



BOSTONLYRICOPERA

**Opera Night at the
Boston Public Library:
Must the Winter
Come So Soon?**

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2025 @ 6PM

Boston Public Library, Rabb Lecture Hall

A concert and conversation featuring the music of Samuel Barber

Welcome to Opera Night at the Boston Public Library with Boston Lyric Opera!

We are delighted to have you join us for a musical gathering that brings warmth, light, and connection to the cold winter season. This evening, Boston Lyric Opera singers and members of the BLO Orchestra bring to life the moving, expressive music of 20th-century American composer Samuel Barber, celebrating music's power to transform difficult emotion into beauty. We hope you will join the conversation during the audience Q&A.

Talk to a friendly BLO staff member and take our survey to share your thoughts about today's performance, sign up for our email list or check out our website to learn more, and bring a friend with you to our next event! To learn more about Boston Lyric Opera and future events, please visit BLO.org.



Boston Lyric Opera has partnered with the Boston Public Library Central Branch and branches across Boston for over twenty years, providing equitable access to quality opera experiences to the community. All programs in partnership with the BPL are made available for free and are open to the public to attend.

Chelsea Basler performs at
BLO's *Opera Night: Women
& Ambition* in 2025.

COURTESY OF BLO STAFF



PROGRAM

Brett Hodgdon, BLO Head of Music
& Chorus Director, *Moderator*

"The Daisies"

Music by Samuel Barber | Text by James Stephens
Performed by Mary Kray & Brett Hodgdon

"Adagio for Strings"

Music by Samuel Barber
Performed by members of the BLO Orchestra
Sarah Atwood *Violin I*
Hikaru Yonezaki *Violin II*
David Feltner *Viola*
Melanie Dyball *Cello*

"The Desire for Hermitage" from *Hermit Songs*

Music by Samuel Barber | Text 8th-9th century anonymous,
based on a translation by Sean O'Faolain
Performed by Mary Kray & Brett Hodgdon

"Must the winter come so soon?" from *Vanessa*

Music by Samuel Barber | Libretto by Gian Carlo Menotti
Performed by Mary Kray & Brett Hodgdon

"Sure on This Shining Night"

Music by Samuel Barber | Text by James Agee
Performed by Mary Kray & Brett Hodgdon

"Knoxville: Summer of 1915"

Music by Samuel Barber | Text by James Agee
Performed by Josie Larsen & Brett Hodgdon

MEET THE ARTISTS



Josie Larsen, a student of Bradley Williams, is a lyric soprano from Sammamish, Washington, joining Boston Lyric Opera as a Jane & Steven Akin Emerging Artist for the 2025/26 Season. She has performed as Annunciata in Bolcom's *Lucrezia*, Fiordiligi in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, Elaine in Musto's *Later the Same Evening*, Rosalinda in Strauss's *Die Fledermaus*, Mimi in Puccini's *La bohème*, and the Governess in Britten's *The Turn of the Screw*. Additionally, she has covered Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* at Music Academy of the West and the Countess in *Le nozze di Figaro* at the Aspen

Music Festival. Concert work includes performances of the Brahms *Requiem*, Mozart's *Mass in C Minor*, and *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5* by Villa-Lobos, as well as "From Jewish Folk Poetry" as part of the Boston Symphony Orchestra's *Decoding Shostakovich* series. Larsen completed her bachelor's degree at Brigham Young University in 2021, her master's degree at the New England Conservatory in 2023, and her Artist Diploma also at the New England Conservatory in 2025. She is a 2026/27 Member of the Ryan Opera Center at Lyric Opera of Chicago. Larsen's greatest joy in music is connecting people across many languages and cultures in a common musical experience.



Mary Kray is a Boston-based mezzo-soprano and returning Jane & Steven Akin Emerging Artist at Boston Lyric Opera. She is thrilled to return for the 2025 season, having recently appeared as Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel* for BLO's Opera on Tour educational program and as Second Woman in BLO's production of *Carousel*. Kray has performed a wide range of operatic and concert repertoire with local organizations such as Boston Symphony Orchestra, Boston Opera Collaborative, and NEMPAC Opera Project. Operatic highlights include Orfeo in Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* and

Marcellina in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*. As a concert soloist, she has performed as the alto soloist in Vivaldi's *Gloria*, Bach's *Magnificat*, Mozart's *Vespers*, Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*, and Handel's *Messiah*. She has received numerous awards at the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions (2018-21) and received recognition from the National Society of Arts and Letters. A graduate of Boston Conservatory at Berklee with an M.M. in opera performance, Kray also teaches musicianship at the Handel + Haydn Society and maintains a private voice studio. She brings a trauma-informed and compassionate approach to her teaching and performance practice.



Brett Hodgdon is Chorus Director and Head of Music at Boston Lyric Opera, where he has collaborated with Music Director David Angus on the company's music staff since 2011. Hodgdon was a member of the first class of Jane & Steven Akin Emerging Artists in the 2011/12 season. Hodgdon serves on the full-time opera faculty of the New England Conservatory of Music. Additionally, he teaches courses including diction and vocal repertoire at the Boston Conservatory at Berklee. In addition to his work at BLO and as an educator, Hodgdon has been a rehearsal pianist for the Boston Symphony

Orchestra and Tanglewood Festival Chorus since 2008, having rehearsed and coached vocal programs for music director Andris Nelsons and many guest conductors, including performances at Symphony Hall, Tanglewood, and Carnegie Hall. He has also been rehearsal pianist and coach for the Emmanuel Music Bach Cantata Series since 2006. Hodgdon spends his summers as Head of Music at Si Parla, Si Canta! in Arona, Italy and serves on the coaching faculty of the Boston Wagner Institute. He received a DMA in collaborative piano from the New England Conservatory and holds degrees from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

String Quartet – Members of the BLO Orchestra

Sarah Atwood Violin I (*BLO Principal Second Violin*)

Hikaru Yonezaki Violin II

David Feltner Viola

Melanie Dyball Cello

TEXT

"The Daisies"

In the scented bud of the morning, o,
when the windy grass went rippling far!
I saw my dear one walking slow
in the field where the daisies are.

We did not laugh, and we did not speak,
as we wandered happ'ly, to and fro,
I kissed my dear on either cheek,
in the bud of the morning, o!

A lark sang up, from the breezy land;
a lark sang down, from a cloud afar;
as she and I went, hand in hand,
in the field where the daisies are.

"Adagio for Strings"

Referred to as "America's semi-official music for mourning," this passionate, cathartic piece has been used in many film and TV soundtracks and heard at memorials around the world, including the funerals of public figures like Albert Einstein and John F. Kennedy, in commemoration of the victims of the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center, and in honor of victims of COVID-19.

"The Desire for Hermitage" from *Hermit Songs*

Ah! To be all alone in a little cell
with nobody near me;
beloved that pilgrimage before the last
pilgrimage to death.
Singing the passing hours to cloudy Heaven;
feeding upon dry bread and water from the
cold spring.
That will be an end to evil when I am alone
in a lovely little corner among tombs
far from the houses of the great.
Ah! To be all alone in a little cell, to be alone,
all alone:
Alone I came into the world
alone I shall go from it.

"Must the winter come so soon?" from *Vanessa*

In Barber's opera Vanessa, Vanessa's niece Erika sings this melancholy aria in the first act, expressing her loneliness and longing to be loved.

Must the winter come so soon?
Night after night, I hear the hungry deer
wander weeping in the woods
And from his house of brittle bark hoots the
frozen owl.
Must the winter come so soon?
Here in this forest, neither dawn nor sunset
marks the passing of the days.
It is a long winter here.
Must the winter come so soon?

"Sure on This Shining Night"

Sure on this shining night
of star-made shadows round,
kindness must watch for me
this side the ground.

The late year lies down the north.
All is healed, all is health.
High summer holds the earth,
hearts all whole.

Sure on this shining night
I weep for wonder
wandering far alone
of shadows on the stars.



TEXT

"Knoxville: Summer of 1915"

It has become the time of evening
when people sit on their porches,
rocking gently and talking gently
and watching the street
and the standing up
into their sphere of possession of the trees,
of birds' hung havens, hangers.
People go by; things go by.
A horse, drawing a buggy, breaking his hollow
iron music on the asphalt;
a loud auto; a quiet auto;
people in pairs, not in a hurry,
scuffling, switching their weight of aestival
body, talking casually,
the taste hovering over them of vanilla,
strawberry, pasteboard and starched milk,
the image upon them of lovers and horsemen,
squared with clowns in hueless amber.
A streetcar raising its iron moan:
stopping, belling and starting; stertorous;
rousing and raising again its iron increasing moan
and swimming its gold windows and straw seats
on past and past and past,
the bleak spark crackling and cursing above it
like a small malignant spirit set to dog its tracks;
the iron whine rises on rising speed;
still risen, faints; halts; the faint stinging bell;
rises again, still fainter, fainter, lifting, lifts,
faints forgone: forgotten.
Now is the night one blue dew.
Now is the night one blue dew,
my father has drained,
now he has coiled the hose.
Low on the length of lawns,
a frailing of fire who breathes...
Parents on porches: rock and rock.
From damp strings morning glories hang
their ancient faces.

The dry and exalted noise of the locusts from all
the air at once enchants my eardrums.
On the rough wet grass of the backyard my
father and mother have spread quilts.
We all lie there, my mother, my father, my uncle,
my aunt, and I too am lying there...
They are not talking much, and the talk is quiet,
of nothing in particular, of nothing at all in
particular, of nothing at all.
The stars are wide and alive, they seem each
like a smile of great sweetness,
and they seem very near.

All my people are larger bodies than mine,
with voices gentle and meaningless like the
voice of sleeping birds.
One is an artist; he is living at home.
One is a musician; she is living at home.
One is my mother, who is good to me.
One is my father, who is good to me.
By some chance, here they are, all on this earth;
and who shall ever tell the sorrow of being on
this earth,
lying, on quilts, on the grass, in a summer
evening, among the sounds of the night.
May God bless my people, my uncle, my aunt,
my mother, my good father,
oh, remember them kindly in their time of
trouble;
and in the hour of their taking away.

After a little I am taken in and put to bed.
Sleep, soft smiling, draws me unto her:
and those receive me, who quietly treat me,
as one familiar and well-beloved in that home:
but will not, no, will not, not now, not ever;
but will not ever tell me who I am.

BOSTONLYRIC OPERA

BLO is Celebrating 15 Years of the Jane & Steven Akin Emerging Artists Initiative!

The pursuit of a successful career in opera is a challenging and expensive undertaking. BLO proudly provides opportunities and funding for Emerging Artists to hone their talents with regular coaching and mentorship, to expand their repertoire by preparing new roles, and to be heard by diverse audiences in BLO productions and community events. More than 50 artists have benefited from this initiative since its inception.



2025/26 JANE & STEVEN AKIN EMERGING ARTISTS

First row, from left: Alexandra Dietrich *director* | Mary Kray *mezzo-soprano*
Josie Larsen *soprano* | Morgan Mastrangelo *tenor*

Second row, from left: Devon Russo *bass-baritone* | Laura Santamaria *soprano*
Zizhao Wang *bass-baritone* | Angela Yam *soprano*



Opera Innovators Series

Presented in partnership by **Boston Lyric Opera & Boston Conservatory at Berklee**, the Opera Innovators Series brings together visionary artists & creative leaders in opera for a dynamic educational & professional development program.

This series offers BLO's Jane & Steven Akin Emerging Artists and BCB voice students unparalleled access to groundbreaking perspectives, fostering the next generation of opera's innovators.



OPERA INNOVATORS SERIES

Melanie Bacaling Masterclass | FRI, DEC 5

Anne Bogart Workshop | SUN, MAR 1

Brenda Rae Masterclass | SUN, APR 12

◀ [LEARN MORE](#)

Thank you to David & Janet McCue for their generous support of Boston Lyric Opera in presenting the Opera Innovators Series this season.

BOSTONLYRICOPERA 2025/26SEASON

YOUR NEXT CAPTIVATING EVENING AWAITS:
[BLO.ORG/SEASON](https://blo.org/season)



MACBETH



OCTOBER 10 - 12
EMERSON COLONIAL THEATRE

RIDE OF THE VALKYRIES!



NOVEMBER 12
SOWA POWER STATION

VANESSA



JANUARY 8 - 10
SYMPHONY HALL

MAHLER SYMPHONY NO. 3



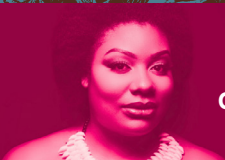
FEBRUARY 10
SYMPHONY HALL

SONG OF THE EARTH (DAS LIED VON DER ERDE)



MARCH 20 - 29
OPERA + COMMUNITY STUDIOS

RAEHANN IN RECITAL



MARCH 24
OPERA + COMMUNITY STUDIOS

DAUGHTER OF THE REGIMENT



APRIL 24 - MAY 3
EMERSON COLONIAL THEATRE

SHE WAS THERE



JUNE 13 - 14
THE WEST END MUSEUM & MUSEUM
OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

BOSTONLYRICOPERA 2025/26SEASON

GET AN INSIDER'S LOOK BEYOND THE STAGE:
[BLO.ORG/SEASON](https://blo.org/season)



**OPERA
INNOVATORS**



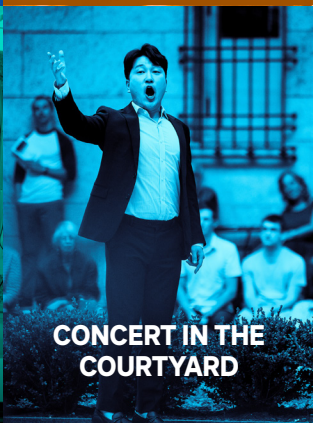
**PRE-SHOW OPERA
LECTURES**



**DECONSTRUCTING
OPERA**



**STREET STAGE:
SUMMER 2025**



**CONCERT IN THE
COURTYARD**



**OPERA NIGHT
AT THE BOSTON
PUBLIC LIBRARY**



**OPERA
CREATION
BOOT CAMP**



**OPERA ON TOUR:
DAUGHTER OF
THE REGIMENT**



**MIDDLE SCHOOL
MUSICAL THEATRE
WORKSHOP**

PLEASE FILL OUT OUR SURVEY!

Please take a moment to fill out
this event experience survey. Use this
QR code to access the survey online.

You can also email events@blo.org with
any additional questions or comments.



(L-r) Ji Yung Lee, Angela Yam, Chelsea Basler, Dr. Charmain
Jackman, and Nina Yoshida Nelsen during a Q&A at *BLO's
Opera Night: Women & Ambition* in 2025.



COURTESY OF BLO STAFF

Visit us for more events in 2025!

Opera Innovators Series @ Boston Conservatory at Berklee:
Melanie Bacaling Masterclass
December 5 | 3:00 - 5:00pm

Boston Lyric Opera @ SoWa Winter Festival
December 13 | 3:00 - 5:30pm

Learn more about upcoming
BLO events at [BLO.org/events](https://blo.org/events).

BOSTON LYRIC OPERA

BRADLEY VERNATTER
Stanford Calderwood General Director & CEO

NINA YOSHIDA NELSEN
Artistic Director

ANNE BOGART
Artistic Associate

DAVID ANGUS
Music Director

VIMBAYI KAZIBONI
Artistic Advisor

BOSTON LYRIC OPERA
Midway Artist Studios
15 Channel Center Street, #106
Boston, MA 02210

[BLO.ORG](https://blo.org)

