

LIDIYA YANKOVSKAYA CONDUCTOR

Russian-American conductor Lidiya Yankovskaya is a champion of Russian masterpieces, operatic rarities, and contemporary works on the leading edge of classical music. As Music Director of Chicago Opera Theater, Lidiya is the only woman to hold that title in a multimillion-dollar opera company in the United States.

In the 2019-20 season, Ms. Yankovskaya leads the world premiere of Dan Shore's *Freedom Ride* and the Chicago premieres of Joby Talbot's *Everest*, Rachmaninoff's *Aleko*, and David T. Little's *Soldier Songs* at Chicago Opera Theater. She conducts Ricky Ian Gordon's *Ellen West* at New York's critically acclaimed Prototype Festival and makes house debuts leading Daron Hagen's *Shining Brow* at Arizona Opera and the world premiere of Paola Prestini's *Edward Tulane* at Minnesota Opera. In standard repertoire, she leads performances of Stravinsky's *The Firebird* at Illinois Philharmonic, Shostakovich's Chamber Symphony in C minor at Chicago Philharmonic, and Mozart's *Don Giovanni* in her Glimmerglass Festival debut.



Ms. Yankovskaya is Founder and Artistic Director of the Refugee Orchestra Project, which proclaims the cultural and societal relevance of refugees through music, and has brought that message to hundreds of thousands of listeners around the world. In addition to a National Sawdust residency in Brooklyn, ROP has performed in Boston, Washington, D.C., and the United Nations, and will make its UK debut in London in an upcoming season. She has also served as Artistic Director of the Boston New Music Festival and Juventas New Music Ensemble, where she led operatic experiments with puppetry, circus acts, and robotic instruments, as well as premieres by more than two dozen composers. Under her artistic leadership, Juventas was the recipient of multiple NEA grants and National Opera Association Awards.

As Music Director of Harvard's Lowell House Opera, Ms. Yankovskaya conducted sold-out performances of repertoire rarely heard in Boston, including Tchaikovsky's *The Queen of Spades*, Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and the U.S. Russian-language premiere of Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Snow Maiden*. Her commitment to exploring the breadth of symphonic and operatic repertoire has also been demonstrated in performances of Rachmaninoff's *Aleko* and the American premieres of Donizetti's *Pia de' Tolomei*, Rubinshteyn's *The Demon*, and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Kashchej The Immortal* and Symphony No. 1.

An alumna of the Dallas Opera's Hart Institute for Women Conductors and Marin Alsop's Taki Concordia Fellowship, Ms. Yankovskaya has also served as assistant conductor to Lorin Maazel, chorus master of Boston Symphony Orchestra, and conductor of Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra. She has been featured in the League of American Orchestras Bruno Walter National Conductor Preview and Cabrillo Festival for Contemporary Music, and assisted Vladimir Jurowski via a London Philharmonic fellowship.

Ms. Yankovskaya holds a B.A. in Music and Philosophy from Vassar College, with a focus on piano, voice, and conducting, and earned an M.M. in Conducting from Boston University. Her conducting teachers and mentors have included Lorin Maazel, Marin Alsop, Kenneth Kiesler, Ann Howard Jones, David Hoose, Joshua Jacobson, Eduardo Navega, and Christine Howlett.

Ms. Yankovskaya's belief in the importance of mentorship has fueled the establishment of Chicago Opera Theater's Vanguard Initiative, a three-pronged investment in new opera that includes a two-year residency for emerging opera composers. Committed to developing the next generation of artistic leaders, she also serves on the Advisory Board of Turn The Spotlight, a foundation dedicated to identifying, nurturing, and empowering leaders – and in turn, to illuminating the path to a more equitable future in the arts. Recipient of a 2018 Solti Foundation Career Assistance Award, Ms. Yankovskaya has been a featured speaker at the League of American Orchestras and Opera America conferences, and served as U.S. Representative to the 2018 World Opera Forum in Madrid.

LIDIYA YANKOVSKAYA
CONDUCTOR

CURRENT POSITIONS

Chicago Opera Theater—Music Director (2017-) Responsible for overseeing all musical decisions within the organization, including casting/hiring music personnel. Work with General Director in making programming decisions and overseeing long-term planning. Regularly conduct mainstage productions.

Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra—Conductor (2015-) work weekly with this renowned youth orchestra incl. *Sacre du Printemps*, productions of Verdi's *Ballo in Maschera* & *Otello* with fully professional cast and chorus, etc. Also serve as chorus master & occasionally as rehearsal pianist for opera productions.

Boston Symphony Orchestra—Chorus Master (Summer & Fall 2016) Preparing several programs including Brahms *Deutsche Requiem*, Adams *Transmigration of Souls*, a pops program and more with Tanglewood Festival Chorus (chorus of the BSO). Have served as Russian diction coach and rehearsal conductor for the chorus since 2013.

Music Director, Juventas New Music Ensemble (2010-) professional instrumental contemporary music ensemble. Instrumental concerts, annual opera premiere, ballets, and recent residencies at The Boston Conservatory, Harvard, WPI and Middlebury.

Conductor, Beth Morrison Projects (2015-) working as a conductor for world-premiere productions of the large-scale *Ouroboros Trilogy*, including serving as guest conductor for New England Conservatory Opera Department for a workshop performance.

Conductor, American Lyric Theater (2015-) performance of Chen's *The Life and Death(s) of Alan Turing*; workshop of *MILA*

Dallas Opera Women Conductors Institute (2015) One of 6 conductors from around the world for this prestigious showcase and longterm development program.

Music Director, Commonwealth Lyric Theater (2012-) conduct fully professional orchestra and world-class soloists including Andrey Nemzer, Dina Kuznetsova, Mikhail Svetlov, Pawel Izdebski, Stefan Szkafarowsky, and Adam Klein in full productions and concerts.

Conductor, Center for Contemporary Opera, NYC (2012-) Most recently conducted the world premiere of Line Tjornhoj's *Oration*, upcoming performances of the world premiere of *Sweat*. Also regularly lead workshop performances from the piano.

Guest Conductor, Flagstaff Symphony Orchestra (2017) also finalist for Music Director position

Conductor, Opera Saratoga (2017) conducting production of Gréty's *Zémire et Azor* (*Beauty and the Beast*)

Conductor, Wolftrap Opera (2017) conducting a double bill of Glass/Murat *The Juniper Tree* and Musoni *Bastianello*

PAST CONDUCTING POSITIONS

Music Director, Harvard University Lowell House Opera (2011-2015) productions with full orchestra, fully-staged, mostly professional singers with select young student artists performing in leading roles. Most recent productions: *Pique Dame*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*

Conducting Fellow, Lorin Maazel/Castleton Festival (2014) regularly covered rehearsals and performances for Maazel

Assistant Conductor, Gotham Chamber Opera (2013-2015) regularly served as Assistant Conductor for productions

Assistant Conductor/Chorus Master, Opera Boston (2010-2012) prepared the chorus and regularly conducted rehearsals.

Conductor, New Opera NYC (2016) productions of *Iolanta* and *Boris Godunov*

Conductor, Metro West Opera (2015, 2016) full productions of operas by Puccini, Bernstein, Adamo

Conductor/Music Director, Hubbard Hall Opera Theater (Summer 2014) full productions of *Figaro* and *Gianni Schicchi*.

Guest Conductor, Chelsea Opera (2014) conducted orchestra concert reading of new operatic work

Guest Conductor, Danbury Choral Society (2012-2013) Prepared this chorus of ~100 in *The Bells* & Polovitsian Dances

Associate Conductor, Boston Opera Collaborative (Spring 2009-2012) regularly conducted full opera productions

Conductor, Brandeis University New Music Series (Fall 2009)

Conductor, Boston University Composers' Forum (2008, 2009) premieres of new works by student composers.

Music Director, Vassar Mahagonny Ensemble, a contemporary music ensemble of about 55 instrumentalists and 20 singers (2007-2008)

Conductor, Lucky Ten (2011--) including full productions of *Figaro*, *Die Zauberflöte* and Glinka's *Ruslan & Lyudmilla* with orchestra.

Music Director, Boston Opera Hub (2011, 2012) Tom Jonson's *4 Note Opera* and AMD for Zemlinsky's *Der Zwerg*

Guest Conductor, Northeastern University Choir (2009, 2010)

Director, Boston University Women's Chorale (2008)

AWARDS & HONORS

Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music Conducting Fellow (2015) under Marin Alsop and James Ross

Taki Concordia Fellowship for Women Conductors, Honorable Mention (2015)

National Opera Association, Best Opera Production, Professional Division (2013)

The American Prize--First Prize Winner, Best Opera Production, Professional Division (2012, 2014)

The American Prize--First Prize Winner, Best Opera Production, Community Division (2014)

Boston University Dean's Scholarship (2008-2010) Full Tuition Scholarship for graduate study

Harvard University Davis Center Associate (2012-) affiliate scholar with center for Russian & Eurasian studies

Harvard Lowell House Senior Common Room member (2013-) honor given to exceptional scholars and professionals

Phi Beta Kappa (academic) & Phi Kappa Lambda (music/academic) honor societies (2008, 2010)

European American Musical Alliance Merit Scholarship (2009) Juilliard School/L'École Normale de Musique Paris

Francis Walker Prize for top pianist in graduating undergraduate class (2008)

EDUCATION

Boston University, *MM, Conducting* (2010) **GPA: 3.92/4 (A)**

Phi Kappa Lambda Honor Society; Dean's Scholarship (full tuition merit scholarship)
Tested out of masters' requirements--almost entirely doctoral coursework

Vassar College, *B.A. in Music, minor in Philosophy* (2008) **GPA: 3.91/4 (A)**

Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society, General Honors, Departmental Honors
Francis Walker Prize for top pianist in graduating class

ADDITIONAL CONDUCTING STUDY

- Cabrillo Festival (Summer 2015) with Marin Alsop and James Ross
- Marin Alsop Southbank Center Education class for women conductors (February 2015)
- Chorus America Choral-Orchestral Conducting Workshop at Mannes w/ Jorge Mester & David Hayes (Feb 2014)
- CCM Conducting Mozart Opera with Mark Gibson and Arthur Fagen (Summer 2012)
- Waterville Music Center workshop with Kenneth Kiesler (Summer 2011)
- Individual mentorship/private study with Kenneth Kiesler (2011-)
- Richmond Symphony Workshop--Gustav Meier, JoAnn Falletta (Spring 2011)
- Ann Howard Jones and David Hoose at Boston University (2008-2010)
- Conductors Retreat a Medomak with Kenneth Kiesler (Summer 2009)
- Conducting Master Class with Diane Wittry (Apr. 2009)
- One week of private conducting study with Tamara Brooks, Conductor in Residence at Vassar (2008)
- Private lessons in Orchestral and Choral Conducting, Eduardo Navega and Christine Howlett, (2004-2008)
- Conducting Fellow: Bard Conductors Institute w/ Harold Farberman (Summer 2008) **Recipient of merit scholarship*
- Yale University's Norfolk Music Festival Conducting Workshop with Simon Carrington (2007, 2008)
- EAMA Conducting Institute in Paris (L'École Normale de Paris and the Juilliard School) (Summer 2006)

PIANIST/COACH

Pianist/Conductor, New York Lyric Opera (2012--) Conduct/lead from keyboard in full and concert productions of major operatic works

Music Director/Pianist, Opera Boston Education Tour (2010-2012) traveled to schools with operatic productions, leading from piano

Cover Pianist, Opera Boston mainstage productions (2009-2012)

Pianist, Opera America Conference New Works Sampler (2011)

Pianist, Boston Opera Collaborative (2009-2012) played regularly for solo performances and scenes, accompanied production rehearsals

Russian Diction Coach (2009—) Opera Boston, Shostakovich's *The Nose* (Spring 2009), several works for Boston Symphony Orchestra

Accompanist, Conductors' Institute at Bard (2008), read wind/brass parts from full score for rehearsals

Choral accompanist (2004-) Vassar College Choir, First Church UU, various shorter term commitments.

OTHER RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Lecturer in Music Theory, Boston College (2015)—taught courses in harmony, counterpoint, and beginning music theory

Arranger, Boston Pops (2016) choral arrangement of "You gotta have heart" from *Damn Yankees*; have also orchestrated for BU Symphony and arranged for Zamir Chorale of Boston

Mezzo-soprano grad study w/ Sharon Daniels (Director BU Opera Institute), undergrad with Mary Nessinger & Drew Minter. 7 years of professional solo and choral experience, roles with Commonwealth Lyric Theater; Helmuth Reilling's Carnegie Hall Workshop (2009) & Yale's Norfolk Festival w/ Simon Carrington (2007, 2008)

Violinist-12 years of private instruction & performance in various ensembles in school years and early university

Russian Translator, The Metropolitan Opera (2013-2014) Translator for the stage director for production of Borodin's *Prince Igor*

LANGUAGES

Russian (fluent)

French (highly proficient; academic minor in college)

German (proficient; 2 years of study, 5 months living in Germany)

Italian (proficient; full summer of intensive study, private tutoring, extensive diction training)

Czech and Ukrainian (diction, reading knowledge)

LIDIYA YAKOVSKAYA
CONDUCTOR
RECENT CRITICAL ACCLAIM

"The opera gave COT music director Lidiya Yankovskaya a juicy opportunity to really strut her stuff for Chicago's audience, and she delivered an electrifying reading."
-Opera News

"By any measure, the Chicago Opera Theater's staging of Jake Heggie's Moby-Dick at the Harris Theater for Music and Dance is a defining success in the history of the company... handsomely realized by the Chicago Opera Theater's pit orchestra, masterfully led by music director Lidiya Yankovskaya, who never allows the momentum to flag."
-Chicago Sun-Times

"Conductor and COT music director Lidiya Yankovskaya brought forth brilliantly colored accompaniment from the orchestra, where the most exciting musical action takes place"
-Chicago Tribune

"Chicago Opera Theater's Music Director Lidiya Yankovskaya masterfully conducted the 60-member orchestra through Heggie's score that, in its overture almost sounded like what Bernard Herrmann may have composed for a Hitchcock film, moved into some pronounced dissonances in Act Two and overall had some of the spirited romanticism of Verdi."
-Around the Town Chicago

"Yankovskaya elicited a lush, propulsive reading that revealed Tchaikovsky's delicious score with idiomatic grace. The finale ensemble was ravishing, as all musical forces came together to deliver a perfectly balanced wave of luxurious sound."
-Opera News

"Lidiya Yankovskaya does a terrific job as a conductor of this score bringing out the many colors and styles of music with her thirteen musicians who prove game to the challenge."
-DC Theatre Scene

"Conductor Lidiya Yankovskaya ably shaped the score "
-Wall Street Journal

"The most interesting parts were Sankaram's atmospheric orchestrations, brought out by Lidiya Yankovskaya in the pit."
-Washington Post

"Russian conductor Lidiya Yankovskaya made a strong WNO debut at the podium, skillfully bringing together the disparate sounds in the pit."
-Washington Classical Review

"Under the baton of Lidiya Yankovskaya, the new COT's Music Director (the only woman to hold that position in a Top-50 opera company in the United States), Tchaikovsky's score became transcendent. With the thorough preparation of the score and empathy with the composer (both having Russian roots and then Western influences), she lovingly guided the singers and orchestra through every ebb and flow of the music, shifting from tenderness to passion, while keeping the pace of the opera moving ahead."
-Opera Wire

"Since this performance was also the Chicago debut of Lidiya Yankovskaya, COT's new Stanley Music Director, it was an auspicious occasion for the company embarking on their 45th season. . . A 2018 recipient of the Solti Foundation Career Assistance Award, Maestra Yankovskaya's debut in the pit was promising and gratifying. She brought out all the pathos and grandness in the lush score, without ever overpowering the singers, quite an accomplishment in an intimate theater with such an exposed orchestra pit. This is most encouraging."
-BuzzNews.net

"Perhaps it was opening-night jitters, for Yankovskaya soon got a firmer handle on the proceedings and led a flexible and richly idiomatic account of this score. Coordination with the singers was largely in synch, and she showed clear sympathy with her compatriot's music—keeping the music flowing through the unbroken 85 minutes, balancing deftly to bring out Tchaikovsky's woodwind accents, and building lyric climaxes to resplendent payoffs." -Chicago Classical Review

"Music Director Yankovskaya, born in Saint Petersburg, Russia, steps to the podium for the first time with this opera, giving a generous accounting of an opera she has conducted many times." -Chicago Theatre Review

"Spoleto's pick-up orchestra, augmented in Pia by Westminster Choir, remains a marvel, and Lidiya Yankovskaya conducted with the brio and tenderness this opera demands." -Opera News

"Maestra Lidiya Yankovskaya presided over the Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra in a reverential performance of Donizetti's musically resplendent score. Utilizing the fruits of the recent scholarship creating critical editions of Donizetti's scores, she made a strong case for "Pia's" musical worthiness." -Opera Warhorses

"With conductor Lidiya Yankovskaya firmly in control, the orchestra was much more lively and idiomatic than the staging." -Wall Street Journal

"In Ms. Yankovskaya's hands, the small Island City Opera Orchestra of some two dozen members gave a richly robust rendition of Rimsky-Korsakov's music." -The Berkeley Daily Planet

"In the pit, conductor Lidiya Yankovskaya does a terrific job with the Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra. She's brings a fiery spirit to a score than could easily feel routine and has a sure instinct for pacing, while always finding room to bring out Donizetti's melodic orchestrational felicities." -Limelight Magazine

"Both productions featured excellent conducting by guest conductor Lidiya Yankovskaya. . . The chamber orchestra, seated cheek-by-jowl with the audience, played with utter confidence even in the demanding chromaticism of Rimsky-Korsakov's storm scenes." -San Francisco Classical Voice

"Lidiya Yankovskaya led a fully committed pit orchestra that met the challenges of Wachner's wide-ranging vision with ease" -The Boston Musical Intelligencer

"Conductor Lidiya Yankovskaya and her ensemble of musicians were excellent." -Operagene.com

"Conductor Lidiya Yankovskaya does a terrific job of leading a full ensemble that was also directed by R.B. Schlather." -DC Metro Theater Arts

"What galvanized the entire production was the high level of the music making. Conductor Lidiya Yankovskaya, who is also music director of Juventas New Music Ensemble and Harvard's popular Lowell House Opera, is a skillful and incisive musician, and she got an exciting, accomplished performance from her small orchestra." -Lloyd Schwartz, New York Arts

"The orchestra, under conductor Lidiya Yankovskaya's attentive baton, seethed and suffered right along with [Mikhail Svetlov's Boris]" -San Francisco Classical Voice

"Another American, Lidiya Yankovskaya, led the evening's most emotionally gripping performance, lovingly textured, with mezzo Heather Johnson singing Mrs. De Rocher's pleading 'I am a mother,' from Jake Heggie's Dead Man Walking." -Dallas Morning News

"BMInt has recognized the value of Juventas New Music Ensemble's performances across many disciplines with more than a dozen rave reviews. The Intelligencer has also registered great pleasures in the accomplishments of conductor and Artistic Director Lidiya Yankovskaya. Therefore, we point to our readers Juventas's Music in Motion, a journey through 100 years of music interpreted through theatrical puppetry, featuring established works from the last 100 years alongside three world premieres and a pre-show one-act comic opera." - The Boston Musical Intelligencer

"The musical aspect of the performance rose to superb virtuosity" -The Harvard Crimson

"superbly conducted by Juventas (and the opera's) Music Director Lidiya Yankovskaya" - The Boston Musical Intelligencer

"Yankovskaya did an incredibly good job of keeping the singers and orchestra together while allowing the soloists enough artistic freedom to give the numbers real and believable emotion." -The Harvard Crimson

"Keeping all of these complex variables well-coordinated was the expert music director, Lidiya Yankovskaya, in her third Lowell House production; she conducted with complete assurance and suppleness, well-controlled stick technique, and close attention to the details of the score. She also wrote very good notes in the program booklet."

- The Boston Musical Intelligencer

"All composers should have the benefit of executants on the level of Juventas under Lidiya Yankovskaya."

- The Boston Musical Intelligencer

"The production is notable for virtually uniformly excellent singing and acting through two casts, the expressive, flexible, but always authoritative conducting of Lidiya Yankovskaya, the strong as well as tender singing of the chorus, the emotionally evocative choreography confidently executed by a talented corps de ballet, and the beautiful costumes that are the work of Scenic and Costume Designers Olga Maslova and Maria Kapustina." - The Boston Musical Intelligencer

"The choral sound, too, was full and rich, and the orchestra crisply directed by Lidiya Yankovskaya." - Boston Globe

"The voices were universally strong, filling the theater to the rafters... The Juventas New Music Ensemble was terrific. The playing was sophisticated and richly colorful, helped by Ms. Yankovskaya's musical direction." - Theater Pizzazz

"Music Director Lidiya Yankovskaya coaxes every possible expressive note from the incredibly talented instrumentalists."

- Theater Review Limited

"The orchestra, an ensemble of Boston freelancers, was superb. Though not a large group, they never sounded small, and all sections acquitted themselves well. Conductor Lidiya Yankovskaya superintended over everything with a sure hand, managing good balances and coordination between the widely spaced forces." -The Arts Fuse

"Run, do not walk to the Harvard ticket office... The music director, Russian-born Lidiya Yankovskaya, conducted a remarkably capable orchestra with authority and sensitivity, and the singers uniformly delivered both excellent diction and acting. Lowell's production is beyond reproach."

- WBUR, Boston's NPR