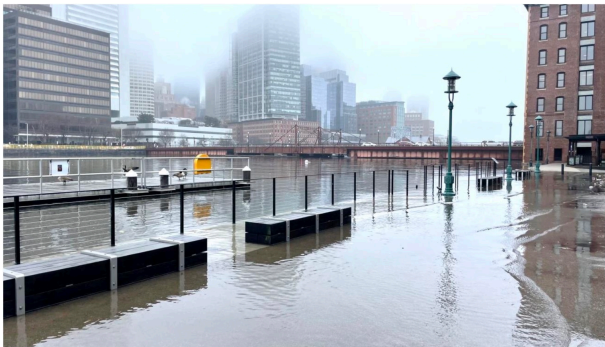


BOSTONLYRICOPERA

BLO TO OFFER ITS VOICE AND ITS STAGES TO ENHANCE CLIMATE CHANGE AWARENESS

Rising Waters/Rising Voices initiative will encompass two mainstage performances in Spring 2025, public programs, and collaborations with climate-centered organizations.



BLO's Fort Point neighborhood flooded in January 2024. Breached seawalls, and flooded footpaths and streets near its administrative offices prompted concerns and a desire to address the issue of climate change.

BOSTON – October 10, 2024 – With a desire to foster dialogue and awareness on climate change and its mitigation, Boston Lyric Opera announced today an initiative to use its stages and its community position to call attention and motivate action for a sustainable future.

BLO's *Rising Waters/Rising Voices* initiative will debut this season through two mainstage opera performances, community discussions and other public programs, as well as information about urgent climate issues in public-facing outlets including theater programs, its website, and more.

BLO Artistic Director Nina Yoshida Nelsen says the initiative was inspired by the company's recent move to Boston's Fort Point neighborhood, an area that houses the company's Opera & Community Studios space and is particularly vulnerable to sea-level rising. BLO's widely lauded *The Butterfly Process*, which took a year-long look at the opera "Madama Butterfly" through an anti-racist lens, provided a template. That effort led to development of an industry-leading approach to mounting "Butterfly" – and other operas from the traditional canon – with intentional, inclusive practices.

"Climate change advocates tell us that the biggest hurdle to engaging more people in the work is weaving the issue into relatable stories and making an emotional connection," Nelsen says. "It's not a science problem, they say, it's a storytelling problem."

"To my mind, the most powerful things about opera are our voices and our ability to tell dramatic stories in an impactful way. In tandem with a strong contingent of regional partners and collaborators, we will use the strength and reach of this art form to tell stories of the global climate crisis through beautiful music and staging. We plan to uplift the work others are doing in the Boston community, reduce our participation in climate change and encourage our audiences and our industry to do the same."

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Earlier this year, BLO announced two productions that anchor the *Rising Waters/Rising Voices* initiative. They include:

- The world premiere production of [“The Seasons”](#) (March 12-16, 2025), a new opera co-conceived by **Anthony Roth Costanzo**, driven by the Vivaldi’s “The Four Seasons,” and with a libretto by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright and librettist **Sarah Ruhl**. The story revolves around a group of artists who gather at a retreat to create new work, but whose plans are radically altered by unnatural and unexpected weather changes.
- A free, community-centered performance of Benjamin Britten’s parable opera [“Noah’s Flood”](#) (May 3, 2025) that tells the biblical story of a world overcome by unnatural rainfall, and the extreme measures one man and his family must take to save the planet. (Britten famously experienced such a storm when his hometown of Lowestoft in Suffolk, England suffered a devastating flood.) A large contingent of community participants will be recruited to take part in the “Noah’s Flood” production, particularly youth singers and musicians.

BLO’s *Rising Waters/Rising Voices* initiative kicks off October 19 and 20 during Fort Point Open Studios from 11am to 5pm, when the company welcomes visitors to its new Opera & Community Studios space at Midway Artist Studios. Musical performances at 11:30am and 3pm on Saturday promote the spring programs. Nelsen will moderate a panel discussion about climate change awareness at 3pm on Oct 20 featuring: **Rebecca Shoer** from [Stone Living Lab](#); **City of Boston Office of Climate Resilience Director Christopher Osgood**; and **Tara Moses**, Co-founder of **Groundwater Arts**. Family-friendly crafts and events take place each day. [Details of the Open Studios event are here](#).

Nelsen says other public events intended to spark public discussion and motivate actions for a sustainable future are planned throughout the next year, including the October 25 multimedia presentation [“WaveForms”](#) with MASARY Studios and the Museum of Science, as well as public programs aligned with BLO’s spring 2025 productions of “The Seasons” and “Noah’s Flood.” These events will engage local environmental groups and advocates, artists and scholars, and the general public. BLO also will present a series of free, environmentally-focused performances by a variety of local artists. More details are to come.

BLO has worked with the Green Ribbon Commission this year and is partnering with the City of Boston Office of Climate Resilience on *Rising Waters/Rising Voices*. Programming and promotional partners include: Back Bay Ringers, Boston Recorder Orchestra, Boston String Academy, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Boston Children’s Chorus, New England Conservatory Preparatory School, and Voices Boston (for “Noah’s Flood”); Lincoln Center, SCENE, AMOC* and ArtsEmerson (for “The Seasons”); and Groundwater Arts, Stone Living Lab, and Mass Rivers Alliance for related activities.

Ongoing/updated information about *Rising Voices/Rising Waters* can be found at blo.org/rising.

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