

Laura Kaminsky, Composer

laura@laurakaminsky.com | laurakaminsky.com

BIOGRAPHY - 600 WORDS

Laura Kaminsky, cited in *The Washington Post* as “one of the top 35 female composers in classical music,” frequently addresses critical social and political issues in her work, including sustainability, war, and human rights. Possessing “an ear for the new and interesting” (*The New York Times*), “her music is full of fire as well as ice, contrasting dissonance and violence with tonal beauty and meditative reflection. It is strong stuff.” (*American Record Guide*).

Her first opera, *As One*, (2014; co-librettists Mark Campbell and Kimberly Reed) is the most produced contemporary opera in North America, with close to 50 productions to date in the U.S., as well as across Europe, Canada and Australia. “*As One* is a piece that haunts and challenges its audience with questions about identity, authenticity, compassion, and the human desire for self-love and peace” (*Opera News*). The original cast recording on the BSS label was named one of the best new opera recordings of 2019 by *Opera News*. The *As One* team has since been commissioned twice—by Houston Grand Opera for *Some Light Emerges* (2017) and Opera Parallèle/American Opera Projects for *Today It Rains* (2019).

With Reed, she has created *Hometown to the World*, inspired by the devastating Immigration and Customs Enforcement raid in Postville, IA in 2008, commissioned by The Santa Fe Opera and Opera For All Voices as a co-commission with Hawaii Opera Theatre. Upcoming are *Finding Wright* (librettist Andrea Fellows Fineberg; Dayton Opera; 2022) and *February* (co-librettist with novelist Lisa Moore; Newfoundland’s Opera on the Avalon; 2023). A new work, *Uncover*, for Hub New Music will premiere at the Morgan Library and Museum in 2022.

Recent recordings include *Fantasy: Oppens Plays Kaminsky* (Cedille Records CDR 9000 202) and *Blythe Gaissert: Home* (Bright Shiny Things BSTC-0137). *Fantasy* features iconic pianist Ursula Oppens performing *Piano Concerto* with the ASU Symphony Orchestra (Jeffery Meyer, music director), *Piano Quintet* with the Cassatt String Quartet, the solo *Fantasy*, and *Reckoning: Five Miniatures for America* for piano four-hands, where Oppens is joined by Jerome

Lowenthal. On *Home, Carne Barata* (Scene 8 from *Hometown to the World*) is one of nine works responding to Gaissert's challenge “what is home?”

Grants, awards and fellowships include those from the National Endowment for the Arts, Koussevitzky Music Foundation, Opera America, Chamber Music America, BAM/Kennedy Center De Vos Institute, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Aaron Copland Fund, Virgil Thomson Foundation, Newburgh Institute for Art and Ideas, Roger Shapiro Fund for New Music, American Music Center, USArtists International, CEC ArtsLink International Partnerships, Likhachev-Russkiy Mir Foundation Cultural Fellowship, Kenan Institute for the Arts, Artist Trust, New York State Council on the Arts, Bronx Arts Council, Arts Westchester, North Carolina Arts Council, Seattle Arts Commission, and Meet the Composer. She has received six ASCAP-Chamber Music America Awards for Adventurous Programming, a citation from the Office of the President of the Borough of Manhattan, the 2016 Polish Gold Cross of Merit (Złoty Krzyż Zasługi RP) awarded by the President of Poland for exemplary public service or humanitarian work, and the Polish Ministry of Culture National Heritage 2010 Chopin Award. She has been a fellow at the Hermitage Artist Retreat, Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, Centrum Foundation, Dorland Mountain Arts Colony, Millay Colony for the Arts, and the Camargo Foundation (France).

She is head of composition at the Conservatory of Music Purchase College/SUNY, serves on the boards of Opera America and the Hermitage Artist Retreat, and is director of the Advisory Council of The American Opera Project.

Scores: [Bill Holab Music](#)

Recordings: Affeto, Albany, Bridge, BSS, Cedille, CRI, Capstone, Mode, MSR, and Navona labels. A complete list of available recordings can be viewed at the [Buy CDs](#) page. Kaminsky is a BMI composer.