

SVADBA



BOSTON LYRIC OPERA'S FILM SVADBA, A CO-PRODUCTION WITH OPERA PHILADELPHIA, WINS TOP DIGITAL AWARD FROM OPERA AMERICA

Directed by Shura Baryshnikov and conducted by Daniela Candillari, the film created a timeless, magical world based on composer Ana Sokolović's music and libretto.

Winning film to stream on BLO's YouTube page.

Svadba film press release [here](#). Video trailer [here](#). Production photos [here](#).

BOSTON – Dec. 5, 2023 – Boston Lyric Opera (BLO)'s film, "[Svadba](#)," one of the company's acclaimed cinematic opera experiences created during the waning days of the pandemic and co-produced with Opera Philadelphia, has won the top prize for Artistic Creation in Opera America's 2023 Digital Excellence in Opera Awards. The Awards were announced and handed out last night in New York City. "Svadba" is available for free on [BLO's YouTube page](#).

Adapted from Serbian composer **Ana Sokolović's** striking libretto and a *cappella* score, the "Svadba" film combines the power of the unadorned human voice with the visual beauty of a dreamy oceanside cottage, where six women celebrate the eve of a wedding and all its ritual, emotion, fun and reflection. The dance-led visual interpretation filmed on Cape Cod's Ballston Beach was directed by **Shura Baryshnikov** with a screenplay by **Hannah Shepard**. Serbian-born **Daniela Candillari** conducted the music.

Sokolović's original score includes text drawn from several sources, including Serbian poetry and Balkan folk music. Collectively, the libretto suggests story elements of a woman leaving her family, conversations about marriage and allusions to ceremonial preparations. The film features six dancers and actors as the story's main characters, while six singers create the film's music with voices and spare instrumentation. The singers appear throughout the film, suggesting ancestral spirits who watch over the action.

Additional team members for "Svadba" include Production Designer **Ana Novačić**, Director of Photography **Katherine Castro** and Costume Designer **Albulena Borovci**. Creative team bios available [here](#).

Artists providing vocals and musical accompaniment include: **Chabrelle D. Williams** singing the role of Milica, the bride-to-be; **Brianna J. Robinson** as Lena the elder; **Maggie Finnegan** as Danica; **Mack Wolz** as Zora; **Vera Savage** as Nada; and **Hannah Ludwig** as Ljubica. Full bios of musical artists [here](#).

Opera
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"Svadba" singers (l.-r.): Maggie Finnegan, Hannah Ludwig, Chabrelle D. Williams, Vera Savage, Mack Wolz and Brianna J. Robinson. Photo by Liza Voll.

Artists embodying the characters include dancer **Victoria L. Awkward** (Milica), actor **Jackie Davis** (Lena), dancer **Jay Breen** (Danica/attendant), dancer **Sarah Pacheco** (Zora/attendant), dancer **Emily Jerant-Hendrickson** (Nada/attendant), and dancer **Sasha Peterson** (Ljubica, maid of honor). **Olivia Moon** makes a special appearance as The Betrothed. Full bios of onscreen artists are available [here](#).



Dancers filming on Ballston Beach in Truro, Mass. (l.-r.) are Sarah Pacheco, Sasha Peterson, Victoria L. Awkward, Emily Jerant-Hendrickson and Jay Breen. Photo by David Angus.

"Svadba" debuted January 28, 2022 on BLO's operabox.tv streaming service and the Opera Philadelphia Channel. The film is now available free [on BLO's YouTube page](#).

MEDIA INFORMATION

- Boston Lyric Opera CEO and General Director Bradley Vernatter is available to talk about the “Svadba” win.
- On-set photos of *Svadba*, including high-res images from the musical recording sessions and the Cape Cod film set are available [here](#).
- For interviews, screener access, and other information, contact John Michael Kennedy (jmk@jmkpr.com or 212-842-1752).

CRITICAL PRAISE FOR “SVADBA”

CLASSICAL VOICE NORTH AMERICA, Mar 10, 2022

- Arresting [and] dreamlike...Fuses the best of opera with the best of video cinematography.
- Nothing is lost [in the translation to film] and everything is gained. A pitch-perfect performance by the sextet of singers.

WALL STREET JOURNAL, February 2, 2022

- Riveting...Alternately fierce, tender, playful and ecstatic. The location and the diverse cast make it feel both contemporary and timeless.

BOSTON GLOBE, Jan 30, 2022

- A joyful work...playful language [and] filled with lush images.

MUSICAL AMERICA, Jan 28, 2022

- Pushes the envelope of opera as film. Universal and timeless...a freshly conceived film version.

GBH “MORNING EDITION” Jan 27, 2022

- Really extraordinary...a cinematic experience. Shura Baryshnikov does something really clever here.