



MEDIA RELEASE

Cincinnati Opera and CCM to Workshop Two New Operas—*Two Corners* and *Bulrusher*—Through Opera Fusion: New Works Partnership This Winter

Both workshops culminate in free, public performances of excerpts on December 17 (*Two Corners*) and January 24 (*Bulrusher*).

CINCINNATI (November 13, 2023)—Cincinnati Opera and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) have announced the next two operas to be workshoped through their joint program, Opera Fusion: New Works.

Opera Fusion: New Works (OF:NW) is co-directed by Robin Guarino, professor of opera at CCM, and Evans Mirageas, The Harry T. Wilks Artistic Director of Cincinnati Opera, and provides composers and librettists the opportunity to collaborate with singers and creative personnel to refine their operas-in-progress.

***Two Corners* Creative Team**



B.E. Boykin
Composer



Jarrod Lee
Librettist

In December 2023, OF:NW will host a workshop for *Two Corners*, with music by B.E. Boykin and libretto by Jarrod Lee. Commissioned by Finger Lakes Opera and slated for a 2024 world premiere, *Two Corners* explores the evolving friendship of a Black woman, Florine, and a white woman, Sarah, during the unrest of the Civil Rights movement. Told through a series of flashbacks, Florine and Sarah reflect on their different perspectives of race, friendship, and the status quo.

A public performance of excerpts from *Two Corners* will take place on December 17, 2023, at 4 p.m. (ET) at Cincinnati Music Hall's Wilks Studio (1241 Elm Street, Cincinnati, OH 45202).

***Bulrusher* Creative Team**



Nathaniel Stookey
Composer/Co-Librettist



Eisa Davis
Co-Librettist

In January 2024, OF:NW will mount a second stage workshop for the new opera, *Bulrusher*, featuring music by Nathaniel Stookey and a libretto by Stookey and Eisa Davis, based on Davis's play of the same name, which was shortlisted for the 2007 Pulitzer Prize. The work was commissioned by West Edge Opera and received an initial OF:NW workshop in 2021. The opera is a coming-of-age story about an African American girl growing up in Northern California's remote Anderson Valley in 1955. Found in a basket by the river, she is raised by the local schoolteacher and has never seen anyone who looks like her until a young Black woman from Alabama comes to town. Meeting someone like herself provokes her political, sexual, and identity awakening.

A public performance of excerpts from *Bulrusher* will take place on January 24, 2024, at 7:30 p.m. (ET) at Cincinnati Music Hall's Wilks Studio (1241 Elm Street, Cincinnati, OH 45202).

Admission to the public performances is free, though seating is limited and reservations are required. Reservations are available beginning Monday, November 13, 2023, at 12 noon (ET) by calling 513-241-2742 or visiting cincinnatiopera.org.

Opera Fusion: New Works is generously funded by the Mellon Foundation.

About Opera Fusion: New Works

Funded through a generous gift from the Mellon Foundation, Opera Fusion: New Works (OF:NW) is a partnership between Cincinnati Opera and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) dedicated to fostering the development of new American operas. This collaboration is jointly led by Robin Guarino, professor of opera at CCM, and Evans Mirageas, The Harry T. Wilks Artistic Director of Cincinnati Opera. OF:NW offers composers or composer/librettist teams the opportunity to workshop an opera during a residency in Cincinnati. Residencies utilize the facilities, personnel, and talent of both Cincinnati Opera and CCM. The workshops are cast with a combination of CCM students and professional

artists, and each workshop concludes with a free public presentation of excerpts followed by an audience Q&A session. For more information, visit ofnw.org.

About Cincinnati Opera

Cincinnati Opera's mission is to enrich and connect our community through diverse opera experiences. Founded in 1920 and the second-oldest opera company in the nation, Cincinnati Opera presents a thrilling season of grand opera every summer and engaging programs throughout the year. The company's repertoire includes beloved classics and contemporary masterworks brought to life by some of the world's most dynamic performers and creative artists.

Cincinnati Opera is supported by the generosity of tens of thousands of contributors to the ArtsWave Community Campaign. This project was supported in part by the Ohio Arts Council, which receives support from the State of Ohio and the National Endowment for the Arts. Cincinnati Opera also receives general season support from The Louise Dieterle Nippert Musical Arts Fund, Patricia A. Corbett Estate and Trust, and the Harry T. Wilks Family Foundation, along with general season and project support from many other generous individuals, corporations, and foundations. Cincinnati Opera is a proud member of OPERA America. Learn more at cincinnatiopera.org.

About CCM

Nationally ranked and internationally renowned, the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) is a preeminent institution for the performing and media arts. The school's educational roots date back to 1867, and a solid, visionary instruction has been at its core since that time. CCM offers nine degree types (BA, BM, BFA, MFA, MM, MA, AD, DMA, PhD) in nearly 120 possible majors, along with a wide variety of pre-collegiate and post-graduate programs.

Declared a top college vocal program by Backstage Magazine and described as "one of the continent's major music schools," by the Toronto Star, CCM's Departments of Opera and Voice provide one of the most comprehensive training programs for opera singers, coaches, and directors in the United States. CCM offers an international faculty of dedicated educators who are also celebrated professionals in their own right, widely and currently active in their respective fields. Several national opera companies hold auditions at the conservatory, and CCM students frequently advance to the final rounds of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. CCM graduates have performed on the stages of the world's greatest opera companies, including Cincinnati Opera, the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco Opera, Royal Opera (London), La Scala (Italy), and more. To learn more, visit ccm.uc.edu.

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RESOURCES:

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