the GERSHWIN bros.

TWO MUSICALS • ONE EVENING
TWO ELECTIONS • TWICE THE FUN

"OF THEE I SING"
&
"LET 'EM EAT CAKE"

BMOP ODYSSEY OPERA

October 12, 2024 7:30pm
Jordan Hall

BMOP

BMOP 2024-25 Season

The 21st Century Orchestra

Music by Eric Nathan, Butch Rovan, Wang Lu and Anthony Cheung

October 25, 2024 at 8pm

Lindemann Performing Arts Center at Brown University

Lysistrata, or the Nude Goddess

an Opera by Mark Adamo

February 15, 2025 at 7:30pm

Jordan Hall

An Odyssey Opera production in collaboration with BMOP

Turning Point

Music by Jeremy Gill, Han Lash, and Chris Theofanidis

May 4, 2025 at 3:00pm *(A free event)*

Jordan Hall

Frederick Douglass

an Opera by Ulysses Kay

June 20, 2025 at 7:30pm

Jordan Hall

A BMOP production in collaboration with Odyssey Opera

TWO MUSICALS • ONE EVENING
TWO ELECTIONS • TWICE THE FUN

"OF THEE I SING"
&
"LET 'EM EAT CAKE"

BMOP ODYSSEY OPERA

October 12, 2024 | 7:30pm | Jordan Hall

DIRECTOR'S WELCOME

I would like to welcome you tonight into 1930s America; into a social landscape drowning in the wake of economic collapse, cowering in the shadow global tensions and the specter of war; a space and a time that is saturated with anxiety, rife with extremism, on the brink of violence; into a moment of vitriolic debate, empty words, and unreliable promises; into campaign season… well, I guess you didn't need to go very far to get here…

It is my pleasure tonight to share two masterpiece political satires by some of the most colorful artists of America's 20th Century. This will be an evening of challenging but extremely rewarding music and into an equally challenging storyline that is perhaps less rewarding than it is utterly ridiculous. And yet, I also invite you to wonder with me – not without a flinch of horror – at which point this caricature of America's past begins most to render a mirror image of America's present. I welcome you to step into the hall this night out from a perhaps equally outlandish and unfortunately much less fictitious campaign season of our own. Then and now, a laugh could help. There's a good reason why political satire has become an American tradition. And it's not getting old any time soon.

I am thrilled once again to have, in joint force, the incredible talent of both BMOP and Odyssey Opera on stage tonight: thank you for joining us!

GERSHWIN DOUBLE BILL

October 12, 2024, 7:30PM
Jordan Hall at New England Conservatory

Of Thee I Sing (1931)

Intermission

Let 'Em Eat Cake (1933)

Music and Lyrics by George and Ira Gershwin

Books by George S. Kaufman and Morrie Ryskind

Conducted and directed by Gil Rose, Artistic Director

Performing edition created by Gil Rose and Megan Stahl

The run time for this performance is approximately 150 minutes.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT for the ARTS arts.gov
Mass Cultural Council

"OF THEE I SING"
(1931)

OVERTURE

ACT I

Scene 1 **Main Street, USA**

Wintergreen for President

Scene 2 **A Hotel Backroom**

Scene 3 **The Boardwalk in Atlantic City**

Who is the Lucky Girl to Be?

Scene 4 **The Parlor of an Atlantic City Hotel**

Finaletto

Scene 5 **Outside Madison Sqaure Garden**

Love is Sweeping the Country

Scene 6 **Inside Madison Square Garden**

Of Thee I Sing

Scene 7 **Election Results**

Scene 8 **Inauguration Day**

FINALE

ACT II

Scene 1 **The Oval Office**

Who Cares?

The Illegitimate Daughter

Scene 2 **Outside the Senate Chambers**

Scene 3 **The Senate Chamber**

The Senator from Minnesota

The Senate

Posterity is Just Around the Corner

Scene 4 **The White House**

Scene 5 **The White House**

Trumpeter Blow Your Golden Horn

FINALE **Of Thee I Sing**

"LET 'EM EAT CAKE" (1933)

ACT I

Scene 1 **Main Street, USA**

Tweedledee for President

Scene 2 **The White House**

Scene 3 **Union Square**

Scene 4 **The New Store**

Comes the Revolution

Scene 5 **On to Washington**

On and On and On

Scene 6 **The Whitehouse Lawn, July 4th**

ACT II

Scene 1 **The Blue House**

Who's the Greatest

Enter the Supreme Court

Exit the Supreme Court

The League of Nations

Scene 2 **The Ball Park**

Team, Team, Team (Up and At 'Em)

Scene 3 **The Tribunal**

The Trial of Throttlebottom

The Trial of Wintergreen

First Lady and First Gent

Scene 4 **The Gallows on the Mall**

Hanging Throttlebottom in the Morning

Prisoner's Entrance

Executioner's Music

FINALE ULTIMO **Of Thee I Sing**

The CAST

Aaron Engebreth	*President John P. Wintergreen*
Heather Buck	*Mary Turner*
Steven Goldstein	*Vice President Alexander Throttlebottom*
Abigail Paschke	*Diana Devereaux (Of Thee I Sing)*
	Trixie Flynn (Let 'Em Eat Cake)
Neal Ferreira	*French Ambassador (Of Thee I Sing)*
	Comrade Kruger (Let 'Em Eat Cake)
Matthew Arnold	*Senator Matthew Arnold Fulton*
Thomas Oesterling	*Senator Francis X. Gilhooley*
Allyn McCourt	*Senator Louis Lippman*
Brendan Buckley	*Senator Robert E. Lyons*
Davron Monroe	*Senator Carver Jones*
David Small	*The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court*
Matthew DiBattista	*General Adam Snookfield of the US (Let 'Em Eat Cake)*
Alan Schneider	*John P. Tweedledee (Let 'Em Eat Cake)*
Ethan DePuy	*Clerk, Doctor, etc.*
Julianne DeRouin	*Sign Bearer*

ASSOCIATE JUSTICES of the SUPREME COURT

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Thomas Cannon	Nate Ramsayer
Joel Edwards	Jiayin Shi
Robert Kleinertz	

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Luisa Earle	*Wardrobe Manager*
Katelyn Geary	*Stage Manager*
Yoko Hagino	*Rehearsal Répétiteurs*
Danielle Ibrahim	*Production Manager*
Leanna Niesen	*Assistant Stage Manager*
Antonio Oliart	*Audio Enginer*
Chris Ostrum	*Lighting Designer*
Rachel Padula	*Wig/Makeup Designer*
Gil Rose	*Production Director*
Brooke Stenton	*Costume Designer*

ODYSSEY OPERA CHORUS

SOPRANO
Grace Anderson
Alecia Batson
Jessica Graves
Aurora Martin
Laura McHugh
Erin Nelson
Kay Patterson
Logan Trotter

ALTO
Julia Cavallaro
Darby Clinard
Ashley Gryta Ramsayer
Shannon Rose McAuliffe
Alexis Rodda
Elena Snow
Mauri Tetreault
Hilary Walker

TENOR
Charles Blandy
Quinn Cason
Daon Drisdom
Philippe L'Esperance
Ehi Omigie
Eric Christopher Perry
Srini Raghuraman
Eduardo Ramos

BARITONE & BASS
Thaddeus Bell
Jacob Cooper
Stephan Griffin
Gray Leiper
Anthony Pilcher
Will Prapestis
Marcus Schenck
Juan Suarez

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Jennifer Slowik

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Whitacre Hil

TRUMPET
Terry Everson
Eric Berlin
Richard Kelley

TROMBONE
Hans Bohn

PERCUSSION & DRUMS
Robert Schulz
Nick Tolle

PIANO
Yoko Hagino

VIOLIN
Gabriela Díaz*
Gabriel Boyers
Colleen Brannen
Piotr Buczek
Paula Caballero
Benjamin Carson
Sonia Deng
Susan Jensen
Yumi Okada
Nicole Parks
Matthew Vera
Hikaru Yonezaki

VIOLA
Noriko Futagami
Abigal Cross
Peter Sulski
Alex Vavilov

CELLO
Nicole Cariglia
David Russell

BASS
Anthony D'Amico
Bebo Shiu

**Concertmaster*

CAMPAIGNS, CORN MUFFINS, and CHAOS: *When Musical Comedy Meets American Politics*

By Dr. Megan Stahl

Tonight's concert presentation of *Of Thee I Sing* and *Let 'Em Eat Cake* offers a unique opportunity to revisit two of the most daring and prescient works in the American musical theater canon. Featuring music and lyrics by George and Ira Gershwin and books by George S. Kaufman and Morrie Ryskind, these musicals—first performed in the early 1930s—boldly satirize the political landscape of their time while tackling themes that remain strikingly relevant today. *Of Thee I Sing*, the first musical to win a Pulitzer Prize, offers an incisive critique of the spectacle and absurdity of American presidential campaigns, lampooning how populism, empty slogans, and even romance can override substance in the race for power. Its sequel, *Let 'Em Eat Cake*, delves into the darker consequences of political disillusionment, portraying the unraveling of democracy and the rise of authoritarianism in a way that feels remarkably contemporary.

Strike Up the Satire

While the accolades lauded upon *Of Thee I Sing* cemented the show's place in theater history, it was not the Gershwins' first foray into musicalizing the world of politics. In 1927, the brothers teamed with playwright George S. Kaufman on a musical titled *Strike Up the Band*. Kaufman, known as "The Great Collaborator," was a member of the Algonquin Round Table and already had a number of Broadway successes to his name, including the Marx Brothers musicals *The Cocoanuts* and *Animal Crackers*. Edgar Selwyn, the producer of *Strike Up the Band*, crowed to the press that this creative team would usher in an "entirely new genre" in American musical theater. It was Selwyn's professional goal to "Americanize" the satirical British operettas of W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan, and by all accounts he did just that: *Strike Up the Band* was a full-fledged operetta in tone, structure, and music. What it was not, however, was a success.

Set against the backdrop of a fictional conflict between the United States and Switzerland over cheese tariffs, the story follows a Connecticut cheese tycoon who initiates a war with Switzerland under the guise of patriotism (pitting American cheese against foreign cheese) and the idealistic reporter who opposes the war while also being engaged to the tycoon's daughter. With its biting political humor and explicit criticism of American imperialism, the show was unable to resonate with a Jazz Age audience used to the fripperies and romance-driven plots of 1920s musicals. *Strike Up the Band* did not survive its out-of-town tryout in Philadelphia in 1927.

Despite the musical's failure, Edgar Selwyn refused to give up his dream of Americanizing Gilbert and Sullivan. In 1930, the Gershwins reworked *Strike Up the Band* with the help of Morrie Ryskind, who was hired to revise Kaufman's original script when Kaufman's commitments to other projects prevented him from rejoining the creative team. Ryskind, who had worked with Kaufman on *Animal Crackers* for the Marx Brothers, characterized his script-doctoring for the show as rewriting "*War and Peace* for the Three Stooges." He set to work lightening the tone of the book and shifting the focus more towards romance and entertainment, even changing the cheese factory to a chocolate factory for an extra element of sweetness and frivolity. Ryskind was able to retain some of the political satire though, and the onset of the Depression seemed to make audiences more receptive to a musical that poked fun at the government. The revised version of the show ran for six months on Broadway, which was certainly respectable considering the unusual style of the piece and the struggling economy. Though not as commercially successful as some of their later works, *Strike Up the Band* is notable for its ambitious attempt to blend political critique with musical theater. This musical experiment, in turn, provided the structural and thematic foundations for their next — and far more impactful — theatrical venture.

Singing a Different Tune

The genesis for *Of Thee I Sing* sprung directly from George S. Kaufman's fury after seeing the revival of *Strike Up the Band*. Ira Gershwin told the *New York Tribune* in 1931 that "Kaufman was sick when he saw the 1930 revised version of *Strike Up the Band* doctored for public taste. He said then and there that he wanted to write one show that would make no concessions to anyone. [*Of Thee I Sing*] is it." This time Kaufman teamed with Ryskind on the book from the very beginning of the process, and together with the Gershwin brothers they created a verifiable smash when *Of Thee I Sing* opened at the Music Box Theatre on December 26, 1931.

This time, rather than aiming their acerbic wit at international warfare (the real-world consequences of which they had learned didn't lend themselves well to musical comedy), the creators chose to lampoon one of the most absurd and theatrical traditions in American society: presidential elections. In both the story and the score, there is a boisterousness to the show's satire as it mocks beloved American institutions in a way that exposes their inherent ridiculousness while simultaneously admitting (albeit grudgingly) that we, as a country, could not do without them. It is, in fact, remarkably reminiscent of the same Gilbert and Sullivan-esque tone that Edgar Selwyn was hoping to capture with *Strike Up the Band*. Unlike their earlier attempt,

however, *Of Thee I Sing* found ways to connect directly with its contemporary zeitgeist. The musical highlighted the Madison Avenue-style gloss on presidential candidate John P. Wintergreen's campaign promise to "Put Love in the White House," and also used a running commentary on the superfluousness of the office of the Vice President as a significant narrative through-line. Additionally, the song "Posterity is Just Around the Corner" subtly references President Herbert Hoover's consistently optimistic assertions during the early years of the Great Depression, and echoes his (apocryphal) statement that "prosperity was just around the corner." Where they overshot in their previous attempt, the Gershwins, Kaufman, and Ryskind found their target with *Of Thee I Sing*, resulting in the longest-running show of the 1930s.

Beyond the commercial success of the production, *Of Thee I Sing* boasts a number of firsts in the history of musical theater. The recognition most often cited is the show's distinction as the first musical to win the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1932. While this marked a significant recognition of musicals as a serious form of theater, the award at the time was presented with a caveat, only to the composition as a piece of dramatic literature. As such, the Pulitzer committee evaluated the production as a dramatic play, which rendered George Gershwin's music ineligible for consideration; the prize was awarded only to Ira Gershwin, George S. Kaufman, and Morrie Ryskind (George Gershwin posthumously received a Pulitzer Prize in 1998 on the centennial of his birth). Giving the Pulitzer Prize to *Of Thee I Sing* did call attention to the growing importance of the text in musical comedy, a shift that was made tangible when the show's libretto was published, making it the first musical text ever to be sold in book form. *Of Thee I Sing* also became the longest running show of the decade, and was also the longest-running Gershwin show that George got to witness during his lifetime.

While *Of Thee I Sing* is considered a landmark in American musical theater for all of the reasons above, it's worth noting that the piece also marked a professional milestone for Ira Gershwin. Within their professional partnership, George would traditionally write the music first and Ira would then craft lyrics to fit George's melodies. For *Of Thee I Sing*, however, their process was reversed. With the exception of the first two songs that the brothers wrote for the show, "Love is Sweeping the Country" and "Of Thee I Sing," Ira produced the lyrics first and then George provided the accompanying music. Working from a lengthy narrative outline that Kaufman and Ryskind had drafted for the musical, Ira crafted lyrics that were completely integrated into the story; in fact, much of the main plot of the show is conveyed through song (though there are several lengthy sections of plot-heavy recitative that drive the narrative). Rather than existing as

standalone musical numbers, the songs serve the story, making the humor and the political commentary more impactful. This approach was a distinct deviation from the typical Tin Pan Alley practice, in which songs were composed for musicals with the express intent of becoming popular hits outside of the theater.

George and Ira's inverted collaborative process on this piece is perhaps what accounts for *Of Thee I Sing*'s overall musical aesthetic, which emphasizes verbal wit and incisive lyrics that challenged dominant musical comedy conventions. At this point in his career, Ira was becoming averse to writing romantic ballads, as he found penning lyrics for such tunes to be clichéd and tiresome (though clearly his disdain didn't prevent him from authoring some of the most enduring love songs of all time, including *Embraceable You, They Can't Take That Away From Me*, and *Love Is Here to Stay*). *Of Thee I Sing* offered Ira the freedom to experiment with language in a way that was openly theatrical and self-referentially playful. For instance, when tasked with writing a smitten-at-first-sight song for future president John P. Wintergreen — the "Love" candidate — Ira subverted conventional romance by instead centering the song around Wintergreen's true gastronomic love: corn muffins. As Wintergreen explains to everyone why he wants to marry Mary, he sings not of how her beauty or brains distinguishes her above other women but instead croons, "Some lovely girls have done wonders with turkey stuffin's, but I have found the one who can really make corn muffins." Ira's lyrics are indelibly tied to the characters and circumstances of the narrative, advancing the plot and deepening the satire; they simply would not make sense out of context as a standalone song for a popular artist to record.

In a *New York Times* review of the show's 1987 concert version at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, critic John S. Wilson praises Ira's lyrical dexterity but notes that "George Gershwin's primary contributions were music for parades and campaign songs that were sometimes also love songs." While a somewhat glib characterization, at face value Wilson isn't entirely incorrect; Ira's own personal brand of W.S. Gilbert's brilliant patter songs may not seem to demand much of George's musical genius. However, a closer listen reveals the musical masterclass in George Gershwin's compositions for *Of Thee I Sing*. As musical theater scholar Larry Stempel writes in *Showtime*, the brothers "parodied birth announcements in a bounding Viennese waltz," "lampooned the indistinguishability of the Supreme Court justices in the uniform steps of the whole-tone scale," and "travestied well-known campaign tunes outright." Stempel asserts succinctly, "the wit of the show was as much a product of its score as its book" (157-8). What the Gershwins, Kaufman, and Ryskind achieved with *Of Thee I Sing* set a new standard for what musical theater could accomplish both artistically and socio-politically.

Things Better Left Unsaid

The history of musical sequels on Broadway is not particularly auspicious, and *Let 'Em Eat Cake* is one of the earliest examples of this specific genre's failings. There are myriad reasons for the show's inability to capture an audience, despite the fact that the original creative team (George and Ira Gershwin, George S. Kauffman, and Morrie Ryskind) and leading players (Victor Moore, William Gaxton, and Lois Moran) reunited for the production. Perhaps the most salient issue was poor timing: though *Let 'Em Eat Cake* premiered just two years after *Of Thee I Sing*, the atmosphere of the country in 1933 was drastically different than when its predecessor opened. At this point, America was in the depths of the Great Depression, and the public mood was one of anxiety and uncertainty. The inauguration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933 provided citizens with a glimmer of hope, but despite Roosevelt's swift actions to stabilize the economy and provide relief for struggling families, 1933 marked the height of the Depression. When FDR was inaugurated on March 4th, the banking system had almost completely collapsed, one quarter of the 51-million-member civilian labor force was unemployed, and productivity had plummeted to one-third of its 1929 level.

As a result of the national crisis, *Let 'Em Eat Cake*'s grim depiction of a failing political system and social upheaval may have struck too close to home for audiences who were already grappling with real-world fears about the future of their country. While *Of Thee I Sing* had used light-hearted satire to poke fun at the absurdities of American political life, *Let 'Em Eat Cake* took a much darker approach. The sequel deals with themes of revolution, dictatorship, and the collapse of democracy, which proved to be too bleak for audiences still in the midst of national anxiety. The biting cynicism of the plot, where the once-comedic President Wintergreen resorts to authoritarian measures after losing reelection, contrasted sharply with the escapism that Depression-era audiences craved. As critic Brooks Atkinson noted in his review for *The New York Times*, Kaufman and Ryskind's "hatreds have triumphed over their sense of humor." Additionally, the title itself, referencing Marie Antoinette's infamous (though, like Hoover's "prosperity" line, apocryphal) quote, suggested a level of detachment or indifference about the public's suffering that might have been off-putting in such a precarious time.

Beyond its lack of connection with the zeitgeist of the time, both the plot and the score of *Let 'Em Eat Cake* were more complex and less immediately accessible than that in *Of Thee I Sing*. Of the show, Ira Gershwin famously quipped, "If *Strike Up the Band* was a satire on War, and *Of Thee I Sing* was one on Politics, *Let 'Em Eat Cake* was a satire on Practically Everything."

The musical had conviction in spades but lacked focus and coherence. George Gershwin's compositions for the sequel, while innovative, leaned towards dissonance and experimentation, reflecting the darker themes of the show. This departure from the more melodic and catchy tunes of the first musical may have disappointed audiences who were expecting another evening of entertainment filled with hummable songs and light-hearted humor. The only true love song in the show is the number "Mine" which, though fully integrated into the plot, was able to stand alone in the same way that "Who Cares?" did in *Of Thee I Sing*. The tune is a contrapuntal composition that pits two melodies against one another: the primary sequence is rather spare and features a fittingly simplistic rhyme to match ("Mine— more than divine— I'll know that love like yours is mine"), but the counterpoint lyrics sung by the chorus gave Ira the chance to indulge in playful pronouns ("He says, no matter what occurs, whatever he may have is hers"). This spirited tension between a moment of romantic lyricism and one that challenges such sentimentality was not enough to alleviate the harshness of the show and, as Ira Gershwin's biographer Philip Furia notes, "a musical that was to have built upon the achievement of *Of Thee I Sing* only ended the Gershwins' venture into satirical operetta" (103).

Can You Ever Truly Minimize the Model of a Modern Major Musical?

Nothing about these two shows can be considered small or intimate. They are sweeping in narrative scope, broad in tone, musically expansive, and require huge casts. They are also long. Very, very long. After reading this program note, you might confidently assume that both musicals are lengthy because of a sprawling Gershwin score that includes detailed musical interludes for nearly every scene change. Let me be the first to say that you, dear theater patron, would be correct. Well, mostly correct. Or, to be more precise, not correct at all.

For two shows that feature a combined 25 musical numbers (some of which are quite extensive and can last upwards of 15 minutes), there are also extensive book scenes in both productions. Together, the libretti of *Of Thee I Sing* and *Let 'Em Eat Cake* total over 300 pages. And, to be clear, that's 300 pages of material written by the gentlemen who created madcap, head-spinning stories for the Marx Brothers. As such, this means that there are myriad plotlines that make very little narrative sense, all of which are connected by a tenuous mention of one tiny detail early in the show that seems superfluous the first time it appears but ends up being massively important by the time you get to the end of the script. Suffice it to say, this does not make for an easily adapted or condensed book.

In *Of Thee I Sing*, the humor and social commentary rely heavily on the interplay between dialogue and lyrics, with many of the jokes and political critiques emerging from specific character interactions or song setups. For the particular needs of this concert performance, it was necessary to limit the number of speaking characters and essentially meld multiple characters together. The various and distinct members of Wintergreen's inner circle needed to be reduced, but the goal was to keep the remaining characters as individual and clear in their personalities as possible. In particular, I tried diligently to retain the Throttlebottom of it all (though sadly some of his most delightful one-liners ended up on the cutting room floor). It's not just the humor derived from the jokes traded at the Vice President's expense that makes Throttlebottom integral to show's farcical tone, but rather it is the relationship between Wintergreen and Throttlebottom (and its performative comedian and straight man dynamic) that provides the real motor of the show's plot.

Let 'Em Eat Cake introduces even more complexity, as it moves from the light-hearted satire of its predecessor to a darker, more complex sociopolitical commentary on revolution and dictatorship. The sequel features more intricate plot points and denser political references, making it harder to streamline without sacrificing the biting critiques of fascism, populism, and failed revolutions. Abridging this script runs the risk of diluting the show's ominous tone and lessening the impact of its political satire, particularly in how it contrasts with the more playful nature of *Of Thee I Sing*. Luckily, most of the major plot points in this musical are conveyed through the score and was dramaturgically much easier to scale back, as *Let 'Em Eat Cake* introduces a number of characters who appear for only a scene or two and have no significant impact on the narrative.

The final scene, however, is a completely different story (and I do mean that literally—the lengthy ending feels as though it belongs in another show entirely). From attempted beheadings to an impromptu fashion show, there are more twists, turns, and tangents in the musical's last moments than in all of Agatha Christie's mysteries combined. It took several drafts of a revised script to realize that it would be impossible to simply pare down the dialogue and still maintain any level of narrative coherence, because in truth there was not much clarity in what was already on the page. In an effort to remain faithful to the overall satirical tone of the musical, most of the "twists" were cut, and—with apologies to Kaufman and Ryskind—a couple of additional phrases were added so that we could make it to the end of the performance without requiring the audience to stay in their seats for an additional hour.

While it is extremely easy to get lost in the infectious Gershwin tunes and engaging repartee of both musicals, as I delved into this material, I was reminded that it is also important to consider *why* the creators of these shows chose to write them as musical satires. Behind the witty wordplay and wacky hijinks, there lies a profound exploration about the volatility of elections and the growing polarization in political discourse. The questions raised by both *Of Thee I Sing* and *Let 'Em Eat Cake* about power, leadership, and the fragility of democracy are as pressing now as they were when these shows premiered, making the narratives not only entertaining but deeply resonant in a time of ongoing political uncertainty. Though the message is delivered in an effervescent and enjoyable package, these works remind us that the tensions, triumphs, and failures of governance are cyclical, and their timeless insights encourage reflection on the state of democracy today.

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BIOGRAPHIES

GEORGE GERSHWIN (1891-1937) Born and raised in New York City, George Gershwin is one of the most renowned composers of 20th Century America. Assimilating from Jewish American roots, Gershwin is famous for incorporating the colors of American jazz into the symphonic and operatic palate of his time. Following hard-earned and somewhat meager success on New York City's concert halls and Broadway stages, Gershwin caught America's attention as he seized opportunities in the burgeoning film industry. His Hollywood success, though, was as magnificent as it was tragically brief. Gershwin died of a brain tumor at 38 years of age. Posthumously, his pre-Hollywood work has warm and continued reception.

IRA GERSHWIN (1896-1983) Primarily known for his work as lyricist and writer, Ira Gershwin preceded his younger brother George onto the Broadway scene. In the early years of the 20th century, Ira and most of his colleagues tended towards collaborative work, as a becoming standard in the thriving musical theater industry. Eventually Ira and George became a relatively successful collaborative of their own, but then it was a style unique to themselves: louder, edgier, and experimental – dissimilar from (and, then, less popular than) the more mainstream Rodgers and Hammerstein aesthetic. George and Ira remained collaborators for the remainder of George's life, both moving to Hollywood in 1936. After George's death, Ira continued to work as lyricist for several other important composers of the mid 20th century while collating a now extremely valuable archive of his brother's musical accomplishments.

GEORGE S. KAUFMAN (1889-1961) Perhaps best known today for his work in film with the Marx brothers, George Kaufman was a highly renowned and very successful playwright on the live stages of Broadway. Born into a Jewish American family in Pittsburgh and initially pursuing a career in law, Kaufman rapidly discerned (after about three months of law school) that he was called to a somewhat more artistic life: he moved to New York City and the fast-paced, performative world of press and theater. There he would remain until his death. Some of his first work in the city was as a columnist for various papers' "drama" sections. This drew Kaufman onto Broadway, and by 1918 he was writing and watching his own shows. During the peak of his theater career, Kaufman saw at least one of his works premiered on Broadway every year for 37 consecutive years. And all along the way, he had no small success in musical theater, directing, and film.

MORRIE RYSKIND (1895-1985) Writer and dramatist Morrie Ryskind, born to a family of Russian Jewish immigrants in Brooklyn, New York, had a varied career straddling the live, Broadway stage and early Hollywood film. Usually as collaborator with other writers, composers, and stage directors, Ryskind earned a reputation for his ability to salvage or rework otherwise mediocre or flopped productions. Throughout his life, but especially as an older adult, Ryskind became seriously involved in the Socialist Party of America and American politics in general, writing for some of the country's liberal publications and in support of Jewish Americans.

Photo opposite page, clockwise from top left: Ira Gershwin, George Gershwin, Morrie Ryskind, George S. Kaufman.

AARON ENGEBRETH
President John P. Wintergreen

For over thirty years, baritone Aaron Engebreth has built a varied solo career in classical music, theatre, musical theatre, and radio. He began performing professionally at the age of 16, (nearly flunking out of High School as a result) and credits very supportive parents and a love of music that he couldn't control for guiding him through. He is now a perennial guest of orchestras, opera companies, and early music ensembles here and abroad and devotes considerable energy to the performance of established music and contemporary premieres, frequently collaborating with many of today's preeminent composers.

His recent New York City Opera debut in Argento's one-man opera, *A Waterbird Talk*, performed at Carnegie Hall, compelled the *New York Classical Review* to write, "Engebreth is a marvelous actor, capable of holding his character's many facets and motivations in tension." Mr. Engebreth has garnered two GRAMMY Award nominations for Best Operatic Recording for his work with the Boston Early Music Festival and Radio Bremen (*Thésée* and *Psyché*, by Lully), has been a soloist at the Kennedy Center and Boston's Symphony Hall, and has made international appearances from Sapporo Japan's Kitara Hall to Le Theatre de la Ville in Paris to the AmBul Festival in Sofia, Bulgaria. In addition to his considerable experiences as guest artist with both standard and early music ensembles, Engebreth is also a prolific recording artist, a member of the Recording Academy and of the Actors' Equity Association, and featured on over 35 commercial recordings while also often heard as a voice-over artist.

His 2024/25 season brings performances with Boston Modern Orchestra Project, Odyssey Opera, Washington DC's 21st Century Consort, Boston's Coro Allegro, Lexington Symphony, Tundi Productions, Enigma Chamber Opera, and Florestan Recital Project. This season will also include Engebreth in the New York premiere of Jon Deak's monodrama, *The Passion of Scrooge* in December. Like many artists, he has been honored to make music in some of the world's greatest concert halls and stages, but has also regularly enjoyed intimate social programs in nursing homes, community centers, and public schools. He is a frequent guest-clinician, leading masterclasses and mentoring activities in universities and conservatories.

HEATHER BUCK
Mary Turner

Praised by *Opera News* as "the kind of performer who makes it all look easy," Heather Buck is best described by opera critic David Shengold as "a lithe and impactful actress with an uncommonly beautiful soprano for the high-lying and testing repertory she serves." Her operatic repertoire ranges widely: from creating such roles as Haroun in Wuorinen's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* at NYCO, Alma Beers in Wuorinen's *Brokeback Mountain* at Madrid's Teatro Real, and Ku in Prestini's *Gilgamesh*; to singing US stage premieres of Lachenmann's *Little Matchgirl*, Rihm's *Proserpina* (*title role*), and Dusapin's *Faustus, the Last Night* (*Angel*); to enjoying standard repertoire such as *Beatrice et Bénédict* (Héro, Opera Boston), *Der Freischütz* (Ännchen, Opera Boston), *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Anina), *Pearl Fishers* (Leïla), *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Zerbinetta), *Magic Flute* (Queen of the Night), *Barbiere di Siviglia* (Rosina), *La Bohème* (Musetta*),* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Tytania).

In concert, Heather has appeared at the Kennedy Center and Trinity Wall Street, Beijing's National Center for the Performing Arts, St. Petersburg's Marinsky Theater, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, Boston's Symphony Hall, Ottawa's National Arts Centre, and Avery Fisher Hall and Carnegie Hall with the American Symphony Orchestra. With an impressive variety of repertoire, she has sung in Bernstein's *Songfest*, Salonen's *Five Images After Sappho*, Druckman's *Counterpoise*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Crumb's *Ancient Voices of Children*, Barber's *Knoxville, Summer of 1915*, Saariaho's *Leino Laulut* (US premiere), and Karchin's *Four Songs on Poems of Seamus Heaney* (world premiere): all with top orchestras.

Buck's Discography includes three recordings with BMOP and Odyssey Opera: Dello Joio's GRAMMY Award-nominated *The Trial at Rouen*, Wuorinen's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, and Argento's *Miss Havisham's Wedding Night* and *The Boor*. Additional recordings include Aldridge's GRAMMY Award-winning *Elmer Gantry* and Floyd's *Wuthering Heights* with Florentine Opera; Glass' Symphony No. 5 with Trinity Wall Street; and Karchin's *Four Songs on Poems by Seamus Heaney* with Bowling Green Philharmonic.

ABIGAIL PASCHKE

Diana Devereaux (Of Thee I Sing)
Trixie Flynn (Let 'Em Eat Cake)

Lauded by *The Washington Times* as "sprightly and charming" with "a voice as clear and acrobatic as one could wish," Abigail Paschke has established herself as an artist with "uncommon spark". Known internationally as an avid "crossover" performer, her most recent credits include multiple productions of *West Side Story* as Francisca (Lyric Opera of Chicago), Rosalia (Teatro Lirico di Cagliari, Italy), Maria (The Carnegie) and Rosalia with the National Symphony Orchestra for the Centennial Celebration of Leonard Bernstein at the Kennedy Center. Paschke's Additional roles include Ellie Mae Chipley in *Showboat* (The Glimmerglass Festival), Gossip 2 in *The Ghosts of Versailles* (The Royal Opera of Versailles, France), Carrie Pipperidge in *Carousel* (Opera Montana), Maria in *The Sound of Music* (The Carnegie), Valencienne in *The Merry Widow* (Kentucky Opera), Cinderella in *Into the Woods* (Opera Montana), Pamina in *The Magic Flute* (Salt Marsh Opera), Governess in *The Turn of the Screw* (Madison Lyric Stage), Juliette(u/s) in *Roméo et Juliette* (Des Moines Metro Opera), Yum-Yum in *The Mikado* (Opera Montana), and Sally in *Die Fledermaus* (Virginia Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, Opera Saratoga). Her film/tv credits include Alice in the Emmy-Award nominated *Le Comte Ory* (Des Moines Metro Opera) and Sandra Gutenberg in the Emmy-Award winning *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* (Amazon Prime Video). She is an Encouragement Award Winner from The Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, a National Semi-Finalist from the Houston Grand Opera Eleanor McCollum Competition, the Grand Prize winner of the Orpheus Competition, and holds degrees from Carnegie Mellon University and University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music.

NEAL FERREIRA

French Ambassador (Of Thee I Sing)
Comrade Kruger (Let 'Em Eat Cake)

Praised for his "rich, powerful voice" and "bravura-filled stage presence," Neal Ferreira is a nationally-recognized lyric tenor known for his cultivated vocalism and eloquent expression. Dubbed a "Boston mainstay" by *The Boston Globe*, he recently appeared with Boston Lyric Opera in the New England premiere of Rhiannon Giddens and Michael Abels' Pulitzer Prize-winning opera, *Omar* (Auctioneer/Taylor).

A much sought-after interpreter of new music, Mr. Ferreira made his European debut in 2021 as Laertes in the world premiere of Joseph Summer's *Hamlet* with State Opera Rousse, Bulgaria. His successful performance as the Visitor

in Boston Lyric Opera's production of Philip Glass' *In the Penal Colony* was called "poignant" by the *Wall Street Journal* and "perfect" by *Opera News*. The tenor can be heard on the premiere recordings of numerous operas, including Charles Wuorinen's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* (BMOP/Sound), James MacMillan's *Clemency* (BIS), Joseph Summer's *The Tempest* (Albany), and Mario Castenuovo Tedesco's *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Odyssey Opera).

In a professional career spanning two decades, Ferreira has appeared with an array of companies including Florida Grand Opera, the Glimmerglass Festival, Opera Colorado, Virginia Opera, Anchorage Opera, Syracuse Opera, American Repertory Theatre, Handel and Haydn Society, Odyssey Opera, Boston Modern Orchestra Project, Emmanuel Music, and Guerilla Opera. Mr. Ferreira holds degrees from Providence College and New England Conservatory of Music, and he is a student of renowned operatic tenor, Frank Lopardo. In addition to performing, he is also an Assistant Professor of Voice at Berklee College of Music.

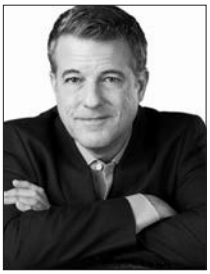
DAVID SMALL
The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court

Baritone David Small continues to enjoy a vibrant career in opera and concert, having performed over 70 different opera roles in nearly 60 operas, including *Rigoletto*, *Tosca* (Scarpia), *Traviata* (Germont), *Boheme* (Marcello), and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Figaro, which he performed well over 100 times). He has been featured as soloist with the Cincinnati May Festival Orchestra, Austin Symphony, St. Louis Symphony, Rochester Philharmonic, and Fort Wayne Philharmonic in works such as *Elijah*, Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem*, Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, Bloch's *Sacred Service*, and Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater*. Mr. Small has collaborated with Anton Nel, Jean Anderson, Joachim Reinhuber, Steve Wogaman, John Novacek, and Eugene Cline, and has sung Schubert's complete *Winterreise* 13 times (and counting).

David retired from The University of Texas at Austin and moved to Boston in 2020. He was invited to join the voice faculty of The Boston Conservatory at Berklee in 2021 and also serves as Artist Teacher of Voice for The Longy School of Music. In 2011 he was selected as one of four NATS Master Teachers, and his students have been finalists in the Metropolitan Opera National auditions, the International Verdi Baritone Competition, and others. He earned a Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance from DePauw University's School of Music while studying with Thomas Fitzpatrick (protégé of American baritone, Mack Harrell) and earned an Artist Diploma in Opera and an MM in Voice Performance from the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music, under the tutelage of the great Italian basso Italo Tajo.

STEVEN GOLDSTEIN
Vice President Alexander Throttlebottom

New York born tenor, Steven Goldstein enjoys a career both on the opera stage and as an actor in theater and films. He has performed with Odyssey Opera in *Awakenings, La Belle Helen,* and *Patience* as well as – in co-production with BMOP – *The Fisherman and His Wife*. Steven has sung a variety of roles with many renowned companies including Squeak (*Billy Budd*), Harry (*La Fanciulla del West*), Third Jew (*Salome*), Scaramuccio (*Ariadne*), and Bardolfo (*Falstaff*) with the Seattle Opera; Monostatos (*Die Zauberflöte*) and First Jew (*Salom*e) with LA Opera; Don Basilio (*Le Nozze di Figaro*) with Vancouver Opera; Quint (*The Turn of The Screw*), Victorin (*Die Tote Stadt*), Don Curzio (*Nozze*), and Borsa (*Rigoletto*) with New York City Opera; Pedrillo (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*) with Israeli Opera; and has also sung for Cleveland Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, Gotham Chamber Opera, Tanglewood Music Festival, Bard Summerscape Festival, and the Metropolitan Opera where he debuted in 2011 as one of the Servants in *Capriccio*. He has also created roles in many new contemporary pieces, including works by Libby Larson, Gerald Busby, and James Sellars. As an actor his performance highlights include *Our Town* on Broadway with Spalding Gray; the world premieres of *I Was Most Alive With You* (Huntington Theater), *Boys! Life*, *Oh Hell*, and *The Lights* (Lincoln Center Theatre), *Romance*, *The Voysey Inheritance*, and *Shaker Heights* (Atlantic Theater Company, Founding member) *Keep Your Pantheon* (LA Theater Center), *Intimate Apparel* (Center Stage Baltimore), *Harmony* (La Jolla Playhouse), and the Boston premiere of *Big Fish* (SpeakEasy Stage Co.). Steven has appeared in the TV shows *quarterlife*, *Law & Order,* and *The Guiding Light* and in films, including The *Untouchable*s, *Signs and Wonders*, *The Spanish Prisoner, The Night We Never Met*, *Homicide*, *House of Games*, and *Things Change*.



MATTHEW DiBATTISTA
General Adam Snookfield of the United States (Let 'Em Eat Cake)

Described as "brilliant" by *Opera News*, tenor Matthew DiBattista is continually in demand on some of the world's most prestigious stages, having performed opera and concert works throughout the United States, as well as Italy, France, and Portugal. He has sung with such conductors as Charles Dutoit, Seiji Ozawa, Andris Nelson, Sir Andrew Davis, and Robert Shaw. Known for an exceptionally varied repertoire, Mr. DiBattista has performed over 70 different roles to date spanning the operatic repertoire from early to new. The year 2024 includes his San Francisco Opera debut as the Doctor in *The Handmaid's Tale,* his Carnegie Hall debut as the Teacher in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* with the Boston Symphony Orchestra recorded on Deutsche Grammaphon, a Grammy Nomination for Odyssey Opera's

recording of *Lord of Cries,* and his performance as the Witch in *Hansel and Gretel* with the Helena Symphony. He has been on the roster of the Metropolitan Opera and performed several seasons as a principal artist with Lyric Opera of Chicago where he recently sang Normano in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Other successes include several performances with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Glimmerglass Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Cincinnati May Festival, Boston Pops, New Orleans Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, Opera Omaha, Tulsa Opera, Opera Boston, Virginia Opera, Opera Colorado, Tanglewood Music Center, Boston Lyric Opera, Wichita Symphony, Fresno Symphony, Dayton Philharmonic, Milwaukee Chamber Orchestra, Charleston Symphony, Long Beach Opera, and he has appeared for nine straight seasons as principle artist with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. A sought-after voice teacher, Mr. DiBattista has taught at Boston University, DeSales University, and Cincinnati Conservatory while also maintaining a vibrant private studio in Boston. He is active as a master teacher and choral clinician across the country.

Reinhuber, Steve Wogaman, John Novacek, and Eugene Cline, and has sung Schubert's complete *Winterreise* 13 times (and counting). David retired from The University of Texas at Austin and moved to Boston in 2020. He was invited to join the voice faculty of The Boston Conservatory at Berklee in 2021 and also serves as Artist Teacher of Voice for The Longy School of Music. In 2011 he was selected as one of four NATS Master Teachers, and his students have been finalists in the Metropolitan Opera National auditions, the International Verdi Baritone Competition, and others. He earned a Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance from DePauw University's School of Music while studying with Thomas Fitzpatrick (protégé of American baritone, Mack Harrell) and earned an Artist Diploma in Opera and an MM in Voice Performance from the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music, under the tutelage of the great Italian basso Italo Tajo.

ALAN SCHNEIDER
John P. Tweedledee

Alan Schneider is a principal artist with the Boston Lyric Opera and has performed with some of the best-known companies in the Northeast, including the Huntington Theatre Company, Boston Opera, Chautauqua Opera and the Glimmerglass Opera Young American Artists Program. An advocate of New Music, he has created roles in world premieres of works by Joseph Summer, Daniel Pinkham and Paula Kimper. Schneider has appeared in a wide range of operas, including Salome, Don Carlos, Carmen and Rigoletto. A graduate of UMass-Amherst and Boston University, he completed the Boston University Opera Institute with the title role in Mozart's Idomeneo — the topic of a The Boston Globe feature story by the late music critic Richard Dyer. Schneider, who lives with his wife and son in Northampton, is also founder of The American Singers' Theater, which produces new American opera.

THOMAS OESTERLING
Senator Francis X. Gilhooley

Thomas Oesterling, tenor, is heard frequently on the opera and concert stages of New England. The Boston Globe has praised him for the "sweetness, awe and clarity" of his singing of Uriel in Haydn's Creation under the baton of Robert Shaw. As Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus* for Commonwealth Opera, he was acclaimed for having "played Eisenstein to the height of comic foppishness, bringing to bear a voice equally at home in the most serious and demanding … repertoire." His roles include Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*, Count Almaviva in *The Barber of Seville*, and Acis in *Acis and Galatea*, which he performed most recently with Ensemble Courant at UNC Chapel Hill. He has created a recital program entitled "Birth of the Lied" with fortepianist Sylvia Berry to perform classical songs with period keyboard instruments, performed recently at the Groton School, New England Conservatory, and Amherst College. Mr. Oesterling is also a proponent of new music, having participated in the premieres or revivals of many new works, including Lee Hoiby's *The Scarf* and James Yannatos' *The Rocket's Red Blare* with Intermezzo Opera, Leonard Bernstein's *A Quiet Place*, and the world premiere of *The Fall of the House of Usher* by Phillip Glass at the American Repertory Theatre. Mr. Oesterling is an alumnus of Washington University, holds a Master of Music degree from The Boston Conservatory, and a diploma from the Boston University Opera Institute. He currently teaches voice at Amherst College and New England Conservatory Preparatory Division.

MATTHEW ARNOLD
Senator Matthew Arnold Fulton

A 2023 Grammy-nominated tenor, Matthew Arnold, has been hailed by *Classical Voice* of North Carolina as "a golden voice, strong, rich, and surprisingly mature for his age." A Finalist in the 2024 Lauritz Melchior International Singing Competition and a two-time Finalist in the Houston Grand Opera Eleanor McCollum Competition, Matthew has spent the last 15 years working in the world of professional opera and has won several awards in competition.

Singing throughout the United States and Europe, Arnold has been heard with several companies in the roles of Prince Yamadori in *Madama Butterfly,* The Ring Announcer in *Champion,* Policeman/Reporter in *X: The Life and Times of Malcom X*, Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos,* Don José in *Carmen,* and Siegmund (cover) in *Die Walküre*.

Mr. Arnold holds the BM in Voice with a Minor in Sacred Music from the University of Delaware, the Master of Music degree in Voice from the UNC

Greensboro, and the Artist Diploma from The University of North Carolina School of the Arts Fletcher Opera Institute. When not on the opera stage or the organ bench, Mr. Arnold is a passionate advocate for promoting, preserving, and performing vintage Jazz and Dance Band music from the 1920s and 30s, with a special focus on the music of Rudy Vallee. Mr. Arnold leads a 12-piece band, The New England Yankees, and can be seen performing across the greater Boston Area in various venues. Mr. Arnold resides in Marblehead with his wife, soprano Holly Cameron, and their three kitties: Pixie, Tilly and Rudy.

BRENDAN BUCKLEY
Senator Robert E. Lyons

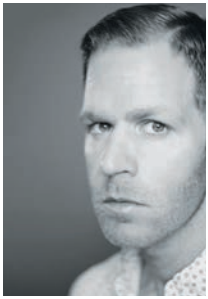
A versatile actor and musician, Brendan Buckley is at home in both classical and contemporary works. In parallel with his performances of more traditional repertoire in some of the country's most prestigious venues, some of Brendan's contemporary music premieres have featured the tenor as the Nurse in Guerilla Opera's production of Hannah Lash's *Beowulf*, Dr. Singleton in Rudolf Rojan's *We Are Sons* (with the same company), John in *RE:* with Juventas! and OperaHub, and Monsieur de Kock in *System of Soothing* by composer Frank Pesci. Brendan also premiered *Music for the Journey* and *The Immigrant Experience*, cantatas composed by John Kramer for the Winchester Unitarian Society.

Mr. Buckley is a passionate educator, with over fifteen years of experience teaching both adults and children. Brendan is currently Visiting Lecturer of Voice at Plymouth State University, is a faculty member of the New England Conservatory's School of Continuing Education, and is the former Massachusetts District Governor of the National Association of Teachers of Singing. He also has appeared on the radio waves as a guest judge for the WERS *All A Capella Live!* competition. Students of Mr. Buckley are NATS competition winners and have gone on to continue their studies in some of the world's top performance institutions as well as into active performing and teaching careers.

Brendan received a master's degree in Voice Performance and Pedagogy from The Pennsylvania State University. He received his bachelor's degree in Music at The University of Massachusetts-Amherst, with further study at the Scuola Italia in Urbania, Italy. Brendan studies with Elisabeth Phinney. For more information, please visit www.brendanpbuckley.com.

DAVRON S. MONROE
Senator Carver Jones

Davron S. Monroe is a Boston-based award-winning singer and actor with vocal talents that run the gamut from Opera to Musical Theatre, gospel to jazz, and everything else in between. Davron is the 2019 recipient of The Elliot Norton Award for Outstanding Musical performance in *Breath & Imagination: The story of Roland Hayes*, African-American classic concert artist (who was also a Boston-based artist in the later years of his life). Other performances of note include *Murder on the Orient Express, The Wiz, Camelot, Company, My Fair Lady, City of Angels, Sweeney Todd, One Man, Two Guvnors, The Mikado, Avenue Q*, and *Ain't Misbehavin'* (Lyric Stage Co.), *The View Upstairs* (Speakeasy Stage) *The Little Mermaid, RAGTIME* (Company Theatre), *Man of La Mancha* (New Rep), *Caroline or Change, Godspell* (Moonbox Productions), *Hairspray* (Reagle Music Theatre), *Dreamgirls, Jesus Christ Superstar, Children of Eden, Songs for a New World* (premiere, Key West Symphony, Broadway Across America), *Smokey Joe's Café, Cinderella, Streakin'!*, a '70s musical revue, and *Sweet Charity*. Davron has also appeared with many orchestral and vocal organizations, such as Boston Landmarks Orchestra (Lost in the Stars – a celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the "I Have a Dream" speech, and The Chariot Jubilee), Brevard Music Center, Finalist in the Orlando Opera's Heinz Rehfuss Singing Actor Awards, Disney Entertainment's Voices of Liberty, South Florida Symphony, Houston Ebony Opera Guild, the New England Spiritual Ensemble and many other organizations throughout the greater Boston area. Davron was the first recipient of the Bob Jolly Award for local actors. Future engagements include Jelly's Last Jam — the story of Jelly Roll Morton African-American Jazz pioneer — and 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, both with New Repertory Theatre Company 2021.



ETHAN DePUY
Clerk, Doctor, etc.

Praised for his "brilliant voice" and "masterful acting," American tenor and actor Ethan DePuy (He/Him/His) brings his unique dramatic style to works ranging from the Baroque era to now. DePuy trained as a young artist at the Chautauqua Opera Company, where he was a recipient of the Young Artist Encouragement Award. His list of credits includes Nemorino in *L'elisir d'amore*, Peter Quint in *The Turn of the Screw*, Alfred in *Die Fledermaus*, the title role in *Albert Herring*, Don Basilio in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Jaquino in *Fidelio*, King Kaspar in *Amahl and the Night Visitors,* Dr. Caius in *Falstaff*, and Chevalier de la Force in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*.

His regional theater credits include *Sweeney Todd* (Pirelli/Fogg) and *The Manic Monologues* with Moonbox Productions in Harvard Square, *Fiddler on the Roof* (Motel)

and *The Music Man* with Charlottesville Opera, and *The Museum of Broken Relationships* with SpeakEasy Stage. He is a proud member of Actor's Equity Association.

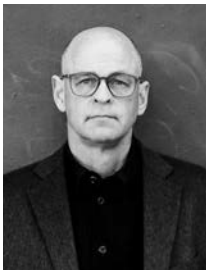
On the concert stage, DePuy has sung an impressive variety of repertoire from Buxtehude to Stravinsky with some of the country's favorite ensembles. And off stage, he can be heard as soloist on two commercially-released albums for BMOP/sound (Gunther Schuller's *The Fisherman and His Wife* and Jeremy Gill's *Before the Wresting Tides)*.A native of Rochester, NY, Ethan earned degrees from SUNY Fredonia and Arizona State University. He currently serves on the Voice faculty of both Concord Academy and the Holden Voice Program at Harvard. Visit ethandepuy.com or @ethandepuywasanxious for more info.

ANDREW CLARK
Chorus Master

Andrew Clark is the Director of Choral Activities and Senior Lecturer on Music at Harvard University. He serves as the Music Director and Conductor of the Harvard-Radcliffe Collegium Musicum, the Harvard Glee Club, the Radcliffe Choral Society, the Harvard Summer Chorus, Cambridge Common Voices, and teaches courses in conducting, choral literature, and music and disability studies in the Department of Music.

Clark's studio recording of Dominick Argento's 1973 oratorio *Jonah and the Whale* with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project and the Providence Singers was released on the BMOP/sound label to critical acclaim. The performance was hailed as "excellent" (*Fanfare*) and "idiosyncratic, colorful, stylistically varied" (*Opera News)*, "led with fine sense of balance and pacing by Andrew Clark, … a coup for the Boston ensemble, whose players are vivid and subtle as they negotiate the contrasting sonorities in Argento's score (*Gramophone*). This marks Clark's second collaboration with Odyssey Opera, following the 2018 production of Arthur Honegger's *Joan of Arc at the Stake*, featuring the Harvard-Radcliffe Collegium Musicum mixed chorus.

Clark's work with the Harvard Choral Program empowers individuals and communities through active engagement with choral music: fostering compassion, community-building, and joy. As an artist-educator devoted to advancing equity, justice, and access to the arts, Clark has developed community partnerships



GIL ROSE
Artistic and General 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. This past fall 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. In addition to his role as conductor, Rose is leading the charge for the preservation and advancement of underperformed works through recordings. BMOP/sound, the independent record label Rose founded in 2008, has released over 86 recordings of contemporary music by today's most innovative composers, including world premieres by John Cage, Lukas Foss, Chen Yi, Anthony Davis, Lisa Bielawa, Steven Mackey, Eric Nathan, and many others.

With Rose as executive producer, the label has secured five GRAMMY® nominations and a win in 2020 for Tobias Picker's opera *Fantastic Mr. Fox*. Odyssey Opera's in-house label has released five CDs, most recently a complete version of Camille Saint-Saëns's *Henry VIII*. 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. This season, BMOP and Odyssey will co-produce 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

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ABOUT BMOP

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."

In its extended quarter-century season celebration, which kicked off in February 2022 at Boston's Symphony Hall, BMOP will inaugurate *As Told By*; visit Carnegie Hall for its debut performance; and release its 100th recording on BMOP/sound.

ABOUT

ODYSSEY OPERA

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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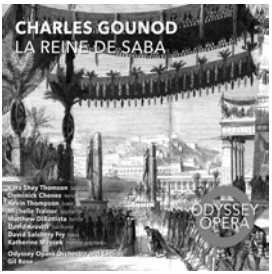

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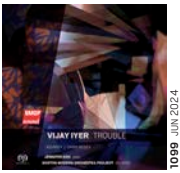

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