

A TRIUMPHANT RETURN

BOSTON LYRIC OPERA

Impact Report
For the 2021/22 Season



Chelsea Basler as Lola in BLO's 2021 production of *Cavalleria rusticana*. Photo by Liza Voll Photography.

OUR 2021/22 SEASON



Bradley Vernatter, CEO & General Director of Boston Lyric Opera.
Photo by Gary Higgins.

This Boston Lyric Opera annual report for the 2021/22 Season defines a year that marked our triumphant return to the mainstage. After a prolonged period of separation, we celebrated the joy of being together again in person, united with our full forces – artists, chorus, orchestra, creatives, and cherished audiences.

Our artistic productions embodied the spirit of a society in transition, offering both in-person performances and innovative cinematic experiences. Among the highlights were two mainstage productions: an outdoor rendition of Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana* and the captivating *Champion: An Opera in Jazz* by Terence Blanchard and Michael Cristofer.

Additionally, we were honored to present opera star Stephanie Blythe in her gender-bending cabaret show, "Blythely Ever After." And we expanded our reach with three original filmed productions for BLO's operabox.tv streaming service: Ana Sokolović's groundbreaking a cappella opera *Svadbā*; the soulful fusion of music and American Sign Language in "Soul(Signs)"; and the concert documentary "B.", which showcased personal musical journeys and highlighted artistry by – or inspired by – AAPI communities.

The 2021/22 Season was a testament to the power of storytelling and human connection, offering emotional nourishment we craved after years apart. It was a pivotal year for BLO as we launched a strategic

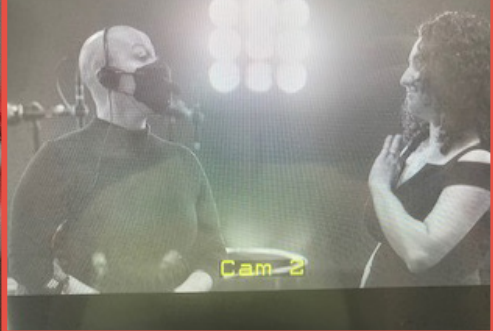
plan that charted our course toward a future filled with optimism for this company and the artform we cherish.

As we reflect on the 2021/22 Season successes and look ahead to the opportunities awaiting us, I extend deep gratitude to our supporters, collaborators, and dedicated team members who make Boston Lyric Opera's mission possible.

With anticipation for the journey ahead,

its strength, its community leadership, and its worth in the industry.

– Bradley Vernatter
CEO and General Director, Boston Lyric Opera



Boston Lyric Opera's 2021 production of *Cavalleria rusticana*. Photo by Liza Voll Photography | Melanie Bacaling (l.) and Zaray Rodriguez (r.) during filming for B. Photo courtesy of BLO Staff.

WELCOME

Boston Lyric Opera's 2021/22 Season marked a triumphant return to the mainstage with our full forces coming out of the global COVID-19 pandemic. From the open-air venue of Leader Bank Pavilion to the picturesque beaches of Cape Cod, opera returned to the City of Boston and beyond.

IN THE 2021/22 SEASON, BOSTON LYRIC OPERA:

- Welcomed over **3,600** audience members to live opera onstage.
- Engaged over **3,000** people through free and low-cost public programs.
- Connected with nearly **1,500** young people through in-school and creative youth programs.
- Opened our new headquarters at Midway Artist Studios.
- Launched our **5-year** Strategic Direction.
- Offered more than **500** employment opportunities for artists, musicians, technicians, and administrative workers.

We are grateful for the community network that made this Season possible – from our audience members and supporters to our union employees, to our Board members and vendor partners – we are honored to be a vital part of the Massachusetts creative economy.

2021/22 SEASON

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michael J. Puzo, <i>Chair</i>	Alicia Cooney	Maria J. Krokidas
Miguel de Bragança, <i>Vice-Chair</i>	Wayne Davis	Abigail B. Mason
Susan W. Jacobs, <i>Treasurer</i>	Alan Dynner	Anne M. Morgan
Irving H. Plotkin, <i>Clerk</i>	Robert Eastman	A. Neil Pappalardo
Catherine Bassick	Andrew Eisenberg	E. Lee Perry
Linda Cabot Black	Timothy Fulham	Vincent Rougeau
Willa Bodman	Mimi Hewlett	David W. Scudder
	Amelia Welt Katzen	Ray Stata

BOARD OF ADVISORS

L. Joseph LoDato, <i>Co-Chair</i>	Ernest Jacob	Stephen Ricci
Lawrence St. Clair, <i>Co-Chair</i>	Louise Johnson	Carl Rosenberg
Lydia Kenton Walsh, <i>Co-Chair</i>	Ellen Kaplan	Allison Ryder
James Ackerman	Lynne L. Levitsky	Simone Santiago
Kimberly Balfour	Russell Lopez	Alex Senchak
Richard M. Burnes, Jr.	Anita Loscalzo	Tricia Swift
Ellie Cabot	David Manning	Wynne Szeto
David Campbell	Joe Mari	Frank Tempesta
Carol Deane	M. Lynne Markus	Richard Trant
Larry DeVito	Jillian McGrath	Amy Tsurumi
JoAnne Walton Dickinson	Kate Meany	Robert Walsh
Laura Dike	Jo Frances Meyer	Peter J. Wender
David Hoffman	Jane Pisciotoli Papa	George Yip
Kathleen Hull	Samuel Parkinson	Tania Zouikin
Amy Hunter	Susanne Potts	

DIRECTORS EMERITI

Steven P. Akin
J.P. Barger
Sherif A. Nada
Horace H. Irvine II†

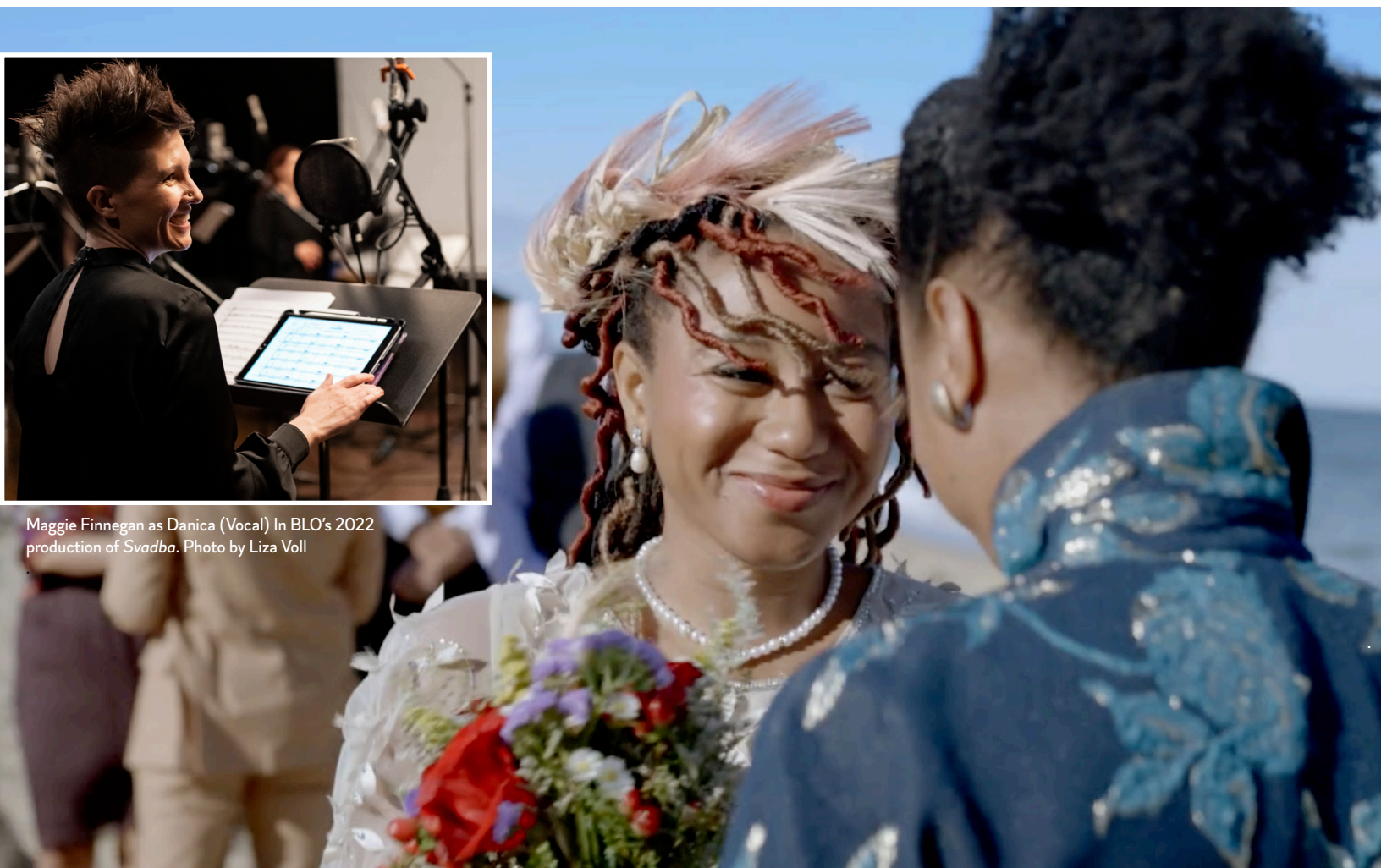
†deceased

STAFF

Amy Advocat, <i>Grant Writer</i>	Jane Esterquest, <i>Database Manager</i>	Benjamin Richter, <i>Artistic Manager</i>
Patricia Au, <i>Resident Teaching Artist</i>	Lydia Graeff, <i>Resident Teaching Artist</i>	Ashley Shea, <i>Executive Administrator</i>
Olivia Begos, <i>Administrative Coordinator</i>	Julia Harbutt, <i>Production Coordinator</i>	Rob Signom, <i>Production Manager, Champion</i>
Sarah Blume, <i>Director of Major Gifts</i>	Jennifer Ihedioha, <i>COVID-19 Supervisor</i>	William Tait, <i>Contract Coordinator</i>
V Brancazio, <i>Public Programming Coordinator</i>	Rebecca Kirk, <i>Director of Community & Learning</i>	David Tompkins, <i>Chief Operating Officer</i>
Jessica Brock, <i>Senior Director of Artistic Operations</i>	Lizabeth Malanga, <i>Senior Director of Administration</i>	Vanessa Vassall, <i>Health & Safety Coordinator</i>
Zane Burden, <i>Audience Services Manager</i>	Nancy McDonald, <i>Senior Manager, Operations</i>	Bradley Vernatter, <i>General & Artistic Director</i>
Hannah Cassell, <i>Audience Experience Coordinator</i>	Sean Meyers, <i>Senior Development Manager</i>	Kara Wasilauski, <i>Development Coordinator</i>
Andrew Chandler, <i>Director of Production</i>	Kay'mon Murrah, <i>Artistic Coordinator</i>	Noah Weber, <i>Senior Director of Development</i>
Jaclyn Cleary, <i>Artistic & Production Payroll/Accounting Associate</i>	Shekinah Newson, <i>COVID-19 Supervisor</i>	
Dominique Dembo, <i>COVID-19 Supervisor</i>	Randolf Noriega Jr, <i>Audience Services Associate</i>	
Erika Dooley, <i>Development Events Manager</i>	Sara O'Brien, <i>Director of Public Engagement</i>	
Ava Dudani, <i>Resident Teaching Artist</i>	Mariel O'Connell, <i>Director of Sales and Marketing</i>	
	Isabel Randall, <i>Social Media Specialist</i>	



Maggie Finnegan as Danica (Vocal) In BLO's 2022 production of *Svadba*. Photo by Liza Voll



Victoria L. Awkward (Milica, c.) smiles at Jackie Davis (Lena the elder, r.) before exchanging wedding vows with her beloved in BLO's 2022 production of *Svadba*. Photo courtesy of BLO Staff.



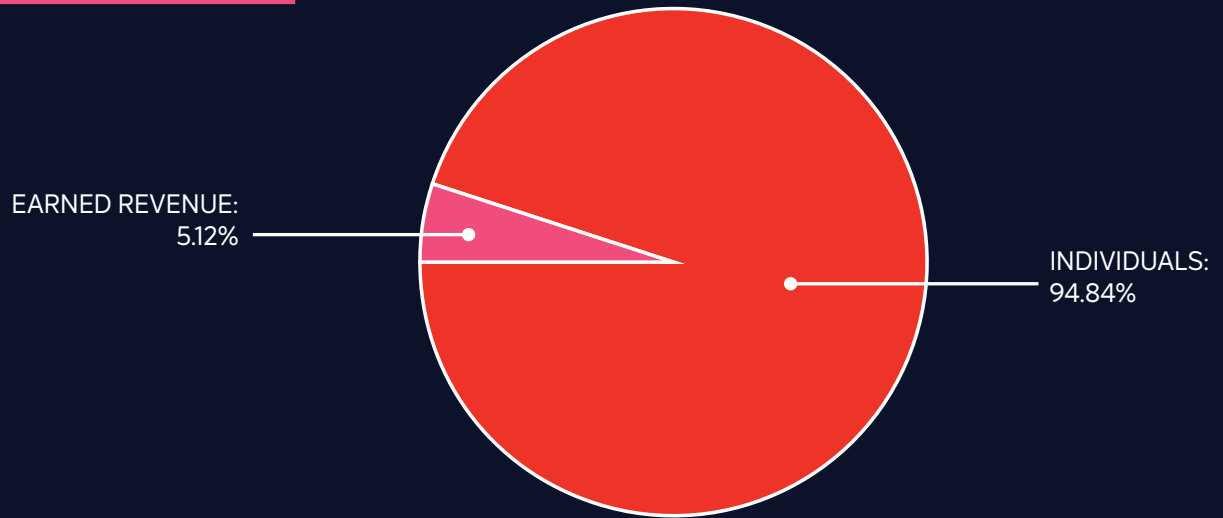
Stephanie Blythe as Kathy Hagen and Markel Reed as Young Emile in BLO's 2022 production of *Champion*. Photo by Liza Voll



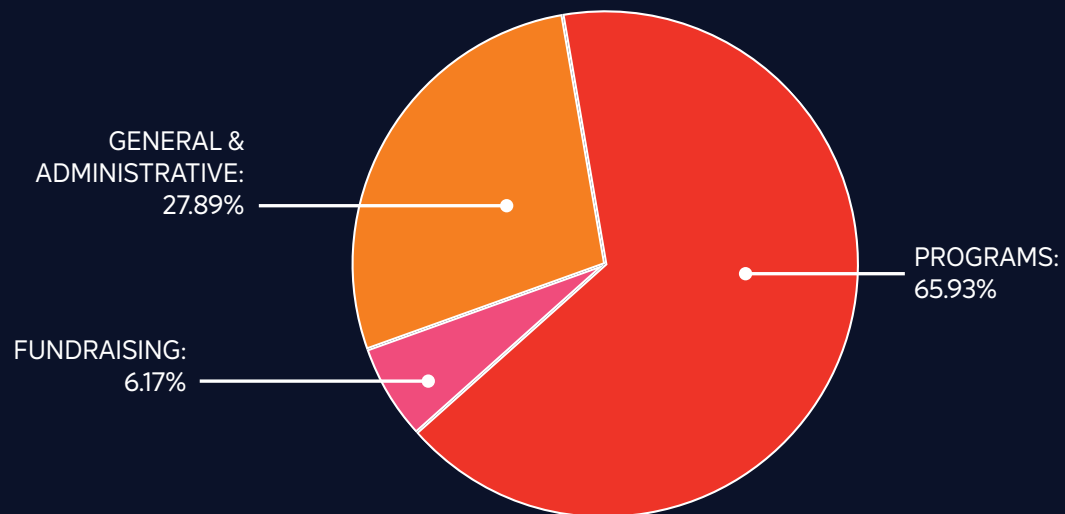
Nina Yoshida Nelsen as Mamma Lucia (l.) and Michelle Johnson as Santuzza (r.) in BLO's 2021 production of *Cavalleria rusticana*. Photo by Liza Voll

BLO FINANCIAL SUMMARY

FY22 OPERATING REVENUE:



FY22 OPERATING EXPENSE:



OPERATING RESULTS | \$THOUSANDS

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
OPERATING REVENUE	\$8,251.5	\$8,912.0	\$7,523.9	\$5,348.9	\$7,914.4
OPERATING EXPENSES	\$8,222.7	\$8,838.7	\$7,497.3	\$5,248.9	\$7,902.6
% EXPENSES SPENT ON PROGRAMS	67%	68.5%	70.32%	53.48%	65.93%
SURPLUS	\$28.8	\$73.3	\$26.6	\$100	\$11.8

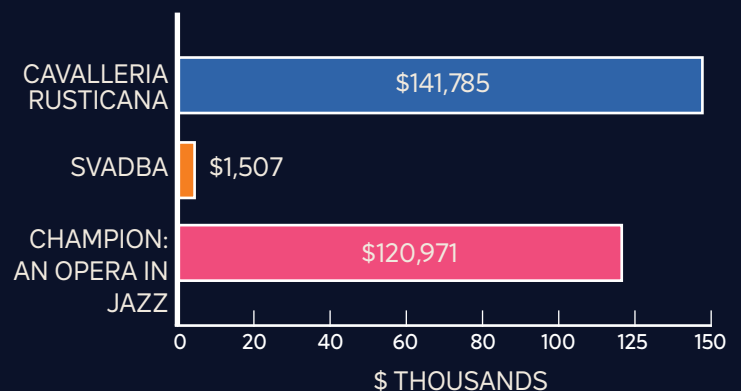
OPERATING RESULTS | \$THOUSANDS

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
TOTAL ASSETS	\$20.6	\$22.3	\$20.5	\$24.5	\$20.4
NET ASSETS	\$19.5	\$20.3	\$18.5	\$23.3	\$19.2

TOTAL ENDOWMENT:



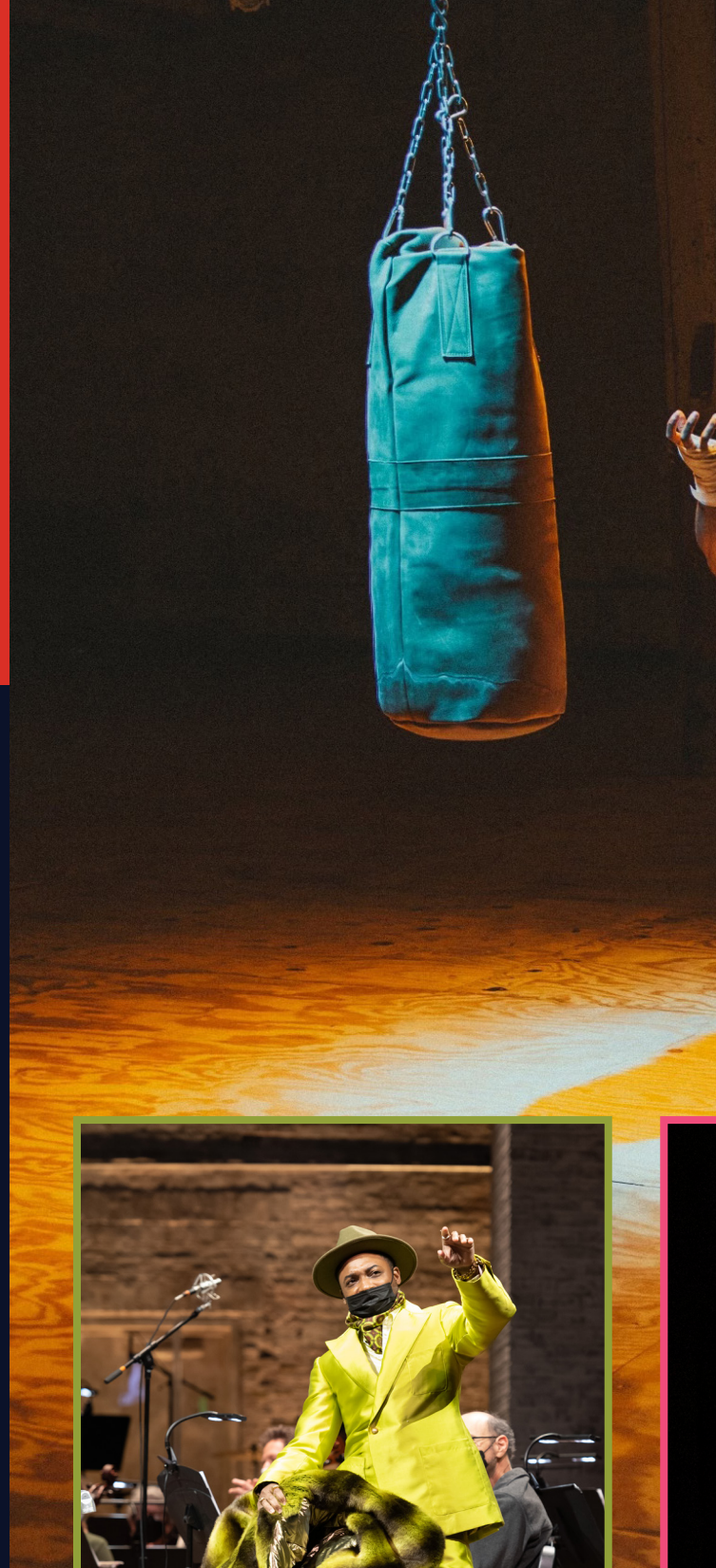
REVENUE BY PRODUCTION 2022:



THE 2021/22 SEASON IN RETROSPECT

The 2021/22 Season marked Boston Lyric Opera's return to live, in-person programming on all our stages with all our artistic and community forces.

From grand opera in the open air to the return of in-person education residencies and community programs, to an in-depth conversation exploring legacy operas, Boston Lyric Opera emerged from the pandemic ready to successfully navigate a changed performance landscape.



Backsplash: Brandon Kazen-Maddox filming *Soul (Signs): Opera*, a 2022 BLO collaboration with Opera Columbus, Opera Omaha, and Portland Opera, presented by Up Until Now Collective. Photo courtesy of Up Until Now.



Photo by Liza Voll Photography. | Mack Wolz recording vocals as Zora in BLO's 2022 production *L. Awkward (I.)* and Jackie Davis (r.) during filming for *Svadba* in Truro, MA. Photo by David Angus.

ARTIST ROSTER

ORCHESTRA 2021/22

VIOLIN

Annie Rabbat
Orchestra Leader
Sarah Atwood
Principal Second
Stacey Alden
Heidi Braun-Hill
Robert Curtis
Colin Davis
Tera Gorsett
Rohan Gregory
Jodi Hagen
Zenas Hsu
Sandra Kott
Pattison Story

VIOLA

Kenneth Stalberg
Principal
David Feltner
Donna Jerome
Abigail Kubert-Cross

CELLO

Loewi Lin *Principal*
Melanie Dyball
Jan Pfeiffer-Rios
Aron Zelkowicz

TROMBONE

Robert Couture *Principal*
Hans Bohn
Cameron Owen

TUBA

Donald Rankin *Principal*

TIMPANI

Jeffrey Fischer *Principal*

PERCUSSION

Richard Flanagan
Principal

HARP

Ina Zdorovetchi *Principal*

BASS

Robert Lynam *Principal*
Barry Boettger

FLUTE

Linda Toote *Principal*
Iva Milch

OBOE

Nancy Dimock *Principal*
Lynda Jacquin

CLARINET

Jan Halloran *Principal*
Nicholas Brown

BASSOON

Ronald Haroutunian *Principal*
Rachel Juszczak

HORN

Kevin Owen *Principal*
Whitacre Hill
Dirk Hillyer
Iris Rosenstein

TRUMPET

Bruce Hall *Principal*
Jesse Levine

MUSIC LIBRARIAN

Ashton Bush

ORCHESTRA CONTRACTOR

Nicholas Brown

CHORUS 2021/22

SOPRANO

Alisa Cassola
Carley Defranco
Jessica Jacobs
Ashley Jones
Tamra Jones
Marie McCarville
Brianna J. Robinson
Abigail Smith
Antonia Tamer
Isabelle Zeledón

ALTO

Jaime Korkos
JoAnna Pope
Vanessa Schukis
Michelle Trainor
Rachael Weishoff
Holly Zagaria

TENOR

Felix Aguilar Tomlinson
Ethan Bremner
Josephat Contreras
Frank Levar
Chris Maher
Thomas Oesterling
David Rivera Bozón
Francis Rogers

Samuel Rosner
Fred C. VanNess, Jr.

BASS

RaShaun D. Campbell
Junhan Choi
Mitch FitzDaniel
Fred Furnari
Michael Galvin
Taylor Horner
Devon Russo
Ron Williams

EMERGING ARTISTS 2021/22

Nicholas LaGesse, *baritone*
Zaray Rodriguez, *mezzo-soprano*



(L) Javier Arrey as Alfio in BLO's 2021 production of *Cavalleria rusticana*. Photo by Liza Voll | (R Top) Chabrelle D. Williams as Milica (Vocal) in BLO's 2022 production of *Svadba*. Photo by Liza Voll.jpg(r.) during filming for *B*. Photo courtesy of BLO Staff. | (R Bottom) Stephanie Blythe as Kathy Hagen and Markel Reed as Young Emile in BLO's 2022 production of *Champion*. Photo by Liza Voll



Stephanie Blythe as Blythely Oratonio, performing BLO's 2022 production of *Blythely Ever After*. Photo by Dominic M. Mercier

CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA



CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA

October 1 & 3, 2021

LEADER BANK PAVILION

Music by Pietro Mascagni

Libretto by Giovanni Targioni-Tozzetti
and Guido Menasci

David Angus *Conductor*

Giselle Ty *Stage Director*

Levi Marsman* *Choreographer*

Julia Noulín-Mérat *Set Designer*

Gail Astrid Buckley *Costume Designer*

Molly Tiede* *Lighting Designer*

Ronell Oliveri *Wig & Makeup Designer*

Annie Rabbat *Orchestra Leader*

Brett Hodgdon† *Chorus Director*

Brendon Shapiro† *Rehearsal Coach/Pianist*

Bruno Baker *Assistant Stage Director*

Mike Janney *Stage Manager*

CAST (in order of vocal appearance)

Adam Diegel* *Turridu*

Michelle Johnson* *Santuzza*

Nina Yoshida Nelsen* *Mamma Lucia*

Javier Arrey* *Alfio*

Chelsea Basler† *Lola*

Victoria Awkward* *Dancer*

Michayla Kelly* *Dancer*

Marissa Molinar* *Dancer*

*Boston Lyric Opera Debut

•BLO Jane & Steven Akin Emerging Artist

‡BLO Jane & Steven Akin Emerging Artist Alum

After all the uncertainty of returning to the stage during the COVID-19 pandemic, BLO's production of *Cavalleria rusticana* marked the first time the full Company had been on stage together since our fall 2019 production of *Pagliacci*. With these two operas often performed together, this production made a fitting bookend to one of the most unpredictable chapters in the Company's history, performed to critical and audience acclaim in Boston's iconic Leader Bank Pavillion.

Michelle Johnson as Santuzza in BLO's 2021 production of *Cavalleria rusticana*. Photo by Liza Voll Photography.

***"Boston Lyric Opera's 'Cavalleria rusticana' is a triumph!"* – Boston Globe**

***"Michelle Johnson was the star of the evening, her beaming soprano finding every nuance of the love-torn Santuzza."* – Boston Classical Review**

***"BLO must be credited for persevering during this extended period of uncertainty and treating us to this well-sung 'Cavalleria rusticana.'"* – EDGE Media**

"It was impossible to tear your eyes (or ears) away from Chelsea Basler's Lola. Her magnetic stage presence and broad, open legato approach to the role of the town flirt helped the audience to understand how Turiddu might be torn between two women."

***"Javier Arrey captured the audience with his opening Prologue and brought new depth to his role as a cuckolded husband."* – The Boston Musical Intelligencer**

SVADBA



Victoria L. Awkward (center) as Milica returns to the cottage with her bridesmaids after gathering decorative flora in BLO's 2022 production of *Svadba*. Photo courtesy of BLO Staff.

SVADBA

January 2023
BLO's operabox.tv

Opera by Ana Sokolović
A Boston Lyric Opera production,
co-produced with Opera Philadelphia

Daniela Candillari* *Conductor*
Shura Baryshnikov *Stage Director*
Hannah Shepard *Screenwriter*
Katherine Castro* *Director of Photography*
Ana Novačić* *Production Designer*
Albulena Borovci* *Costume Designer*
Erica Gomes* *Hair & Makeup Designer*

Djordje S. Nesic* *Rehearsal Coach/Pianist*
David Angus *Music Supervisor*
Anderson Nunnelly *Assistant Stage Director*

ARTISTS

Chabrelle D. Williams* *Milica (Vocal)*
Victoria L. Awkward *Milica (Dancer)*
Brianna J. Robinson‡ *Lena (Vocal)*
Jackie Davis* *Lena, the elder (Actor)*
Maggie Finnegan* *Danica (Vocal)*
Jay Breen* *Danica, attendant (Dancer)*
Mack Wolz* *Zora (Vocal)*
Sarah Pacheco* *Zora, attendant (Dancer)*
Vera Savage‡ *Nada (Vocal)*
Emily Jerant-Hendrickson* *Nada, attendant (Dancer)*
Hannah Ludwig* *Ljubica (Vocal)*
Sasha Peterson* *Ljubica, maid of honor (Dancer)*
Olivia Moon* *The Betrothed*

*Boston Lyric Opera Debut

•BLO Jane & Steven Akin Emerging Artist

‡BLO Jane & Steven Akin Emerging Artist Alum



Filmed on Cape Cod under a picturesque October sky, *Svadba* came to life nestled in the dunes of Truro, MA. An a cappella opera, the story of Milica preparing for her wedding day unfolded through a unique combination of song and dance, with each character portrayed by both an opera artist and a dancer. This third full-length film from BLO continued the Company's unique approach to filmed opera being designed as an exclusively cinematic experience.

WINNER FOR ARTISTIC CREATION

at the 2023 Opera America Awards for Digital Excellence in Opera

"Really extraordinary...a cinematic experience! Shura Baryshnikov does something really clever here." -WGBH Morning Edition

"Creatively re-imagined! A virtuoso tour-de-force!"

"'Svadba' communicates directly, emotionally, and viscerally." - Opera Today

"...scene after *luminous scene* of dancing." - Yahoo News

"Universal and timeless...a freshly conceived film version."

"Sophisticated, heady and attractive...'*Svadba*' pushes the envelope of opera as film." - Musical America



CHAMPION: AN OPERA IN JAZZ

BLO's production of *Champion* was impacted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and had to reduce its run from three shows to two shows with heightened safety protocols onstage to protect our artists.

CHAMPION: AN OPERA IN JAZZ

May 20 & 22, 2022

EMERSON CUTLER MAJESTIC THEATRE

Music by Terence Blanchard

Libretto by Michael Cristofer

Kwamé Ryan* *Conductor*

Timothy Douglas* *Stage Director*

Darius Barnes* *Movement Director*

Rocio Mendez* *Intimacy Director*

Sara Brown *Set Designer*

Trevor Bowen *Costume Designer*

Marcus Doshi* *Lighting Designer*

J. Jared Janas* *Wig & Makeup Designer*

Annie Rabbat *Orchestra Leader*

Brett Hodgdon‡ *Chorus Director*

Douglas Sumi*, Brendon Shapiro‡, James Myers,

Maja Tremiszewska *Rehearsal Coaches/Pianists*

Dennis Robinson *Assistant Stage Director*

Mike Janney *Stage Manager*

CAST (in order of appearance)

Brian Major* *Emile Griffith*

Markel Reed* *Young Emile Griffith*

Tichina Vaughn* *Emelda Griffith*

Chabrelle D. Williams

Cousin Blanche/Sadie Donastrog Griffith

Jesus Garcia *Luis Rodrigo Griffith*

Terrence Chin-Loy Benny *"The Kid"*

Paret / Benny Paret, Jr.

Wayne Tigges* *Howie Albert*

Stephanie Blythe* *Kathy Hagen*

Jonathan Harris* *Little Emile Griffith*

Neal Ferreira‡ *Ring Announcer*

Nicholas LaGesse• *Man in the Bar / A Young Man*

*Boston Lyric Opera Debut

•BLO Jane & Steven Akin Emerging Artist

‡BLO Jane & Steven Akin Emerging Artist Alum





Backsplash: Chabelle D. Williams and Markel Reed as Sadie Griffith and Young Emile Griffith in BLO's 2022 production of *Champion*. Photo by Liza Voll Photography.



Markel Reed as Young Emile Griffith in *Champion*. Photo by Liza Voll Photography.

"A revelation! 'Champion' punches above its weight."

"A theatrical coup! The concert-style staging didn't break immersion; to the contrary, it enhanced it." – The Boston Globe

"First-rate! Terence Blanchard keeps the score swinging throughout." – The Arts Fuse

"It's really a story about people, it's a story about acceptance, and the things that society chooses to accept and the things that society chooses to condemn," says (Brian) Major. 'There is a striking quote from Griffith himself that punctuates the show: 'I killed a man and the world forgives me; I love a man and the world wants to kill me.'" – Bay State Banner



BLO's 2023 production of *Champion*. Photo by Liza Voll Photography.

BLYTHELY EVER AFTER

BLYTHELY EVER AFTER

May 6, 2022

ROYALE BOSTON THEATRE

Directed by John Jarboe

Music and Arrangements by Daniel Kazemi

Co-written by John Jarboe and Stephanie Blythe

Stephanie Blythe* *Blythely Oratonio*

John Jarboe* *Writer and Director*

Daniel Kazemi* *Music Director and Arranger*

Machine Dazzle with Rebecca Kanach* *Blythely and Flowers Costumes and Throne Design*

Sara Meehan-Maranich* *Stage Manager*

Calvin Anderson* *Lighting Designer and Bearded Ladies Production Manager*

Dan Perelstein-Jaquette* *Original Sound Designer*

Taylor Jedlinski* *Tour Sound Designer and Mixer*

FEATURING

Blythely Oratonio*

Blythely Oratonio's Band "The Fluffers"

Daniel Kazemi* *Piano, Lead Fluffer*

Jimmy Coleman* *Drums*

Mike Ian* *Guitar*

Andrew Nelson* *Bass*

Abigail Krawczynska *Flower*

Jaime Korkos *Flower*

Joel Clemens *Birdie*

Lindsey Polcyn *Birdie*



Abigail Krawczynska (l.) and Jaime Korkos (r.) as Flowers in *Blythely Ever After*.
Photo by Dominic M. Mercier.

*Boston Lyric Opera Debut

•BLO Jane & Steven Akin Emerging Artist

‡BLO Jane & Steven Akin Emerging Artist Alum

Brandon Kazen-Maddox filming *Soul (Signs): Opera*, a 2022 BLO collaboration with Opera Columbus, Opera Omaha, and Portland Opera, presented by Up Until Now Collective.
Photo courtesy of Up Until Now.

SOUL(SIGNS): AN OPERA PLAYLIST

SOUL(SIGNS): AN OPERA PLAYLIST

A series of short films produced by Up Until Now

Co-commissioned by Boston Lyric Opera, Opera Omaha, Opera Columbus, and Portland Opera

Debuted April 2022 exclusively on BLO's operabox.tv

"What Makes a Man a Man"

From *Champion: An Opera in Jazz*

Music by Terence Blanchard
Libretto by Michael Cristofer

CAST:

Brandon Kazen-Maddox* *Emile Griffith*
Andrew Morrill* *Howie Albert*
Alberto Medero* *Benny Paret*
Tom Nelis*, Andrew Rubin*,
Paul Zimet* *Gathered Men*

RECORDING:

Singer: Markel Reed*
Pianist: Mila Henry

"His Name Is Jan"

From *Breaking the Waves*

Music by Missy Mazzoli
Libretto by Royce Vavrek

CAST:

Monique Holt* *Bess*
Dickie Hearts* *Elder #1*
Zavier Sabio* *Elder #2*
Seth Gore* *Elder #3*
Andrew Morrill* *Elder #4*

RECORDING:

Singer: Kiera Duffy*
Pianist: Daniel Schlosberg

"Papageno & Papagena"

From *The Magic Flute*

Music by W.A. Mozart
Libretto by Emanuel Schikaneder

CAST:

Brandon Kazen-Maddox* *Papagena*
Dickie Hearts* *Papageno*

RECORDING:

Singers: Jordan Rutter*,
John Taylor Ward*
Pianist: Mila Henry

THE BUTTERFLY PROCESS

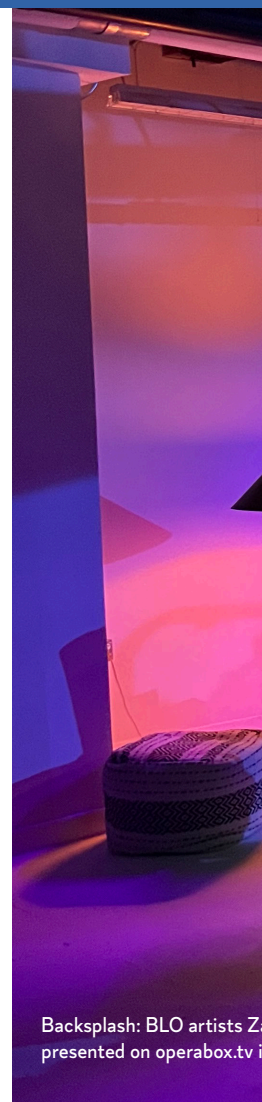
Spurred by a postponed 2020/21 Season production of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, Boston Lyric Opera began conversations with artists, staff, and community leaders to reexamine the history and legacy of this opera, particularly in terms of cultural appropriation, race, and gender stereotypes – and the wide-ranging impact of *Madama Butterfly* for Asian artists. The resulting “Butterfly Process” became part of BLO’s commitment to authentic storytelling and informed its approach to reframing the famous opera in a way that centered Asian and Asian American voices, perspectives, and experiences.

Led by Phil Chan, co-founder of Final Bow for Yellowface, an organization whose mission is to eliminate offensive stereotypes of Asian cultures, BLO facilitated a series of public discussions with notable speakers, artists, and scholars to address cultural appropriation, race, and gender stereotypes in opera. Another significant outcome of BLO’s work was a comprehensive list of resources for opera companies to use when staging future productions of *Madama Butterfly*.

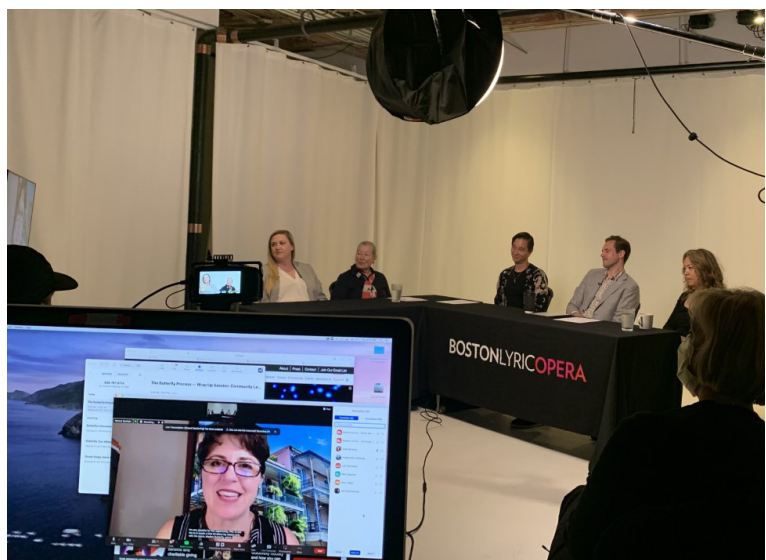
Putting this work into practice, BLO produced a six-part recital series, *B.*, that celebrated identity and what it means to belong. Centering Asian, Asian American, and Pacific Islander artists as performers, creators, and curators, each work on the program was paired with discussion to reflect their individual creative processes, identities, and journeys.

In fall 2023, “The Butterfly Process” culminated in a new production of *Madama Butterfly*, led by Phil Chan and Nina Yoshida Nelsen, that examined the experience of Japanese Americans during WWII. Employing 70 AAPI artists, this new retelling “delivered the message of why these issues of exoticism, orientalism, appropriation, and representation matter.”

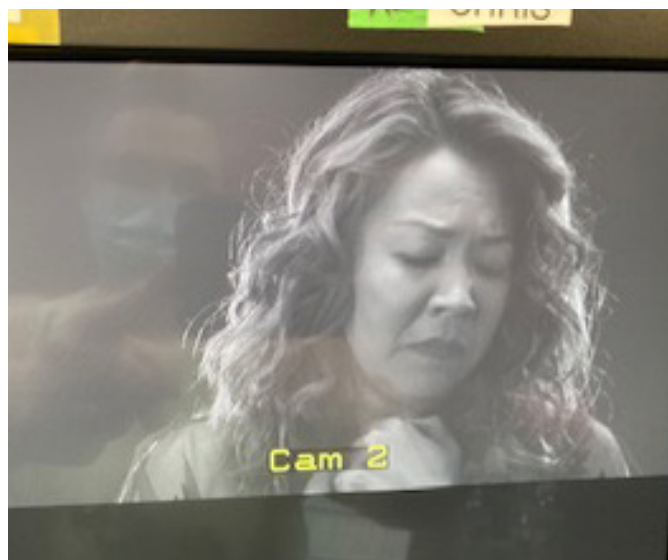
Quote received from community feedback.



Backsplash: BLO artists Z...
presented on operabox.tv



Behind the scenes discussions of *Madama Butterfly* as part of BLO’s “Butterfly Process.”
Photo courtesy of BLO Staff.



Nina Yoshida Nelsen during *B.* filming. Photo courtesy of BLO Staff.



Brendon Sha



Aray Rodriguez and Nicholas LaGesse filming *B*, a six-part recital series in 2022. Photo courtesy of BLO Staff.



DiPietro (l.), Omar Najmi (center), and David Angus (r.) during *B*. filming. Photo courtesy of BLO Staff.



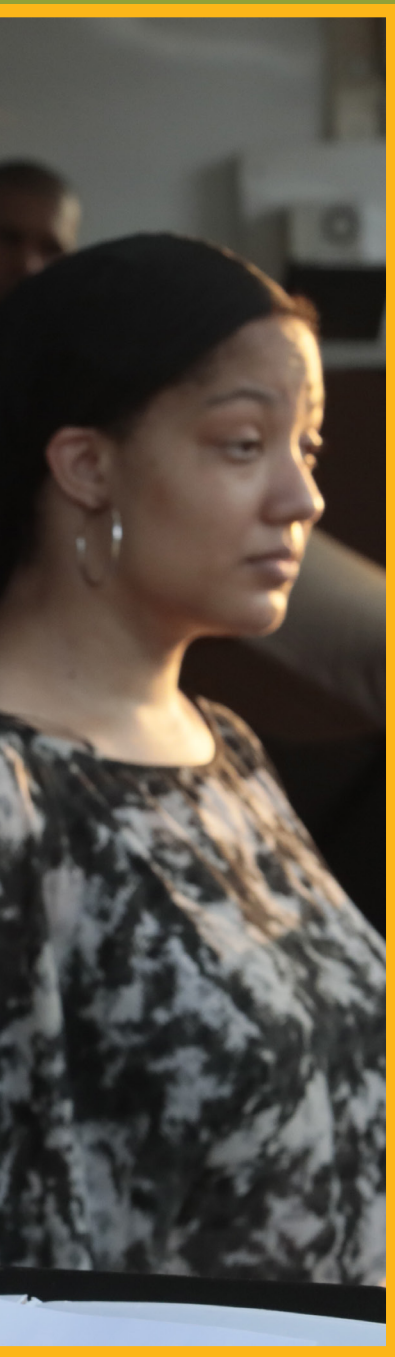
Levi Hernandez during *B*. filming. Photo courtesy of BLO Staff.

IN THE COMMUNITY



All photos from 2021/22 Season Street Stage, Opera Night at the BPL, and Create Your Own Opera events. Photos courtesy of BLO Staff.





Throughout the 2021/22 Season, Boston Lyric Opera provided access to free and low-cost public and education programming to over 3,000 people through a combination of live and digital programs.

Provided over **600 FREE TICKETS** to *Cavalleria rusticana* to first responders, medical professionals, and community members

Brought BLO Street Stage to **NEW LOCATIONS**, such as deCordova Sculpture Park in Lincoln, A Street Park in Fort Point, and Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción in the South End, as well as continuing collaboration with The Rose Kennedy Greenway

Produced two hybrid **IN-PERSON AND LIVESTREAM PROGRAMS** for Opera Night @ the Boston Public Library

Resumed live, in-school **CREATE YOUR OWN OPERA** residency programs with Boston Public Schools and beyond

Collaborated with **CASTLE OF OUR SKINS** to premiere *Misodzi YaMarimba*, an original musical narrative by COOS Artist-in-Residence Tanyaradzwa Tawengwa, with BLO Street Stage



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Victoria L. Awkward (right) as Milica returns to the cottage with her bridesmaids after gathering decorative flora in BLO's 2022 production of *Svadba*. Photo courtesy of BLO Staff.



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