

As One

A chamber opera for two voices and string quartet

Music and Concept by **Laura Kaminsky** • Libretto by **Mark Campbell** and **Kimberly Reed** • Film by **Kimberly Reed**



Matt Gray



Sasha Cooke



Kelly Markgraf



Fry Street Quartet

Performance Tuesday, August 7 at 4 p.m. – Norton Hall

Premiere Performance Brooklyn Academy of Music, Brooklyn, 2014

As One was commissioned, developed, and premiered by **American Opera Projects (AOP)**.

The Chautauqua Opera Company would like to dedicate this production of *As One* to the memory of Bob Reeder.

Bob and Carole Reeder have been intensely active in the drive to bring *As One* to Chautauqua and Western New York for several years. Their personal connection to this story and passion that it be told here has been a source of inspiration through the many months of planning. Their activism and engagement have been critical in spreading the word about this production and the Institution-wide activities that surround it.

Bob's sudden passing on July 17 is still being absorbed by the many people whose lives he touched. He is dearly missed, and his impact on this community will be felt for years to come. His spirit is certainly felt in this room today. — Steven Osgood

CAST

Hannah Before

Kelly Markgraf +

Hannah After

Sasha Cooke +

Fry Street Quartet

Robert Waters, Violin +
Rebecca McFaul, Violin +
Bradley Ottesen, Viola +
Anne Francis Bayless, Cello +

+ Chautauqua Opera Debut

CREATIVE AND PRODUCTION

Conductor

Steven Osgood

Stage Director

Matt Gray

Set Designer

Ron Kadri

Lighting Designer

Michael Baumgarten

Video Engineer

Lianne Arnold

Costume Designer

B.G. FitzGerald

Hair/Makeup Designer

Martha Ruskai

Properties Master/ Scenic Artist

Theresa Pierce

Technical Director

John P. Woodey

Coach/Accompanists

Emily Jarrell Urbanek
Allison Voth

Production Stage Manager

Samantha Greene

Assistant State Manager

Emily Barber

Assistant Director

Kaley Karis Smith

Trigger Warning: *As One* contains a scene of violence that may be disturbing to some people.

CREDITS

Presented by Chautauqua Opera in association with American Opera Projects

Presented by arrangement with Bill Holab Music

Scenery constructed by Local #266 I.A.T.S.E.

Lighting provided by Advanced Production Group

Supertitles provided by Mark Campbell

As One film direction and film by Kimberly Reed, commissioned by AOP.

As One premiered at Brooklyn Academy of Music, September 2014, made possible in part with funding from BAM/DeVos Institute of Arts Management at Kennedy Center Professional Development Program, OPERA America's Opera Discovery Grants for Female Composers Program, supported by Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation, New York State Council on the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Art Works, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Bronx Council on the Arts, Purchase College Development Fund, Tanner Fund at Utah State University, Jeremy T. Smith Fund, Dr. Coco Lazaroff, Lynn Loacker, Judith O. Rubin, and many generous individuals.

NOTE FROM THE GENERAL & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Ever since its premiere in 2014 the chamber opera *As One* has been creating communities, from coast to coast in the United States, and in Europe. Hannah's journey toward self-acceptance has proven to speak in profound ways to audiences of every orientation. *As One* is truly for ALL.

While Chautauqua Opera's production of *As One* represents a reunion for the first time of all of the performers from the world premiere, it also marks a new beginning for the opera. This co-production with American Opera Projects, directed by Matt Gray has been designed to fit optimally in Norton Hall, but also to be transferable to a wide range of theaters and venues. American Opera Projects will become the owner of this production following the Chautauqua premiere, and there are plans brewing for it to be seen in upcoming seasons across the country. *As One*, which has been embraced by opera companies of all sizes, will now have a flexible touring production that can easily go into smaller communities which do not have their own opera company.

Many people are responsible for the production that graces the stage at Norton Hall today. Jane Gross' generous pledge of production support over 18 months ago was the key to our being able to include *As One* in our 2018 season. Financial support from Bob Jeffry, along with Eithne Ross and Michael Southwick has been invaluable. And our partner, American Opera Projects, has been very influential in the designing and building of this production. We extend our deepest gratitude to all of these people.

It is in the wide array of activity surrounding this production that Chautauqua has exhibited the deep ties that bind all of the Institution's platforms. *As One* Community Day has been a labor of love for a host of my colleagues, and I could not be more profoundly grateful for their focus, energy, collaboration and clarity of purpose and mission through the months of planning that this has taken. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Emily Morris, Atom Atkinson, Sara Noble and Deborah Sunya Moore for their untiring efforts to organize all of these activities. My thanks go out as well to Reverend Gene Robinson, and our colleagues in Literary Arts and the Chautauqua Theater Company for their participation in our panel discussion. I am also very grateful for the work of Bill Schmidt, who has managed to bring screenings of both of Kimberly Reed's films — "Prodigal Sons" and "Dark Money".

And finally, my most heartfelt thanks go to the three creators of this profoundly moving opera — Laura Kaminsky, Mark Campbell and Kimberly Reed — each of whom has carved out several days in their busy calendars in order to be here at Chautauqua as we join the *As One* community. Thank you for bringing this unique and moving piece into the world, and for joining us here at Chautauqua!

—Steven Osgood

NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

I have been with this show from the beginning. (Well, perhaps not the very beginning, but at least since the show's puberty.) As one of the producers in the organization that commissioned, developed, and ultimately premiered the work, I watched the opera search for and settle into its own identity in tandem with its protagonist Hannah. Sitting in the audience at that premiere in Brooklyn in 2014, performed by all of the same artists you will see on stage tonight, I knew that Kim, Mark, and Laura had succeeded in creating something both specific and universal, that rose above politics and case studies to connect with the human heart — laughing, crying, fearful, hopeful, and pure. That was what I was most proud of at first.

This is something like the 25th new production. Somewhere in there I directed the European premiere in Berlin — a modest production to say the least, but the first sketch of what would become this one. Before I left, I told my 5-year old daughter about the show that I would be leaving her for three weeks to do, in simplified 5-year old language. She seemed either confused or bored — it certainly had a distinct dramaturgical flaw in its dearth of ninjas or zebras — but she grasped the idea of feeling different inside and wanting others to be kind to you.

Some time later, my wife and I saw her working something out in her head. "If a boy feels like a girl inside and becomes a girl, but still likes girls... is she gay?" This is the new math. Explored without judgment. Merely clarification of what words are closest to the truth. Five years old.

This is what I am most proud of. She hasn't even seen the show, but a discussion of it has set the groundwork for understanding the world, and more importantly, people, in a way already beyond the goals we all had when creating *As One*.

To my daughter's generation, *As One* will not be The Transgender Opera. Or A Transgender Opera. Or even an opera with a transgender character. It will just be an opera. And I think when my daughter does see it, she will like it, but I hope she will wonder what all the fuss was about.

—Matt Gray

Local Organizations for Transgender People:

Buffalo Belles: <http://www.thebuffalobelles.com/>

Spectrum Transgender Group of Western New York (Buffalo): <http://www.spectrumwny.org/>

TransGeneration (Buffalo): <http://www.pridecenterwny.org/>

International Transgender Day of Remembrance: <https://tdor.info/>

ADDITIONAL THANKS

Courtney Ross, Sidney Walker, Samuel Thompson, Jens Heutling, Andre Lousada, Sarah Moulton Faux, Robert E. Lee III and Martha Woods