

Lidiya Yankovskaya is a fiercely committed advocate for Slavic masterpieces, operatic rarities, and contemporary works on the leading edge of classical music. She has conducted more than 40 world premieres, including 17 operas, and her strength as a visionary collaborator has guided new perspectives on staged and symphonic repertoire from *Carmen* and *Queen of Spades* to *Price* and Prokofiev. Since her appointment as Music Director of Chicago Opera Theater in 2017, Ms. Yankovskaya has led the Chicago premieres of Jake Haggie's *Moby-Dick*, Rachmaninov's *Aleko*, Joby Talbot's *Everest*, Tchaikovsky's *Iolanta*, and Adamo's *Becoming Santa Claus*, as well as the world premiere of Dan Shore's *Freedom Ride*. Her daring performances before and amid the pandemic earned recognition from the *Chicago Tribune*, which praised her as "the very model of how to survive adversity, and also how to thrive in it," while naming her 2020 Chicagoan of the Year.



In the 2022/23 season, Ms. Yankovskaya makes a series of major orchestral debuts, including performances with Los Angeles Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Sacramento Philharmonic, Knoxville Symphony, and Richmond Symphony. She returns to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra for their MusicNOW series, conducting a work by CSO Composer-in-Residence Jessie Montgomery. She also debuts at Santa Fe Opera in a new production of Dvořák's *Rusalka*, at Staatsoper Hamburg with *Eugene Onegin*, and at English National Opera, conducting a new staged production of Górecki's *Symphony of Sorrowful Songs*. She leads the long-awaited world premieres of *Edward Tulane* at Minnesota Opera and *The Life and Death(s) of Alan Turing* at Chicago Opera Theater, where she also conducts the Chicago premiere of Szymanowski's *Król Roger*.

Ms. Yankovskaya has recently conducted *Carmen* at Houston Grand Opera, *Don Giovanni* at Seattle Opera, *Le Nozze di Figaro* at Dallas Opera, *Edward Tulane* at Minnesota Opera, *Pia de' Tolomei* for Spoleto Festival USA, and *Taking Up Serpents* at Washington National Opera and the Glimmerglass Festival.

On the concert stage, recent engagements include Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, Omaha Symphony, Rhode Island Philharmonic, Elgin Symphony Orchestra and Pasadena Symphony Orchestra.

Ms. Yankovskaya has conducted as well the world premiere of Sankaram's *Taking Up Serpents* for Washington National Opera, Rubinstein's *The Demon* and Rachmaninoff's *Aleko* for Commonwealth Lyric Theater, and U.S. premiere of Donizetti's. On the concert stage, she has been recently engaged with Chicago Philharmonic, Rhode Island Philharmonic, Illinois Philharmonic, and the symphony orchestras of Hawaii, Nashville, Stamford and New Hampshire.

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 London, Boston, Washington, D.C., and the United Nations. She has also served as Artistic Director of the Boston New Music Festival and Juventas New Music Ensemble, which was the recipient of multiple NEA grants and National Opera Association Awards under her leadership.

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 the Taki Alsop Conducting Fellowship, Ms. Yankovskaya has also served as assistant conductor to Lorin Maazel. She has been featured in the League of American Orchestras Bruno Walter National Conductor Preview 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, and Ann Howard Jones.

Her 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 Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Awards in 2018 and 2021, 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.