *Citizen of Paradise* (1984), which received its New York premiere with world-renowned mezzo-soprano Suzanne Mentzer. *A Time to Dance* (1993), his large-scale work for chorus, bass-baritone soloist, and orchestra, was commissioned by the American Choral Directors Association.

Among Floyd's numerous awards and honors are a Guggenheim Fellowship (1956); Citation of Merit from the National Association of American Conductors and Composers (1957); National Opera Institute's Award for Service to American Opera (1983); and the National Medal of Arts in a ceremony at the White House (2004). In 2008, Floyd was one of four honorees—and the only composer—to be included in the inaugural National Endowment for the Arts Opera Honors. Additionally, he served on the Music Panel of the National Endowment for the Arts from 1974–80 and was the first chairman of the Opera/Musical Theater Panel.

In 2001, Floyd was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He also was inducted into the South Carolina Hall of Fame (2011) and the Florida Artist Hall of Fame (2015). He was awarded six honorary doctorates.

During the 2015–16 season, Floyd partnered with Opera America to produce "Masters at Work," a live, interactive webcast exploring the making of an opera.

The music of Carlisle Floyd is published exclusively by Boosey & Hawkes.



SOLOISTS

JULIE MINTZER, Soprano

Julie Mintzer recently won rave reviews in the title role of Tobias Picker's *Thérèse Raquin* at Theater an der Wien. She made her UK debut in spring of 2020 in the title role of *Carmen* at Welsh National Opera. Hailed by Montreal's *La Presse* as "a true *Carmen*: extremely sensual, with the grace of a serpent, the violence of a tiger, and a mezzo of penetrating depth," Julia has performed principal roles at Washington National Opera, Die Semperoper Dresden, and The Glimmerglass Festival. She has recently moved into soprano repertoire, and sang the title role in *Salome* at Tulsa Opera, in a new production by Thaddeus Strassburger. She has also performed the final scene from *Salome* at Queen Elizabeth Hall with the Odyssey Festival Orchestra and debuted as Tosca at Theater Sankt Gallen, reprising Santuzza at Dorset Opera Festival immediately after.

She was a member of the Junges Ensemble at the Semperoper Dresden from 2013-15 and a young artist at the Washington National Opera from 2012-13. In 2015-16 she returned to Washington National Opera as Hansel and to the Dresden Semperoper as Mercédès. She returned to Dresden again for the world premiere of *Chasing Waterfalls*, a co-production of the Semperoper Dresden and phase7 performing arts Berlin with the Hongkong New Vision Arts Festival and made her role debut as the Foreign Princess *Rusalka* at Stadttheater Bremerhaven.

At the Washington National Opera, her roles were Hansel, Clotilde in *Norma* and Giovanna Seymour in *Anna Bolena* (WNO Opera Insight, Kennedy Center).

She sang the first staged performance of David Lang's *Little Match Girl Passion* at the Glimmerglass Festival in 2013. Recently, Julia has been seen as *Elisabetta* in *Maria Stuarda* and *Preziosilla* in *La forza del Destino* at Theater Aachen. She joined the Landestheater Schleswig-Holstein to sing the title role in *Carmen* and *Elisabetta* in *Maria Stuarda*, returning for Santuzza in *Cavalleria Rusticana* and Giulietta in *Les Contes d'Hoffman* before reprising the title role in *Carmen* at the Theater Lüneburg.

Julia graduated from The Juilliard School and the Boston University Opera Institute. Her concert engagements include Handel's *Messiah* with Boston Baroque, Washington National Cathedral, and the Toledo Symphony and Mozart's *Requiem* at Washington National Cathedral.

Julia holds a Tier 1 Exceptional Talent Visa in the United Kingdom, where she is now a resident.

Photo credit: Jeremy Knowles



MICHAEL CHIOLDI, Baritone

GRAMMY®-nominated artist, Michael Chioldi, acclaimed for his powerful baritone voice and magnetic stage presence, has carved an illustrious path, enchanting audiences worldwide with his rich timbre and emotive performances. Born with a natural affinity for music, Chioldi's journey from humble beginnings to operatic stardom is a testament to his unwavering dedication and innate talent.

This season Chioldi returns to the Metropolitan Opera for Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* and Gerard in *Andrea Chenier*; the title role in *Der Fliegende Holländer* with Art Park in Niagara NY; *Rigoletto* with Vancouver Opera and *Falstaff* with Pittsburgh Opera.

In January 2022, Chioldi made a triumphant major role debut with the Metropolitan Opera, portraying the title role of *Rigoletto* in a new production. Critics lauded his performance as nothing short of a triumph, with Robert Levine of Bachtrack proclaiming it as “a true Verdian voice that displays booming power, tender softness, and ravaging tragic colors.” This debut solidified Chioldi's status as one of the preeminent interpreters of Verdi's iconic roles.

In the 24-25 season, Michael was seen at the Metropolitan Opera again in *Rigoletto* and *Nabucco* and made his role debut as Amonasro in the Met's new production of *Aida*. Michael returned to Seattle Opera for Tonio in *Pagliacci*, made his Irish National Opera debut in the title role for *Rigoletto*, NYCO Bryant Park Summer Concerts as Scarpia in *Tosca*, Michonnet in *Adriana Lecouvreur* with Pittsburgh Festival Opera, Germont in *La Traviata* with Palm Beach Opera and a triumphant return to Santa Fe Opera for his major role debut in *Rigoletto*. Critics commented on Chioldi as becoming “one of the world's finest dramatic baritones.”

In the 2023-24 season Chioldi returned to the Metropolitan Opera to reprise his role in *Rigoletto* and debuted the role of Don Alvaro in Daniel Catan's *Florenca en Los Amazonas*, a production seen across the world as part of the Met's *Live in HD* series and PBS's *Great Performances* schedule. He sang the titular character in Verdi's *Falstaff* at Palm Beach Opera, where critics lauded “a bravura performance” and returned to Utah Opera for the title character of Wagner's *Der Fliegende Holländer*. He sang one of his signature roles (over 100 performances) of Germont in Verdi's *La Traviata* with the Pittsburgh Opera, where critic George P. Parous of Onstage Performances hailed: “The most astonishing singing of the evening came from baritone Michael Chioldi.”

Chioldi's ascent to prominence was marked by an array of notable performances in such places as São Paulo, Brazil; Barcelona, Spain; Macao; Tsingtao; Hong Kong; Shenzhen; the San Francisco Opera; over 250 performances with the New York City Opera (including Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*, which garnered an Emmy Award in 2008); and several performances across Japan with the late, great Maestro Seiji Ozawa. With a repertoire spanning from Verdi and Puccini to Strauss, he effortlessly traversed the operatic landscape, infusing each role with a depth of emotion and artistry that resonated with audiences on a profound level.

Photo credit: Randall Scott



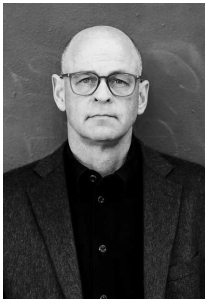
SARAH COBURN, Soprano

A native of Oklahoma, soprano Sarah Coburn has performed on many of the world's great stages, including The Metropolitan Opera, Washington National Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Seattle Opera, Los Angeles Opera, the Wiener Staatsoper, and Welsh National Opera. She has received awards from the George London Foundation, The Richard Tucker Foundation, The Jensen Foundation, The Liederkrantz Foundation, Opera Index, and was a National Grand Finalist in the 2001 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

This season, she sings Handel's *Messiah* at the United States Naval Academy, and performs and records Carlisle Floyd's *Flower and Hawk*. Coburn's recent engagements include selections from Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* and Handel's *Messiah* with the North Carolina Symphony and music director Carlos Miguel Prieto, and a masterclass and recital at the University of Wyoming. She returned to Seattle Opera in May 2024 as a soloist for their 60th Anniversary Gala. In the summer following, she reprised the role of Adina in *L'elisir d'amore* with Charlottesville Opera. Her critically acclaimed recording of Bellini's *I Puritani*, featuring tenor Lawrence Brownlee and the Kaunas City Symphony and Kaunas State Choir, was released in 2021 on Delos. She also performed Princess Yue-Yang opposite Plácido Domingo in the world premiere of Tan Dun's *The First Emperor* with The Metropolitan Opera. Other operatic highlights include Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* with Los Angeles Opera, Seattle Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Tulsa Opera, and Opera San Antonio; the title role in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Washington National Opera, Tulsa Opera, Utah Opera, Lyric Opera

of Kansas City and with Cincinnati Opera and Glimmerglass Opera for the French version of the same opera; Gilda in *Rigoletto* with Welsh National Opera, Opéra de Montréal, Los Angeles Opera, Portland Opera, Arizona Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Nashville Opera, and Tulsa Opera; Marie in *La fille du regiment* with Seattle Opera, Opera Carolina, and Tulsa Opera; Asteria in *Tamerlano* with Washington National Opera and Los Angeles Opera; Elvira in *I Puritani* with Boston Lyric Opera, Washington Concert Opera, and the Tivoli Festival; Oscar in *Un ballo in Maschera* with Opera Company of Philadelphia, Florida Grand Opera and Cincinnati Opera; Sister Constance in *Les dialogue des Carmelités* with Glimmerglass Opera and New York City Opera; Konstanze in *Die Entführung aus dem serai* with Atlanta Opera; Adele in *Le comte Ory* and Zerbinetta in *Ariadne auf Naxos* with Seattle Opera; Amina in *La sonnambula* with Wiener Staatsoper; Adina in *L'elisir d'amore* with Washington National Opera; Adele in *Die Fledermaus* with Seattle Opera and Michigan Opera Theater; Vittoria in *Tuttie in Maschera* with Wexford Festival Opera; the title role in *Manon* with Opera Santa Barbara; Norina in *Don Pasquale*, Sandrina in *La finta giardiniera*, and Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro* with Florida Grand Opera; and *Linda di Chamounix* with Caramoor Festival.

Photo credit: Dario Acosta



GIL ROSE Artistic Director, Conductor

Gil Rose is one of today's most trailblazing conductors, praised as "amazingly versatile" (*The Boston Globe*) with "a sense of style and sophistication" (*Opera News*). Equally at home performing core repertoire, new music, and lesser-known historic symphonic and operatic works, "Gil Rose is not just a fine conductor, but a peerless curator, sniffing out—and commissioning—off-trend, unheralded, and otherwise underplayed repertoire that

nevertheless holds to unfailingly high standards of quality. In doing so, he's built an indefinable, but unmistakable, personal aesthetic" (WXQR).

A global leader in American contemporary music, Rose is the founder of the performing and recording ensemble the Boston Modern Orchestra Project (BMOP), who "bring an endlessly curious and almost archaeological mind to programming... with each concert, each recording, an essential step in a better direction" (*The New York Times*), as well as the founder of Odyssey Opera, praised by *The New York Times* as "bold and intriguing" and "one of the East Coast's most interesting opera companies."

Since its founding in 1996, the "unique and invaluable" (*The New York Times*) BMOP has grown to become the premier orchestra in the world for commissioning, recording, and performing music of the twentieth and

twenty-first centuries. Under Rose's leadership, BMOP has won seventeen ASCAP Awards for Adventurous Programming, been selected as *Musical America's* Ensemble of the Year in 2016, and in 2021 was awarded a *Gramophone* Magazine Special Achievement Award in recognition of its extraordinary service to American music of the modern era. Under Rose's baton, BMOP has been featured at numerous festivals including the Festival of New American Music (Sacramento, CA), Concerts at the Library of Congress (Washington, DC), and the MATA Festival in New York. In Fall 2021, Gil was named the Director of Opera and Sonic Exploration at Artpark in Lewiston NY. His tenure there was launched with a performance of a staged version of Carmina Burana.

In 2013, Gil Rose expanded his musical vision with the founding of Odyssey Opera, a company dedicated to eclectic and underperformed operatic repertoire from all eras. Working with an international roster of singers and directors, Odyssey has presented more than 35 operas in Boston, with innovative, thematically linked seasons. The company has also established itself as a leader of modern opera in the United States, having given three world premieres and numerous U.S. premieres.

Beyond Boston, Gil Rose enjoys a busy schedule as a guest conductor and educator. Equally at home on the podium in both symphonic and operatic repertoire, Rose has led performances by the Tanglewood Opera Orchestra, the Netherlands Radio Symphony, the American Composers Orchestra, the National Symphony of Ukraine, the Matsumoto Festival of Japan, the New York City Opera, and the Juilliard Symphony, among others. In addition to being former faculty at Tufts University and Northeastern University, Rose has worked with students across the U.S. at institutions such as Carnegie Mellon University, MIT, New England Conservatory, and the University of California at San Diego. He is a visionary curator of music, inaugurating the Ditson Festival of Music at Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art and programming three seasons for the Fromm Concerts at Harvard series.

In the 2022/2023 Season, Gil Rose led Odyssey Opera in a concert performance of three one-act operas by Rachmaninoff and brought John Corigliano and Mark Adamo's new opera *The Lord of Cries* to Boston audiences. Gil and BMOP traveled to Carnegie Hall for the orchestra's debut performance and celebration of the culmination of their 25th season in April 2023. Last season, BMOP and Odyssey co-produced Ulysses Kay's *Frederick Douglass*, the second opera in *As Told By: History, Race, and Justice* on the Opera Stage, a five-year initiative highlighting Black composers and vital figures of Black liberation and thought.

Photo credit Kevin Condon

ABOUT

THE BOSTON MODERN ORCHESTRA PROJECT

A unique institution of crucial artistic importance to today's musical world, the Boston Modern Orchestra Project (BMOP) is the premier orchestra in the United States dedicated exclusively to commissioning, performing, and recording music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Founded by Artistic Director Gil Rose in 1996, BMOP has championed composers whose careers span nine decades.

Each season, Rose brings BMOP's award-winning orchestra, renowned soloists, and influential composers to the city's most prestigious halls in a series that offers orchestral programming of unrivaled eclecticism. Musical America's 2016 Ensemble of the Year, BMOP was awarded the 2021 Special Achievement Award from Gramophone magazine as "an organization that has championed American music of the 20th and 21st century with passion and panache."

Since its extended quarter-century season celebration, which kicked off in February 2022 at Boston's Symphony Hall, BMOP has inaugurated As Told By; visited Carnegie Hall for its debut performance; and released its 100th recording on BMOP/sound.



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BMOP/sound

BMOP/sound, BMOP's independent record label, was created in 2008 to provide a platform for BMOP's extensive archive of music, as well as to provide widespread, top-quality, permanent access to both classics of the 20th century and the music of today's most innovative composers. BMOP/sound has garnered praise from the national and international press. It is the recipient of a 2020 GRAMMY® Award for Tobias Picker: *Fantastic Mr. Fox* as well as nine GRAMMY® nominations, and its releases have appeared on the year-end "Best of" lists of *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, National Public Radio, *American Record Guide*, *DownBeat*, WBUR, *NewMusicBox*, and others. Admired, praised, and sought after by artists, presenters, critics, and audiophiles, BMOP and BMOP/sound are uniquely positioned to redefine the new music concert and recording experience.

In Summer 2024, BMOP/sound celebrated a milestone: the release of its 100th album, *John Alden Carpenter: Complete Ballets [1100]*. The sheer size of BMOP's collection underscores its steadfast commitment to expanding the historical record of underacknowledged talent in modern music.

This month, BMOP/sound releases two more albums featuring a familiar face and a new voice. *Eric Sawyer: Civil Disobedience [1108]* is available for purchase at tonight's concert and online, and *Shelley Washington: Both [2002]* will be the latest addition to our all-digital lineup, BMOP/sound Singles. See the latest at bmopsound.bandcamp.com

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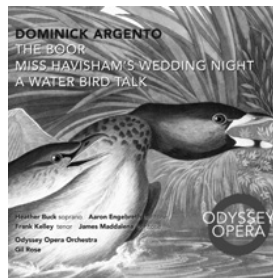
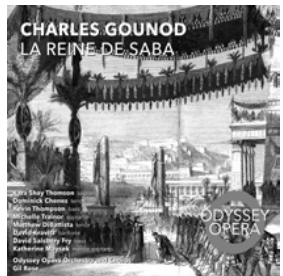
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ABOUT

ODYSSEY OPERA | GIL ROSE | ARTISTIC & GENERAL DIRECTOR

ODYSSEY OPERA OF BOSTON presents adventurous and eclectic works that affirm opera as a powerful expression of the human experience. Its world-class artists perform the operatic repertoire from its historic beginnings through lesser-known masterpieces to contemporary new works and commissions in a variety of formats and venues. Odyssey Opera sets standards of high musical and theatrical excellence and innovative programming to advance the operatic genre beyond the familiar and into undiscovered territory. Odyssey Opera takes its audience on a journey to places they've never been before.

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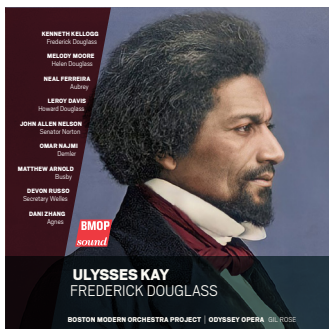
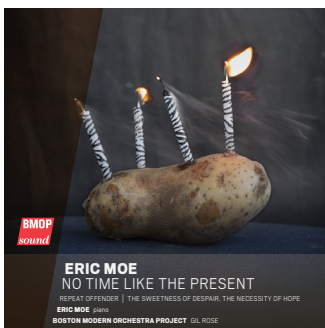
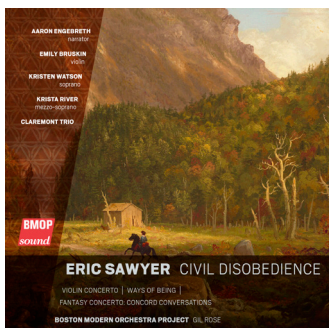
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