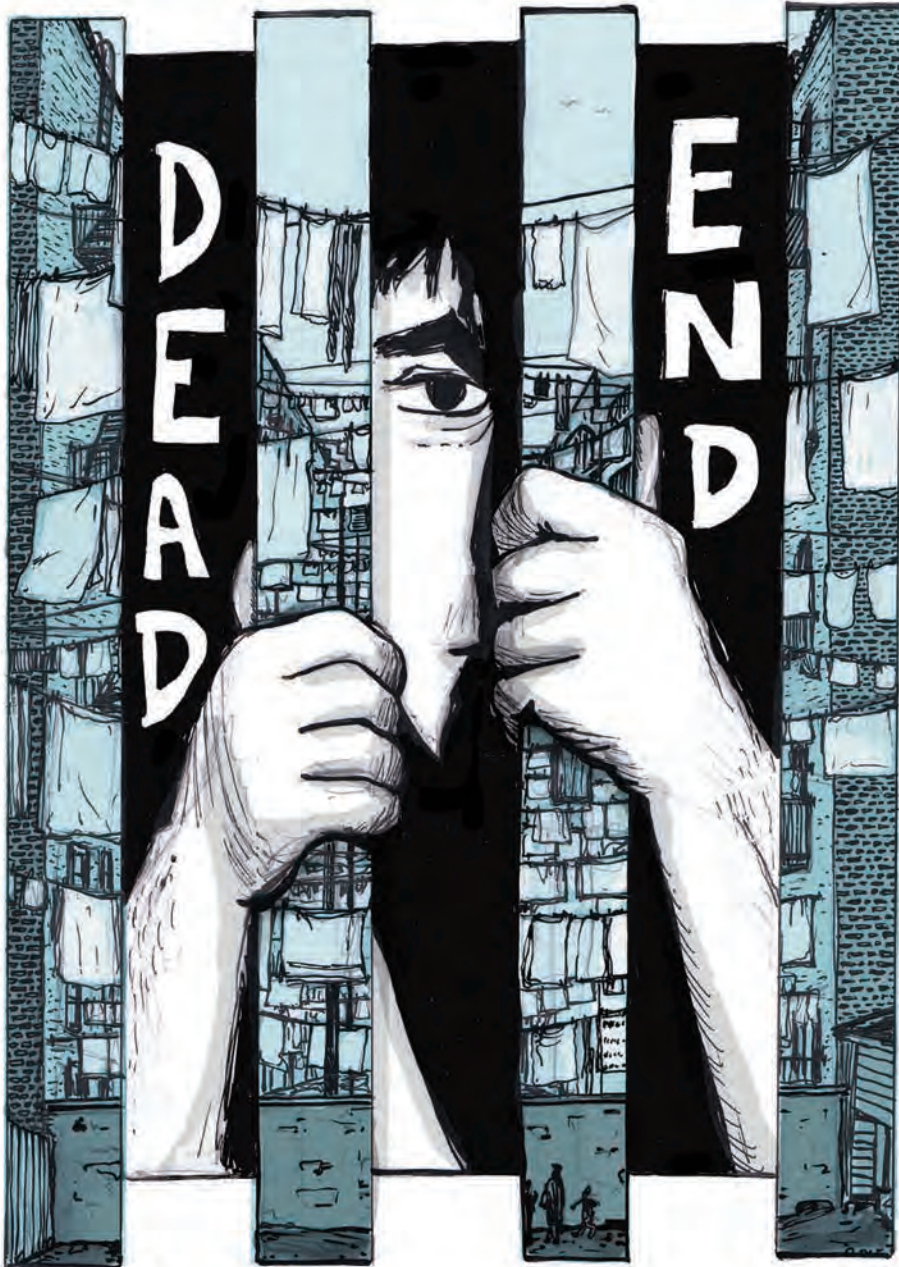
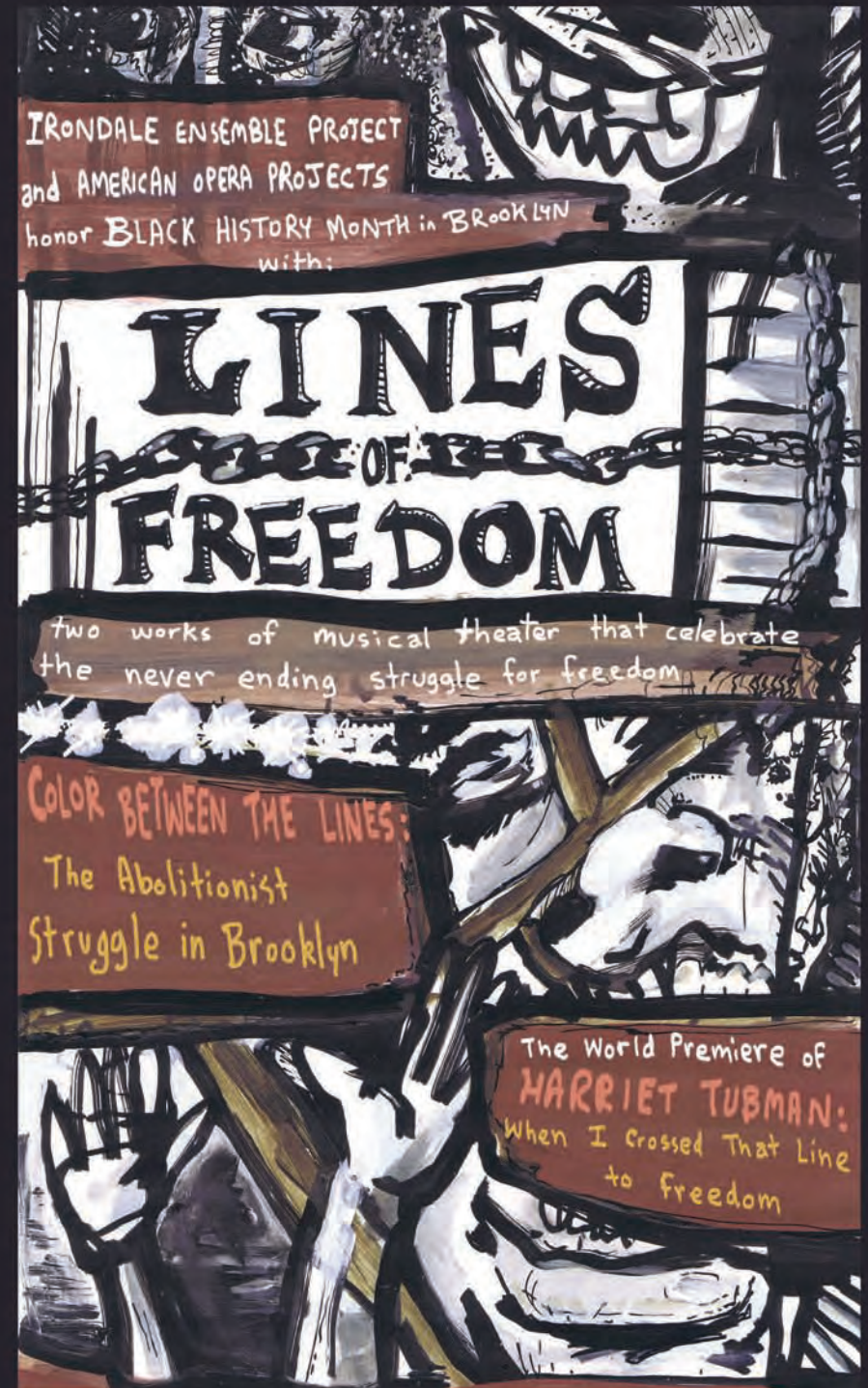


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# Color Between the Lines



February 20, 22, 28 at 7:30PM  
March 1 at 3PM

See this dynamic work of musical theater in repertory with  
*Harriet Tubman: When I Crossed that Line to Freedom*

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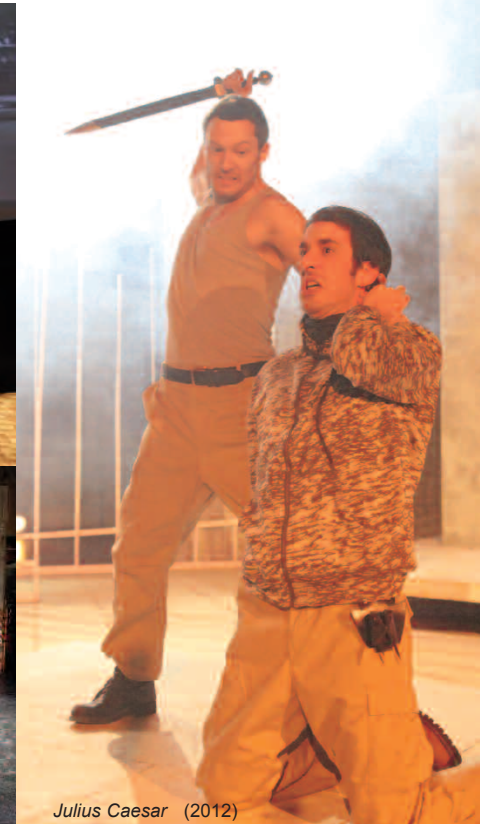
# Irondale Ensemble at the Irondale Center



*Murrow's Boys* (2011)



*Color Between the Lines* (2012)



*Julius Caesar* (2012)



*Henry V* (2011)



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# Color Between the Lines

Directed by Jim Niesen

Created by the Irondale Ensemble

Based on a Narrative Written by Prithi Kanakamedala

Music and songs by Nolan Kennedy and Michael-David Gordon, Terry Greiss,  
Taifa Harris, Ben Mathews, Alex Miyashiro, Patrena Murray, Scarlet Maressa  
Rivera, Damen Scranton, Victoria L. Ward

**Irondale Ensemble**

Michael-David Gordon, Terry Greiss, Nolan Kennedy, Patrena Murray, Scarlet  
Maressa Rivera, Lucia Roderique, Damen Scranton,

Theatre is an art form. It is not journalism. It is metaphor. It plays with and against  
the historical narrative, data, and facts as it creates a work rooted in and true to  
its own point of view and artistic truth. It is the plays of Shakespeare, the films of  
John Ford and the novels of Doctorow. At its best it is the reenactment of the great  
subconscious myths and yearnings that define the human spirit.

-Jim Niesen, Artistic Director, Irondale

**Musical Director & Sound Designer:** Nolan Kennedy

**Drums and Percussion:** Hollis Headrick

**Acting Coach:** Barbara Mackenzie Wood

**Dramaturg:** Prithi Kanakamedala, Josie McAdam

**Lighting Design/Technical Director:** Nick Brown

**Scenic Design:** Ken Rothchild

**Costumes:** Hilarie Blumenthal

**Stage Manager:** Josie McAdam

**Sound Mixer:** Jack Flachbart

**Irondale Artistic Director:** Jim Niesen

**Irondale Executive Director:** Terry Greiss

**Irondale Managing Director:** Maria Knapp

**Irondale Education Director:** Amanda Hinkle

**Irondale Photographer:** Gerry Goodstein

**Irondale Graphic Design:** Sam Ferri

**Special Thanks:** Randolph Curtis Rand, Taifa Harris, Lois Rosebrooks (Plymouth  
Church), Ben Mathews, Alex Miyashiro, Victoria L. Ward, Camp Winnebago

*Emancipation Proclamation recorded at The Doghouse NYC/Nathan Rosenberg.*



Irondale sent out a series of eblasts about the people and events in our  
show. To read them, go to: <http://irondale.org/InPursuitOfFreedom.html> or  
scan here.

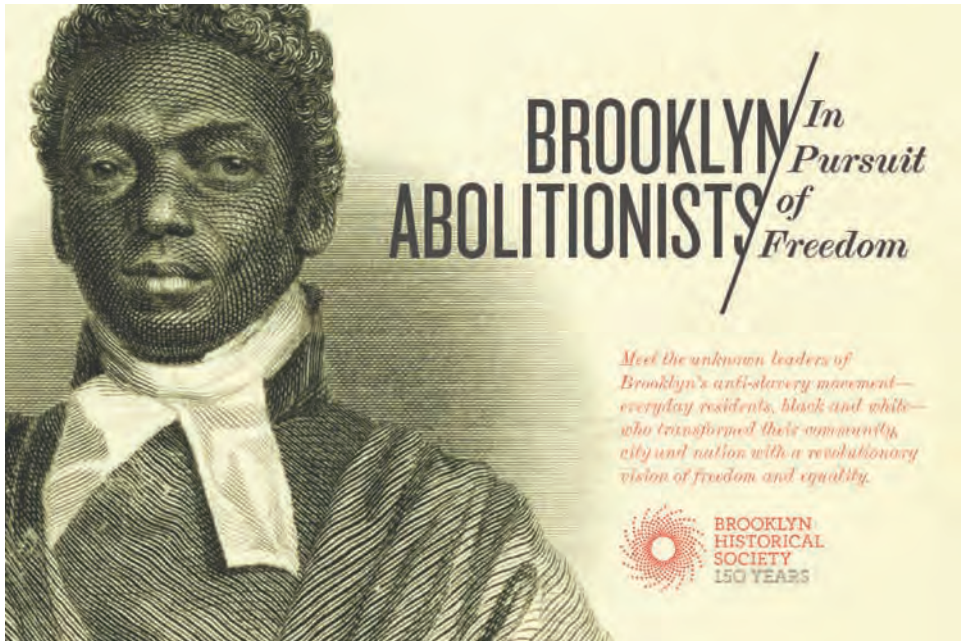


A Project by Brooklyn Historical Society, Irondale Ensemble Project, and Weeksville Heritage Center

In Pursuit of Freedom recovers the role that Brooklyn played in one of the most tumultuous periods of American history. It is an ambitious, multi-site, multi-faceted project that will restore the story of abolitionism and anti-slavery activism to the popular understanding of the Borough's history. It will reveal how black and white Brooklynites were engaged in the national struggle to eradicate slavery and demand racial and social justice. Using the latest research and scholarship it will return Brooklyn to its rightful place, alongside Boston, Philadelphia, and Manhattan, in the history of anti-slavery and abolitionism.

In Pursuit of Freedom draws on the resources and capacities of three of Brooklyn's leading cultural organizations, Brooklyn Historical Society, Weeksville Heritage Center, and Irondale Ensemble Project, and like the subject it addresses, it will pervade the Borough. The drama of the abolitionist movement is manifest in the physical environment. Many communities still meet in churches that were centers of resistance. The Brooklyn waterfront is a reminder of the city's exchange and trade with the Southern slave holding states.

Each of the three project partners will house a permanent exhibition, focusing on a specific aspect of the subject that speaks to the institution's strengths. Although each exhibition could be enjoyed alone, together they will give a complete and compelling overview of the current scholarship on abolitionism, anti-slavery and Brooklyn. The parallel themes of the exhibitions will be brought together on the specially designed In Pursuit of Freedom interactive website, where visitors will meet the people, see the places and discover more about the events that constitute the story. In Pursuit of Freedom walking tours of the borough will also be available to view, print, or use on mobile devices.



### Thank you to our funders:

The Buckhorn Association of Brooklyn  
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The Frances & Benjamin Benenson Foundation  
The Hearst Foundation  
The Ira and Julie Cohen Charitable Foundation  
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New York State Council on the Arts  
National Endowment for the Arts

**Special Thanks to:  
Kennon & Nina Rothchild  
Shoshana Perry**

Irondale is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, in partnership with the City Council.



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### Thanks for being part of the Irondale Community!

Have you seen something at Irondale before?

Turn to the person next to you and tell them what you saw and why you came back.

### Thanks to our Irondale Members

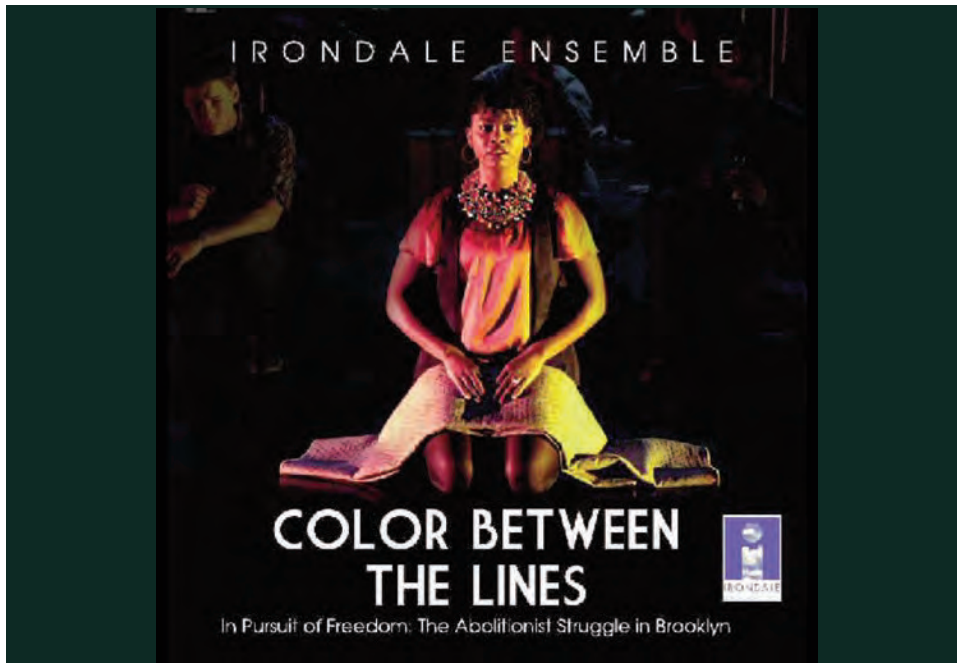
Michelle Abdurrashid	Suzanne England	Ann Longmore	Carlos Rivera
Paul Adornato	Henry Florsheim	Barbara Mackenzie Wood	Richard Rosen
Jane Asch	David Garvoille	Jed Marcus	Barbara Hauben Ross
Caron Atlas	Mary Geissman	Marty Markowitz	Kayne Rourke
Barry Axelrod	Vicky Gilmore	Greg McCaslin	Sylvia Ryan
Judi Bendewald	Rory Greiss	Tamara McCaw	Sue Scranton
Stephanie Bok	Libby Handros	Susan Metz	Eleanor Shakin
Jenelle Boucher	Hollis Headrick	Peg & Lou Metzger	Julie Simpson
Marvin Carlson	Cecil & Mary Jean Holland	Edward Moran	Sonnet Takahisa
Nivea Castro	Jerry James	Richard J Moylan	Harriet Taub
Dorothy Chansky	Mary Kennedy	Anne Needham	Tamecca Tillard
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David Dean	Elizabeth Landes	Nicole Poole	Florence Wheeler
Theresa Doherty	Melanie Lee	Kim Quarles	Sheila J. White
David Dyson	Andy Lewis	Julie Rapoport	Tremaine Wright
Dominik Eckenstein	Janet Lindgren	Lisa Reed	Ellen Zerkin

At the Irondale Center, the Irondale Ensemble Project has created a new play, Color Between the Lines. The new play with original music is being presented initially at the Irondale Center through May 24th and will subsequently tour to other places in Brooklyn. A version will also be prepared as part of the extensive education program being developed for In Pursuit of Freedom and will either be presented to school groups at the Irondale Center or toured to the Borough's public schools.

A special In Pursuit of Freedom curriculum is being developed, which is designed to meet and integrate with all New York City and State curricula standards, and professional development support will be offered to Brooklyn teachers. Within a few years it is expected that all Brooklyn school students will be introduced to the Borough's history of abolitionism and anti-slavery activism.

In Pursuit of Freedom brings to life one of the most important stories in Brooklyn's history. In showing the ways that the past still lives in today's streets and alleyways, it will be a powerful and unexpected guide through some of the borough's most fascinating corners. It will remind us that legacy of racial inequality is a powerful influence on all our lives; even as Brooklyn again becomes a cultural, tourist, and economic engine for the region, we are still grappling with its consequences. The search for social justice continues and provides a forum for discussion and debate on the continuing impact of the actions of our nineteenth-century forebears.

Visit [www.PursuitOfFreedom.org](http://www.PursuitOfFreedom.org) - the In Pursuit of Freedom Interactive Website.



Irondale's CD of our original production Color Between the Lines on sale now! Available at our bar and online at [www.irondale.org](http://www.irondale.org). Listen to tracks and download it at [www.cdbaby.com](http://www.cdbaby.com)!



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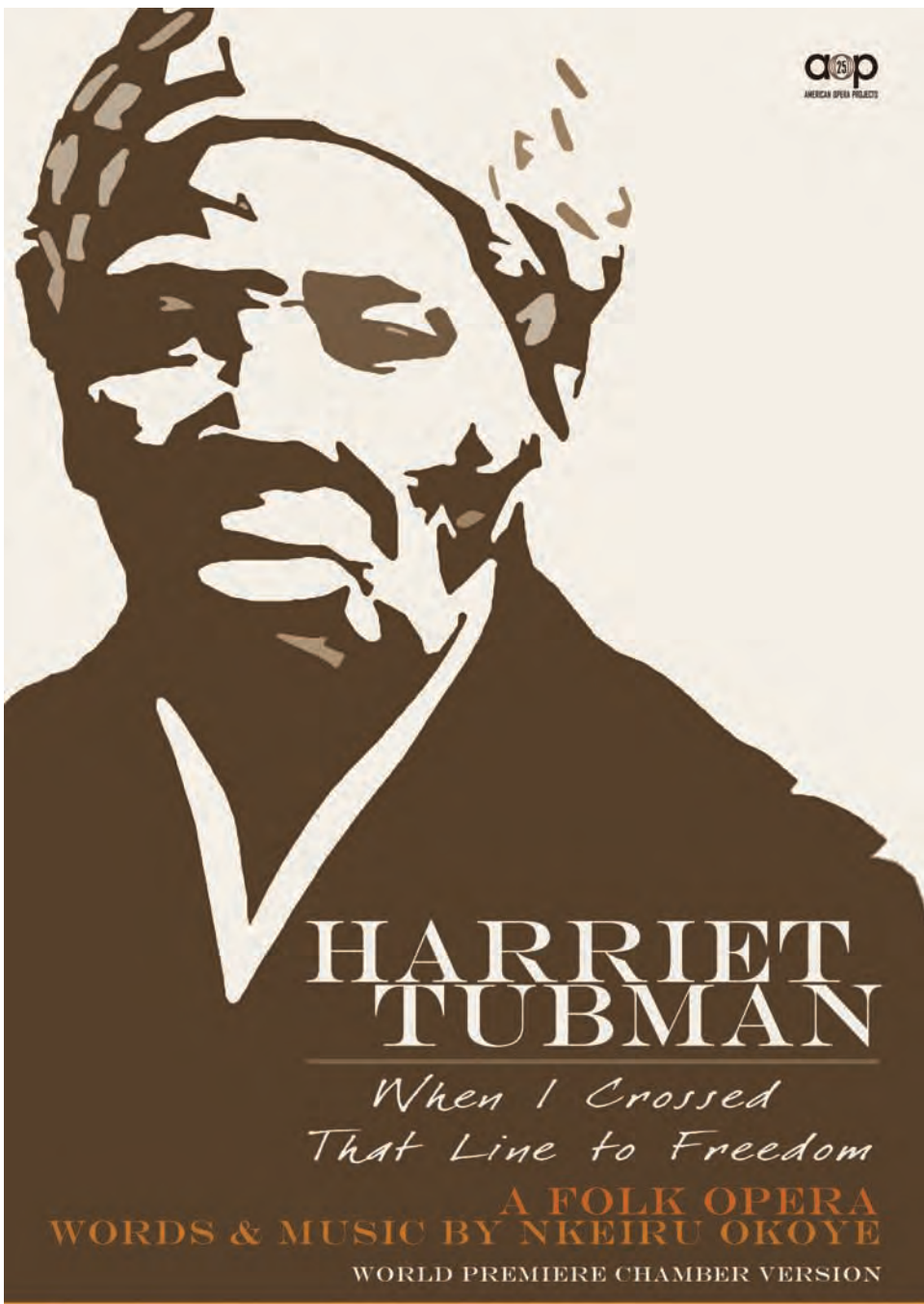
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# HARRIET TUBMAN

*When I Crossed  
That Line to Freedom*

**A FOLK OPERA**  
**WORDS & MUSIC BY NKEIRU OKOYE**

WORLD PREMIERE CHAMBER VERSION

**LINE OF FREEDOM FESTIVAL FEB 20 - MARCH 1, 2014**  
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presented by the Irondale Ensemble Project and American Opera Projects

(Donor Defiance: When I Crossed That Line to Freedom is a proud member of the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City of Irondale. This production is made possible in part by the financial support of the New York State Office of Cultural Affairs.)

## About the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church

When Irondale discovered a neglected, long-forgotten former Sunday school space in the historic Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, in Fort Greene, Brooklyn, the ensemble company saw its future - a vibrant, 7,300-square foot center for creating and presenting inventive theater, as well as education and outreach.

The LAPC was organized in 1857, at a time when the issue of slavery dominated the national debate. From the onset the church was known as a "temple of abolition". Through friends, its founding pastor pressed President Lincoln relentlessly on the issue of emancipation, both before and during the Civil War. The annex was used as an auditorium for speakers, including Frederick Douglas and Charles Dickens. It was also the site of the first demonstration in Brooklyn of the telephone by Alexander Graham Bell.

The setting offers a perfect match with a like-minded organization, a culturally diverse church with activist roots. And it also provides an opportunity for Irondale to play an important role in an exiting and growing cultural district.

## Irondale Young Company!

A Professionally Trained Teen Ensemble

Irondale's Young Company is created using the same model that created the Irondale Ensemble Project. We use the same ensemble training techniques, the same games and exercises that the Irondale Ensemble uses. Just as the professional company grew out of the interests and talents of the original members, the Young Company develops in the same way. This is a free program open to all teens.

For more information,  
call Irondale Education Director Amanda Hinkle  
at 718-488-9233 x224 or email [Education@irondale.org](mailto:Education@irondale.org)

# Irondale Ensemble Project

The Irondale Ensemble Project is an experimental theater ensemble established in 1983 by Terry Greiss, Jim Niesen and Barbara Mackenzie-Wood. The company creates and presents original work, through the research and exploration of emerging themes in our society. Our theater and our artists engage the wider community by forging deep partnerships with schools, prisons, shelters, and other organizations, and at our home, the Irondale Center for Theater, Education, and Outreach. Irondale's full-time artists have a commitment to making plays and education programs that are socially relevant, challenge the status quo and inspire fresh perspectives in our audiences. Irondale has produced 43 major Off-Broadway shows including the American Premier of Brecht's *Conversations in Exile*, radical reinterpretations of Chekhov, Ibsen, Sophocles and Shakespeare, and 12 original works created collaboratively by the company.

Since its inception, Irondale, in addition to developing and performing its own theatrical pieces, has conducted extensive programs of educational and social outreach work. The combination of the company's own daily rehearsal and performance work in conjunction with the para-theatrical use of Irondale techniques as a means of educating, and addressing social issues, has done much to shape the politics of Irondale as a company and to determine the nature and direction of its ongoing experiments.

## Irondale Mission Statement

Through the power of the ensemble process, Irondale creates and presents theatre, performance and educational programs that challenge traditional assumptions about art, and help us to better interpret contemporary culture. The Irondale Center, our theater, laboratory, and classroom, is a home for ensemble artists of all disciplines and cultures, and a resource for our community.

## The Irondale Center

In September, 2008 Irondale moved into its first permanent home: the historic Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, located in the BAM Cultural District in Fort Greene, Brooklyn. The Irondale Center for Theater, Education, and Outreach will be the performance and education-base for Irondale, NET ensembles, community-centered theater arts and education programs.

### Visiting the Irondale Center

To make your visit more comfortable,  
please note that concessions are available in the balcony.

**AND REMEMBER: Irondale Members get a FREE DRINK**

Restrooms and a water fountain are in the yellow lobby.

If you enjoyed this evening's event, please  
Like Us on Facebook ([Facebook.com/IrondaleCenter](https://www.facebook.com/IrondaleCenter))  
or tweet it. You can also email us comments or questions at  
[AfterThePlay@irondale.org](mailto:AfterThePlay@irondale.org).

# HARRIET TUBMAN: WHEN I CROSSED THAT LINE TO FREEDOM

**MUSIC AND WORDS BY NKEIRU OKOYE**

**WORLD PREMIERE CHAMBER VERSION**

presented by AOP, in association with the Irondale Ensemble Project

**February 21 & 27, 2014 | 7:30PM**

**February 22 | 3PM      March 1 | 7:30PM**

## CAST

Janinah Burnett	Harriet Tubman
Briana Hunter	Rachel Ross
Nicole Mitchell	Rittia "Ma" Ross
Clinton Ingram	Ben "Pa" Ross
Damian Norfleet	John Tubman
Patrice P. Eaton	Caroline
Marsha Thompson	Kezziah/Harriet cover*
Ernest Jackson	Sam Green/Reverend Still
Kyle Guglielmo	Brodess/Overseer Pitts
Anthony P. McGlaun	Robert/Runaway

## CHORUS

Brandie Sutton\*, Hannah Fuerst, Tesia Kwarteng, Christiana Little, Kevin Tucker, Leslie Tay, Ras Dia, Charles D. Carter

*\*The role of Harriet Tubman will be played by Marsha Thompson and the role of Kezziah will be played by Brandie Sutton on March 1.*

**Conductor:** Leslie B. Dunner

**Assistant Conductor/Pianist:** Mila Henry

**Stage Director:** Lemuel Wade

## The Harlem Chamber Players

Chala Yancy, violin  
Charlene Bishop, violin  
Celia Hatton, viola  
Lawrence Zoernig, cello  
Maurice Belle, double bass

**Scenic Design:** Ken Rothchild

**Lighting Design/Technical Director:** Nick Brown

**Costume Design:** Karen Flood

**Production Stage Manager:** W. Wilson Jones

**Assistant Stage Manager:** Beverlix Jean-Baptiste

*Janinah Burnett appears by kind permission of The Metropolitan Opera.*

## **A Note from the Director:**

It has been a pleasure to direct HARRIET TUBMAN: WHEN I CROSSED THAT LINE TO FREEDOM. In addition to the challenge of bringing this epic story to life, it was wonderful to see Ms. Tubman through the eyes of composer Nkeiru Okoye.

Because of the constant reference of the railroad that accompanies Ms. Tubman's legacy and the ever present metaphor of the train in African American history, I thought it would be most appropriate to put the telling of this story in that context. I also wanted to let the story unfold through the music and action and not let too many elements like set and props get in the way of that.

I hope you will enjoy this journey and come take a ride on the train that takes us from young Araminta's life in slavery to Harriet Tubman's brave journey to free her loved ones.

## **A Note from the Composer**

"I looked at my hands to see if I was the same person," sings the protagonist in HARRIET TUBMAN: WHEN I CROSSED THAT LINE TO FREEDOM. In real life Tubman made the statement when describing her first taste of freedom to journalist, Sarah Bradford. But in the same utterance, she admits to mixed feelings about being free while her family remained in bondage. These conflicting emotions from a noteworthy heroine were so compelling, that they became the root of my opera.

Many people know about Harriet Tubman as the legendary American hero; and when originally embarking on this journey of my first opera, I was prepared to write a fictionalized Underground Railroad encounter with Tubman. However, since that had been done already, I decided to find Tubman as a human being beyond her enslavement and liberation of others. This was accomplished through three years of reading recent biographies, fieldwork on Maryland's Eastern shore, collaborating with biographers, researching abolitionists, and reading slave narratives and accounts of life specific to where she lived.

My telling of Araminta "Harriet" Ross Tubman's story involves a community touched by her activities: the close-knit family into which she was born, her real life love interest – a free man named John Tubman, and the abolitionists William Still, stationmaster of the Philadelphia Underground Railroad Station, and Reverend Samuel Green who secreted slaves out of Tubman's community. Tying the story together is the bond between Tubman and her sister Rachel who promise that "nothing but the grave" will tear them apart.

The opera's grounding in folk music gives it yet another dimension – one that is educational, while entertaining. Between spirituals, juba, ragtime, field hollers, work songs, gospel, jazz, and shouts, the opera remains surprisingly contemporary, interweaving these idioms, seamlessly, with Western traditions.

**I want to thank all the people in my life who have taken this artistic journey with me,** especially: Charles, Mila, Matt, Bob, Bill, and the rest of the crew at American Opera Projects, who turned me into an opera composer; Kate Clifford Larson, for encouragement and for writing BOUND FOR THE PROMISED LAND, which helped me understand Tubman's mission; Noel DaCosta (in memoriam), who believed in me from the beginning, and whom I believe is smiling down at me somewhere; Wendell Logan (in memoriam), whose RUNAGATE, RUNAGATE inspired "My Name is Harriet, Now," and so much more; Alvin Singleton, who introduced the project to the John Duffy Composer Institute, Diana Solomon Glover, for singing the songs and bringing the project to the attention of ALT; Adrienne Danrich, who brought it to the attention of AOP; Director Beth Greenberg, who helped shape the vision for the opera; Mimi Stern-Wolfe, who produced the original first

## **Lemuel Wade (AOP Stage Director)**

Lem brings an international, critically acclaimed career to his craft as a stage director. In 2012 Lem directed *Porgy and Bess* for the Cincinnati Opera's Education Outreach program, as well as the first ever performances of *Porgy and Bess* rendered at Cincinnati Opera in its ninety-two year history. This was followed by Manly Romero's new opera, *Dreaming of Wonderland*, excerpted for American Opera Projects, in collaboration with Manhattan School of Music. Lem directed a staged premiere concert version of *Mrs. President*, composed by Victoria Bond, at Anchorage Opera, and followed by the excerpts of the opera at New York Symphony Space. In the summer of 2013 Lem directed the one act play, *Her Honor*, at the New York New Works Festival, Thesbian Productions. 2014 brings Lem's directing debut of *Porgy and Bess* at L'Opera de Montreal, and, with American Opera Projects, Rachel Peters' *Companionship* at Manhattan School of Music and Daniel Sonenberg's *The Summer King* at PortlandOvations.

## **Chala Yancy (AOP Musician)**

Ms. Yancy enjoys a career as a chamber musician, studio violinist, and music educator. Yancy graduated from the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts in Houston, Texas in 1994; received her Bachelor of Music from NYU in 1998; and earned her Masters Degree from the Manhattan School of Music in 2000. As a studio musician, Yancy has worked and traveled with world-renowned performing artists such as Johnny Mathis, Alicia Key, Mos Def, James Carter, Kayne West, Beres Hammond, and David Broza. She has also performed at the DC Jazz Festival with Paquito D'Rivera and Jazz at Tanglewood with the Dreaming the Duke tour. Most recently Chala played on the album *Inura: For Voices, Strings, and Percussion*, which was nominated for a Latin Grammy and a Grammy. She plays with the Orchestra of St. Luke's, Harrisburg Symphony Orchestra, is assistant director of the new music ensemble International Street Cannibals, and is the founder of the Play Date music school in Brooklyn.

## **Lawrence Zoernig (AOP Musician)**

Mr. Zoernig has been principal 'cellist of many fine New York symphony and chamber orchestras including New York Chamber Orchestra, Bachanalia and Opera Manhattan. Mr. Zoernig premiered Lars-Erik Larsson's Concertino for Cello and String Orchestra at Trinity Church with the New York Scandia Symphony, for which he is also principal 'cellist. As a chamber musician, he has performed with Goliard Ensemble and the Cosmopolitan Chamber Players. He has appeared with such noted artists as Nina Beilina, Sidney Harth, Mark Peskanov and Charles Neidich and dance ensembles including Paul Taylor Dance Company and the David Parsons Dance Company. He has appeared as soloist and chamber musician at Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Bruno Walter Auditorium at Lincoln Center, Steinway Hall in New York and the Phillips Collection and the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. In April 2005 he was invited to play for President Jimmy Carter at the Carter Center in Atlanta, Georgia.



graduate of NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, he is currently an adjunct faculty member and Resident Designer at Manhattanville College in Purchase, NY.

**Damen Scranton** (Irondale Ensemble Member)

Damen was one of two U.S. recipients of a Princess Grace Award for Acting in 1996. Since 1997, he has worked as an actor and teacher for the Irondale Ensemble Project. He is also an artistic associate with Blessed Unrest, and is a core member of Strike Anywhere. As an actor, he has also performed at the Lincoln Center Theater, the La Jolla Playhouse, Sledgehammer Theater in San Diego and the Granary Theatre in Cork, the Republic of Ireland, among others.

**Brandie Sutton** (AOP Chorus/Kezziah cover, soprano)

Ms. Sutton made her recital debut at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, sponsored by the Vocal Arts Society of Washington, D.C., and a second appearance there with the National Symphony Orchestra. Ms. Sutton made her Manhattan recital debut in the Kaufman Music Center's Merkin Concert Hall. Opera performances for Ms. Sutton include Pamina in *The Magic Flute*, Cleopatra in *Giulio Cesare*, and Musetta in *La Bohème* and most recently the role of Giuletta in *Les Contes D'Hoffmann* in Martina Arroyo's Prelude to Performance program for young emerging artists. She is a district winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. To begin this year she performed with the Royal Danish Symphony Orchestra in Copenhagen, Denmark, and will be touring Russia this spring with Opera Noire of New York, including stops in St. Petersburg and Moscow. She credits her gift and all accomplishments to the One who is mostly responsible for them- God.

**Leslie Tay** (AOP Chorus, tenor)

Mr. Tay was praised for being the "standout of the afternoon, with a clear crisp voice and easy graceful movement" as Edwin in *Trial by Jury* (Hubbard Hall Opera). He made his Carnegie Hall, Weill Hall debut as Guillot/*Manon* with New York Lyric Opera. Other roles performed include Don Ottavio/*Don Giovanni*, Oronte/*Alcina*, (New York Opera Forum), Isacco/*La Gazza Ladra*, Monostatos/*The Magic Flute* (Bronx Opera), Goro/*Madama Butterfly* (Opera Company of Brooklyn), Tanzmeister/*Ariadne auf Naxos*, Don Basilio/*The Marriage of Figaro* (Brooklyn Repertory Opera) and Flute/*A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Lowell House Opera). He has also sung with American Opera Projects, Center for Contemporary Opera, Chelsea Opera, Boston Opera Collaborative and Singapore Lyric Opera. He has degrees from Manhattan School of Music and Boston Conservatory and was a Young Artist in Lorin Maazel's 2011 Castleton Festival. He is presently a member of Tanglewood Festival Chorus, Opera on Tap and the Boston Lyric Opera chorus. [www.leslietaytenor.com](http://www.leslietaytenor.com)

**Marsha Thompson** (AOP Kezziah/Harriet cover, soprano)

Ms. Thompson is a recent finalist and grant winner in the Altamura International Voice Competition held in New York City October 6th 2013. She will be featured in the Altamura Foundation Opera Orchestra, Opera Hits concert in Round Top, New York on August 31, 2014. She has been seen at The Ravello International Arts Festival, The Verdi Foundation, New York City Opera, New York Grand Opera, Opera Carolina, Mississippi Opera, Houston Ebony Opera Guild, and Opera Festival di Roma to name a few. Her roles include Aida, Violetta, Mimi, Suzel in *L'amico Fritz*, Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi*, Betty Shabazz in *Malcolm X*, and Bess in *Porgy and Bess*. Ms. Thompson has received numerous prestigious singing awards and grants from the Career Bridges Foundation, Opera Index Society, Gerda Lissner Foundation, Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation, George London Foundation, SW Region Metropolitan Opera National Council-Winner, the Metropolitan Opera National Council Encouragement Award, and First Prize in the Enrico Caruso Awards Competition, among many others.

**Kevin Tucker** (AOP Chorus, tenor)

Mr. Tucker has been noted for having a "very expressive and smooth voice". He has appeared across the US in concert, oratorio and opera. He has performed with Martina Arroyo's: Prelude to a Performance, Americolor Opera Alliance and Georgia State Opera Co. In concert and theater, Mr. Tucker was a featured vocalist in the Herndon Home Christmas Program and Jazz Series. Fox 5 News chose him to sing the jingle announcing 2010 season of American Idol. In 2011 he was cast as Elder Whitehead and the Second Wiseman in the True Colors Theatre production of *Nativity: A Gospel Celebration*. Also, Mr. Tucker was a guest artist for the Patients First Act lobbying session, held at the Georgia State Capitol. His recording credits include the musical dramatization of *Dangerous Liaisons* based on the novel by Pierre Choderlos de Laclos and with Indie R&B alternative artist Christine Horn.

act; Maestro Julius Williams, for suggesting I write the Songs of Harriet Tubman; Louise Toppin for recording them and for singing them to the world; Kishna Davis, the original Harriet; Sumayya Ali, Jasmine Muhammad and Sequina DuBose whose singing was essential in developing the characters in AOP workshops, Carole Cowan, Bob Lukomski, Susan Selligman, Dan Kempton, Vinnie Martucci, and everyone in the Music Department at SUNY New Paltz for supporting me through this process; my "Composer Mom," Lorraine Whittlesey, Ambassador "Aunt" Gloria Herndon, Priscilla Douglas, and Cecelia Brauer; my friends Angela Lawrence, Allison Upshaw, David Yarbrough, Brandon Keith Brown, Renee Baker, Marian Harrison Stephens, Leslie Stewart Kenney, for being part of my musical family and taking those late night questions. I thank tonight's performers, who have done such a fine job of bringing this work to life; Director Lemuel Wade, for your masterful interpretation of the piece; Maestro Leslie Dunner, for your dedication to mentoring composers; Aunt Carol, Uncle Rocky, Eva, Vivian, and Naja, for your support; and my mother, Renee Okoye, who, like Harriet's parents, brought me up to fear the Lord. Your prayers have sustained me. Most of all, I thank God Almighty, for allowing me to live to see this project through to completion. I thank all of you and everyone else who helped along the way.

## SYNOPSIS

HARRIET TUBMAN: WHEN I CROSSED THAT LINE TO FREEDOM is a two act folk opera for singers and chamber ensemble that tells of how a young girl born in slavery, becomes Harriet Tubman, the legendary Underground Railroad conductor and American hero.

## ACT I: In Slavery

Born into slavery, the young Araminta "Minty" Ross is sent away from the only home she's known, in order to work for various masters. Despite the melancholy of her upbringing, which includes watching three sisters being sold away on a chain gang, she sings about how 'very happy,' she is that her "family gets to stay together."

Community members chronicle her mishaps over the next several years as she is shuttled between various masters and as many maladies. This comes to a head when the teenaged Araminta is injured so badly, that she is sent home to heal from a coma. Araminta eventually recovers, having been nursed by her mother and her sister, Rachel, but she is left with sudden 'sleeping spells' as a reminder of what has taken place. Unable to sell her, and deeming her unfit for being hired out, Araminta's master decrees that she will learn the trade of lumbering from her father, a woodsman.

While waiting to escort the sleeping Araminta to her first day of forestry lessons, younger sister Rachel sings about her own desire to be married and have children. Araminta hears Rachel's song and encourages her to keep hope instead of fear. She and Araminta make a blood oath that "nothing but the grave will ever tear them apart." The sisters travel to a forest clearing where their father, Ben, and brothers serenade them with a mapping song that shows life's lessons through chopping wood. Having blossomed into a young woman through her years of tree chopping, Araminta changes her name to Harriet.

As the plantation residents gather on a Sunday, a free man named John Tubman woos Harriet into becoming his wife. John and Harriet make plans to work and wait while saving money to buy Harriet's freedom. The plantation erupts into near hysteria when the plantation owner dies and rumors of impending sale surface. Harriet steals away one night, in order to avoid being sold. Aware that she is defying John's direct order and risking life as she knew it, she leaves, singing a final farewell to the community she loved.

## ACT II: In Freedom

Philadelphia-based abolitionist William Still presides over a meeting of the Philadelphia Anti-Slavery Society, where those who are gathered recite the code words associated with their covert assisting of runaways. The meeting's guest speaker is Harriet, who has become an abolitionist in her own right over two years of being free.

Back at the plantation, the folks at home use the Slave Grapevine to send a message to Harriet, who has sent word about her intending to visit them. The family is delighted when Harriet returns; however John Tubman refuses to see his estranged wife. Instead, he tells her father and brothers that he has moved on. Harriet persuades some slaves to journey north with her, but Rachel declines the offer, as she is with child.

Over the years of Harriet's returning for rescue missions, and some slaves leaving the area without her help, the plantation is guarded more heavily. When news of another impending visit from Harriet reaches the plantation, Rachel is advised to run with her at any cost. Rachel balks at the advice, as she could never leave the plantation without her husband and children. When Harriet returns to the plantation, Ben greets her, but is wearing a blindfold. He explains this is because he always tells the truth, and wants to be able to say, he hadn't seen her, if asked. Rachel again declines to travel with Harriet, as her un-weaned baby could not survive the trip.

In Pennsylvania, William Still and the abolitionists are in an uproar due to the passing of the Fugitive Slave Act. The meeting calms as Still introduces would-be speaker, Harriet Tubman; however when she fails to appear, Ben and Rittia take the stage. Introducing themselves as Harriet's parents, they explain that she got them out just in time, and that while not in imminent danger, she is in need of prayers, as bounties on her head have reached \$20,000. During their prayer, the scene changes to a trail between Philadelphia and Maryland, where patter-rollers are in hot-pursuit of Harriet, who narrowly escapes capture.

Harriet returns to the plantation, hoping to rescue her sister, but Rachel is sick and dies in her arms. Though devastated, Harriet realizes that there is not even time sufficient to bury her sister. Instead, she takes one final group with her to the North. While on the trail, one tired runaway wants to turn back, she responds "I am Moses, the Liberator: You keep on going or die."

## AOP (American Opera Projects)

At the forefront of the contemporary opera movement for a quarter-century, AOP creates, develops and presents opera and music theatre projects collaborating with young, rising and established artists in the field. AOP has produced over 20 world premieres including most recently Lera Auerbach's *The Blind*, a co-production with Lincoln Center Festival 2013. Other notable premieres include Kimper/Persons' *Patience & Sarah* (1998), Stefan Weisman's *Darkling* (2006), Lee Hoiby's *This is the Rill Speaking* (2008), and Phil Kline's *Out Cold* (2012) at BAM. AOP-developed projects with premiere with collaborating companies: Gregory Spears's *Paul's Case* at Urban Arias (2013) and PROTOtype Festival (Jan 2014), Kamran Ince's *Judgment of Midas* at Milwaukee Opera Theatre (2013), Jack Perla's *Love/Hate* at ODC Theater with San Francisco Opera (2012), Stephen Schwartz's *Séance on a Wet Afternoon* at New York City Opera (2011), Tarik O'Regan's *Heart of Darkness* at London's Royal Opera House (2011), Jorge Martín's *Before Night Falls* at Fort Worth Opera (2010), *This Is the Rill Speaking* at Opera Memphis (2013).

**Upcoming:** AOP-commissioned *The Wanton Sublime and The Companion* at Roulette (April 2014) and *As One* at BAM, September 2014.

include Coalhouse in *Ragtime*, Joe in *Showboat*, Old Deuteronomy in *Cats*, Scar in *The Festival of the Lion King*, Ken in *Smokey Joe's Café*, Curtis in *Dreamgirls*, Specialist in *Tommy*, Young Horseman/Nugget in *Equus*, King of France in *Henry V*, Duke of Grenada in *Happy Hunting*, Olin Britt in *The Music Man*, Paul in *Kiss me, Kate* (directed by Diane Paulus), Top in *The Tenderland*, Henry in *Street Scene*, Bob in *The Old Maid and the Thief*, Balthazar in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, and led the national tour of *In the Mood* (a big band musical). Damian played the role of Smith in the Drama Desk Award-nominated production of *The Threepenny Opera*, and was nominated for an IRNE Award for Best Actor for his performance in *Ragtime*. An advocate for new American operas, he recently played Frederick Douglass in the new opera *Truth*, by composer Paula Kimper.

## Nkeiru Okoye (AOP Composer/Librettist)

Dr. Okoye is an established voice in new music. Her works have been performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra, Detroit Symphony, Virginia Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, Grand Rapids Symphony, New Jersey Symphony and countless regional orchestras. She has garnered numerous awards, commissions and commendations from MEET THE COMPOSER, the Virginia Symphony, MetLife Creative Connections, John Duffy Composer Institute, Composer's Collaborative, Inc., the Walt Whitman Project, Yvar Mikhashov Trust for New Music and the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP). After penning her first composition at age 13 and winning first prize at a national competition, she decided to pursue training as a composer. Okoye's best known works include Brooklyn Cinderella (2011, commissioned by American Opera Projects), *Songs of Harriet Tubman* (2007, on the CD Heart on a Wall), *Phillis Wheatley* (2005 recorded by the Moscow Symphony), *Voices Shouting Out* (2002, commissioned by the Virginia Symphony); *African Sketches* (2007-08, published in the Oxford University Press *Anthology of Piano Music of the African Diaspora*); and *The Genesis*. As a frequent guest lecturer and panelist, Okoye was a composer mentor at the University of Ghana for the 2005 International Society of Contemporary Music's World New Music Days. In 2006, she was the winner of a British American Project Fellowship. A native New Yorker of African American and Nigerian descent, Okoye was honored at Nigeria's 40under40 ceremony in Lagos. Dr. Okoye is a multi-talented polymath who designed the acclaimed "Canbie Collection", a series of multicultural, soft sculpture dolls, found in the Smithsonian and museums nationwide. She holds degrees from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and Rutgers University and currently serves on the composition faculty at the State University of New York at New Paltz.

## Scarlet Maressa Rivera (Irondale Ensemble Member)

M.F.A. in Performance and Interactive Media Arts (PIMA) at Brooklyn College, B.A. in Dance/Theater at Manhattanville College. For the last 8 years, Scarlet has been an actor, musician, mover, teacher, leader and producer with Irondale Ensemble Project and has played an important role in the opening and development of their venue, the Irondale Center in Fort Greene Brooklyn since its launch in 2008. She is a founding member of Band of Bicycles, a collective of musicians, artists, activists, and bicycle enthusiasts. She has also served on the board of Artistic Evolution, which devises and enacts social issue campaigns using art music performance and technology, since 2008. Scarlet considers herself an ambassador of ensemble theater practice and has been involved with The Network of Ensemble Theaters since 2005. As a professional collaborator, she has performed in a large range of places from internationally in Berlin and Manchester and to locally in the underground venues of NYC. Scarlet is currently thrilled to participate in the co-creation of a new ensemble, Letter of Marque Theater Co (LOM).

## Lucia Roderique (Irondale Ensemble Member)

Lucia is so honored to be making her debut with Irondale Ensemble Project. Favorite past productions include *Zorro: A New Musical*, *Sweeney Todd*, *The Lady in Red...* (Arts@renaissance) *The Toymaker*, *Barbarous Nights* (The Invisible Dog). Love to the family, the friends, and the pup. Carnegie Mellon musical theater grad.

## Ken Rothchild (Scenic Designer/Irondale Board Vice President)

Ken Rothchild has been a member of the Ensemble since 1983, designing scenery for all its productions, save the very first. He has had a rich and varied career, working as an Assistant on various Broadway productions (including *Cats* and *Precious Sons*); designing scenery for various regional theaters and opera companies (including *The Pioneer* in Salt Lake City, The Peterborough Players in New Hampshire, and the Berkshire Opera in Lenox, MA); art direction for film and television (including *Guiding Light* on CBS and *Novel Dreams* for WNET-NY/PBS); and lighting design for dance (including Kei Takei's *Moving Earth* at the Israel Festival in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv). A

of the BMI Workshop. Columbia University for creative writing. Improv: UCB. Voiceover: Mattel, Apple Computers, Houghton-Mifflin. Christiana plays the accordion, piano, ukulele and euphonium; she also teaches voice lessons. Austin, TX native. Member: AEA, SAG-AFTRA, Dramatists Guild. christianalittle.com

**Barbara Mackenzie-Wood** (Irondale Founder/Acting Coach)

Co-founder of the Irondale Ensemble Project. Irondale: More than 20 shows: *The Great American All-Star Traveling War Machine*, *9/11: Voices Unheard*, *Hamlet: Up Close*, *Brecht on Brecht*, *The Seagull*, *You Can't Win*, *The Good Woman of Setzuan*, *Ethan Frome*, *Our Country's Good*, *The Hostage*, *The Williams Project*: Drama Center: *You Can't Take It With You*; Long Warf: more than 20 shows; NJTF: *A Doll House*; *Caravan Theater: How To Make a Woman*; O'Neill Foundation: *Madeline Gimple*. FILMS: *Roommates*, *Backstreet Justice*. Carnegie Mellon: Head of Acting.

**Josie McAdam** (Irondale Associate Director)

Josie McAdam is a recent graduate of Manhattanville College. While attending, she stage managed the Fall 2009 Dance Concert and was Prop Master for the theatre department productions. She would like to thank Ken for seeing the potential in her and Jim and Terry for allowing her to be a part of this incredible ensemble.

**Anthony P. McGlaun** (AOP Robert/Runaway, tenor)

Mr. McGlaun is heralded for his clarity of tone, sensitive musicality and expressive singing. His repertoire encompasses opera, oratorio, lieder, art songs, musical theater and Negro spirituals. Mr. McGlaun's opera roles include Tamino in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, Nemorino in Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore* and Ferrando in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. Mr. McGlaun specializes in the music of African American composers and is sought after to perform these works. He has also performed small roles at Michigan Opera Theater and Lyric Opera of Chicago. Mr. McGlaun recently debuted as Sportin' Life at Skylight Music Theater in Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*. He also is a member of Associated Solo Artists. Mr. McGlaun currently splits his time between Chicago and New York as a choral singer as well as a soloist.

**Nicole Mitchell** (AOP Rittia "Ma" Ross, contralto)

Ms. Mitchell is a proud native of Brooklyn, New York. She has performed regularly with American Opera Projects (AOP) and The Walt Whitman Project extensively promoting the works of New York composers, notably their joint-commissioned song cycle *Songs from the F Train* composed by Gilda Lyons that she performed at Carnegie Hall's Zankel Hall. In 2013, Nicole performed in the New York premiere of Lera Auerbach's opera *The Blind* in an AOP & Lincoln Center Festival production. Ms. Mitchell has performed at Avery Fisher Hall and with New York City Opera and Sarasota Opera where she sang the role of Tituba in Robert Ward's Pulitzer Prize-Winning opera *The Crucible*, later reprising the role with Piedmont Opera (2012) at the request of the composer. As a Tanglewood Vocal Fellow (2008) she sang for Maestro James Levine and performed as one of the Six Ladies while covering the role of Leocadja Begbick in Kurt Weill's *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*. In February 2013, Nicole gave a recital at Brooklyn Navy Yard Center's BLDG 92 Museum. She was officially the second operatic voice heard at the Navy Yard since Eugenia Farrar's 1907 radio broadcast. This year, Nicole will appear in David Lang's work *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field* (Beth Morrison Projects 2014).

**Patrena Murray** (Irondale Ensemble Member)

Patrena joined Irondale and has been a company member since 1996. She attended SUNY Purchase's Conservatory training program from 2002-2006, where she earned her BFA. Some of her favorite roles have been Ermina in *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*, Pantalone in *The Green Bird*, Exeter in *Henry V*, Paulina in *The Winter's Tale*.

**Jim Niesen** (Irondale Artistic Director/Founder)

Co-founder who has guided the creative aspects of the company's work since 1983. He has directed most of the Irondale repertoire and conceived the scenarios and directed Irondale's radical reinterpretations of such classics as *Uncle Vanya*; *Peer Gynt*; *As You Like It*; *The Inspector General*; *Ubu Roi* and *Peter Pan*.

**Damian Norfleet** (AOP John Tubman, baritone)

Damian is a singing actor from Texas who now calls New York City home. Some of his past roles

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### Beverlix Jean-Baptiste (AOP Assistant Stage Manager)

Beverlix is a graduate of the William Esper Studio. Beverlix will appear in the pilot 'These People' airing this year. Partial Acting and Stage Credits Include: *Life Without Parole* (Steege/Shaeffer), *One Nation Under God* (Antoinette), *Conversation with a Kleagle* (Lurinda), *A Credit to His Race* (Ethel Highwarden) and *Tellin' Man* (Wilhelmina), *The Kingdom of Sam* (SM), *Gypsy Housing* (SM), *Nettles* (SM), *Horses in Central Park* (SM). Beverlix lives in New York working as an actor, writer, director, producer, and stage manager. Many thanks to all who attended this production, God Bless and Much Love.

### W. Wilson Jones (AOP Resident Production Stage Manager)

Mr. Jones has staged managed AOP's world premieres: Phil Kline's *Out Cold* (BAM Next Wave Festival), *This is the Rill Speaking*, *Romulus*, *Patience & Sarah*, the New York and Philadelphia premieres of *Memoirs of Uliana Rooney*, and workshops of *Heart of Darkness*, *Séance on a Wet Afternoon*, *Before Night Falls*, *Darkling*, *Tone Test*, *Paul's Case*, and *Harriet Tubman*, among many others. Other New York work includes the New York premiere of Mollicone's *Hotel Eden*, United States staged premiere of Milhaud's *Christophe Colomb* and the American premiere of Sirota's *The Clever Mistress*. Among the over 100 productions stage managed with the AVA Opera Theater, Opera Company of Philadelphia, and other Philadelphia area companies, are several PBS telecasts. Mr. Jones is a member of the Stage Managers' Association and is an Associate Curator on the faculty of the New York University Libraries.

### Prithi Kanakamedala (Irontale Dramaturg/ Historian).

Prithi serves as historian for In Pursuit of Freedom which examines the history of abolitionism and anti-slavery activism in nineteenth century Brooklyn. She is responsible for managing all research and is the author of the project's narrative which will inform In Pursuit of Freedom's exhibitions, website, education curricula, walking tours and Color between the Lines, Irontale's original theater production. Prithi is a nineteenth century scholar with an emphasis on the diasporic culture of the Black Atlantic and has worked with a number of regional theater companies, both as a dramaturge and in education outreach. She holds degrees from Oxford University and the University of Sussex, where she completed her Ph.D.

### Nolan Kennedy (Irontale Ensemble Member)

Nolan has a B.F.A. acting graduate of Illinois Wesleyan University. Nolan trained and then worked for many years at The Improv Playhouse. He has also studied with Keith Johnstone, ComedySportz Chicago, & the Gaiety School of Acting in Dublin, Ireland. Further education: internships with Strawdog Theatre Company & The Neo-Futurists, both in Chicago. With Irontale: *The Great American All-Star Traveling War Machine*, *Peter Pan*, *London Cries*, *Color Between the Lines*, *Julius Caesar*. He is a co-founder of a new ensemble, Letter of Marque Theater Co (LOM).

### Maria Knapp (Irontale Managing Director)

Upon graduating from Towson University with a MFA in Theater in 1996, Maria moved to New York to work with Irontale. Maria began as intern and has worn the hats of Stage Manager, Associate Director, and General Manager. Until August 2009, Maria also ran the administration of NET, the Network of Ensemble Theaters, a national service organization comprised of over 100 ensembles around the country.

### Tesia Kwarteng (AOP Chorus, mezzo-soprano)

Ms. Kwarteng is recent graduate from Manhattan School of Music with her Masters degree in Voice Performance. She was seen there as an ensemble member in the productions of *Aufstieg und fall der Stadt Mahagonny* and *The Ghosts of Versailles*, Mercedes in the opera scenes production of *Carmen* and as Sarah's Friend in *Ragtime*. She has been seen as La Zia Principessa in *Suor Angelica* with Opera on the Avalon, and with the Fort Worth Opera in the choruses of *The Mikado*, *Il Trovatore* and *L'Elisir D'Amore*. She sang the role of Maria in *Porgy and Bess* in Concert with Barn Arts Center for the Arts and sang in *Ask Your Mama: 12 Moods for Jazz* at the Apollo Theater in concert with Jessye Norman, Nneena Freelon, Roger Bonair-Agard, Meshell Ndegocello and the Manhattan School of Music Chamber Sinfonia under the baton of George Manahan. She is a recipient of the 2013 Legacy Award in the National Opera Association's vocal competition.

### Christiana Little (AOP Chorus, mezzo-soprano)

Christiana is a writer and performer. BM: Manhattan School of Music. Voice with Ron Raines. Member

been involved with numerous projects in development, including Assistant Conductor for their co-production of Lera Auerbach's *The Blind* with Lincoln Center Festival 2013, and music directing for their *Composers & the Voice* workshop series. She has worked with American Lyric Theater, Beth Morrison Projects (BMP), Center City Opera Theater, Gotham Chamber Opera, HERE, OPERA America, Opera on Tap, VisionIntoArt, and new music ensemble Two Sides Sounding. Current projects include *The World Is Round* (Ripe Time/BAM), David Lang and Mac Wellman's *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field* (BMP), Rachel Peters' Companionship (AOP) and Stefan Weisman and David Cote's *The Scarlet Ibis* (PROTOTYPE 2015). Mila holds degrees from the Manhattan School of Music and Elizabethtown College, and lives in Brooklyn. Having been part of HARRIET TUBMAN since its first workshops at AOP, she is honored to be part of the world premiere chamber production before you tonight. milahenry.com

**Amanda Hinkle** (Irondale Director of Education)

Amanda's first experience with Irondale was stage-managing a bi-lingual French/English production of *Macbeth* with soundpainting ensembles Strike Anywhere (NYC) and ANITYA (Paris). Her work with Strike Anywhere as Education Coordinator, event manager, and Teaching Artist has kept her close to the Irondale Family, and she is thrilled to become part of both. At Roundabout Theatre Company, Amanda served as Education Associate for School-Based Programs, managing school-wide and classroom partnerships in all five boroughs. She has also worked administratively for NYSCA's Empire State Partnership program and Brooklyn Youth Company. Amanda is a graduate of University of Minnesota Duluth (Theatre & Art), and a member of the American Alliance of Theatre and Education.

**Briana Elyse Hunter** (AOP Rachel Ross, soprano)

Ms. Hunter, born in Baltimore, MD, received her BA from Davidson College (NC) and MM at Manhattan School of Music. Previous credits include *Cendrillon* (Cendrillon), *Die Fledermaus* (Ida/Prince Orlofsky), *Iolantha* (Laura), *Summer and Smoke* (Rosa Gonzales), *Ragtime* (Sarah), and *The Ghosts of Versailles* (Woman w/ baby). She has worked under the direction of The Royal Shakespeare Company as both actress and vocal soloist in an original production *For Every Passion Something* that premiered at the Fringe Festival in Scotland. In addition to being awarded 2nd Alternate in MSM's Eisenberg-Fried Concerto Competition, she was a semi-finalist in Opera Theater Pittsburgh's Mildred Miller Competition, and a Finalist in the Kurt Weill Foundation's Lotte Lenya Competition. She has been on the rosters of I SING BEIJING and Sarasota Opera, and looks forward to joining Music Academy of the West this summer in their production of *Carmen* as the title character.

**Clinton Ingram** (AOP Ben "Pa" Ross, tenor)

Mr. Ingram has appeared with The Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, Tulsa Opera, Calgary Opera, Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera, Teatro Real in Madrid, Spain and the Bregenz Festspiele in Bregenz, Austria. His operatic repertoire includes principal roles in Bizet's *Carmen*, Verdi's *Aida*, Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*, Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman*, Massenet's *Herodiade*, and Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*. He was featured as a principal in four operatic world premieres including *Angel Levine* by Elie Seigmeister at the 92nd Street Y in New York City, *X* by Anthony Davis at the American Theater Festival in Philadelphia and N.Y. City Opera, *The Mummy* by George Quincey at the Musical Theater Lab on 42nd Street, and *Three Willies* by Leroy Jenkins at The Kitchen Theater in New York City. Other premieres include *Coincidents* by Leroy Jenkins, *Katrina- Voices of the Lost* by Michael Sahl, and the cantata *Martin Luther King (His Dream Lives On)* by David Blake.

**Ernest Jackson** (AOP Sam Green/Reverend Still, tenor)

Mr. Jackson, a native of Philadelphia, made his mainstage debut as Mingo in Opera Delaware's production of Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*. He is a recipient of the Matinee Musical Club Vocal Scholarship Award and NAACP ACT-SO Vocal Competition Award. He has essayed with ConcertOPERA, Philadelphia the roles of Dr. Blind in Strauss' *Die Fledermaus*, Sailor in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, Corporal in Donizetti's *La Fille du Regiment* and Lorenzo in Auber's *Fra Diavolo*. In 2010, Mr. Jackson covered the role of Robbins in New Jersey State Opera's production of *Porgy and Bess*. In March 2014, Mr. Jackson will sing the role of Aaron Henry in *Dark River, the Fannie Lou Hamer Story* by Mary Watkins with Mount Holyoke College. He will return to Cincinnati Opera this summer for upcoming productions of Bizet's *Carmen* and Kevin Putts' *Silent Night*.

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Paul Carlos, Principal

**Potion: In Pursuit of Freedom Interactive Designer for Exhibitions**

Jared Schiffman, Principal-in-charge

**Lord Cultural Resources: Interpretive Planner for In Pursuit of Freedom**

Joy Bailey, Senior Consultant

**In Pursuit of Freedom Curriculum Developer:** Tracee Worley

**In Pursuit of Freedom Project Evaluator:** Ellen Leerburger

**In Pursuit of Freedom Website Writer:** Suzanne Spellen

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Samantha Gibson, Research Assistant

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## **Brooklyn Historical Society**

Founded in 1863, Brooklyn Historical Society (BHS) is a nationally recognized urban history center dedicated to preserving and encouraging the study of Brooklyn's extraordinary 400-year history. Located in Brooklyn Heights and housed in a magnificent landmark building designed by George Post and opened in 1881, today's BHS is a cultural hub for civic dialogue, thoughtful engagement and community outreach. Brooklyn Historical Society connects the past to the present and makes the vibrant history of Brooklyn tangible, relevant, and meaningful for today's diverse communities, and for generations to come.

[www.brooklynhistory.org](http://www.brooklynhistory.org)

## **Irondale Ensemble Project**

COLOR BETWEEN THE LINES is an original work devised by the Irondale ensemble and developed as part of the borough's first public history project to explore the abolitionist movement in Brooklyn. In 2013 an interactive exhibit dedicated to telling more of the In Pursuit of Freedom story, will open at the Irondale Center.

[www.irondale.org](http://www.irondale.org)

## **Weeksville Heritage Center**

Weeksville Heritage Center (WHC) documents and preserves the history of the intentional free 19th century African American community of Weeksville. WHC stewards the three Hunterfly Road Houses, rare domestic structures dating from 1840 – 1883 and original to historic Weeksville. WHC also leverages the history of Weeksville through educational and cultural programming that engage audiences of all ages with African American history and traditions.

In 2013 Weeksville Heritage Center's new Education and Cultural Arts Building will open to the public. This impressive 19,000 square foot Gold LEED certified building, is being built in partnership with the Mayor of New York City, the Brooklyn Borough President and the Brooklyn Delegation of the New York City Council. It will transform WHC into a cultural campus that incorporates the Historic Hunterfly Road Houses and offers year-round public programming in addition to its current historic house tours, educational programs, and summer arts and culture programming.

[www.weeksvillesociety.org](http://www.weeksvillesociety.org)

*Everything*) and Apollo Opera (*Il pianista disgraziato*). Ms. Fuerst has appeared with American Opera Projects, Opera Moderne, the Resonant Bodies Festival, and the Institute & Festival for Contemporary Performance. Ms. Fuerst is a busy recitalist in NYC, and she is a frequent guest of noted contemporary chamber ensemble Lunatics at Large. Ms. Fuerst holds Master's and Bachelor's degrees from the Manhattan School of Music.

### **Michael-David Gordon** (Irondale Ensemble Member)

With Irondale: *Julius Caesar, Color Between the Lines, Henry V, Murrow's Boys, Alice...Alice...ALICE!, London Cries, Peter Pan, The Great American All-Star Traveling War Machine, 9/11: Voices Unheard, Hamlet: Up Close, Wasted; In the Jungle of the City, The Pope and the Witch, Outside the Law, Comedy of Errors, The Dr. Seuss Show, Brecht on Brecht, The Murals of Rockefeller Center, Much Ado About Nothing, Degenerate Art, The Seagull, The Bundle, Ghost Sonata, Danton's Death, The Hostage, The Mother, Andrew Carnegie presents The Jew of Malta, A Family Affair, You Can't Win, St. Joan of the Stockyards, Antigone*

### **Terry Greiss** (Irondale Executive Director/Actor/Founder)

Co-founder of the Irondale Ensemble Project. In addition to performing in over thirty roles with the company, he created the dual role of Walt Disney/Walter Cronkite in *Flying Underground-the Abbie Hoffman Play*, played J. Edgar Hoover in another Irondale original *Outside The Law*, and played The Professor in Irondale's telling of the Infamous Nazi Entarte Kunst Exhibition: *Degenerate Art*. Terry was also in *Three Sisters* at the Cincinnati Playhouse under the direction of Broadway veteran John Doyle.

### **Kyle Guglielmo** (AOP Brodess/Overseer/Pitts, baritone)

Kyle most recently premiered the role of Calvin Griffith in Daniel Sonenberg's *The Summer King* during Opera America's New Works Forum. Kyle was also featured on The Phoenix Concert Series' AOP 25 - performing highlights from the past seasons of AOP's Composers & the Voice program. Other recent performances include Le Dancaire in the Westfield Symphony's concert version of *Carmen* and Dr. Pill in Sarasota Opera's world premiere production of Daron Hagen's *Little Nemo in Slumberland*. Kyle's engagements during the 2011-2012 season included Marco (*Gianni Schicchi*) with the Princeton Festival and an apprenticeship with Sarasota Opera, where he covered Le Dancaire and performed Lillas Pastia (*Carmen*). In the spring of 2011 Kyle starred as Curly in the UNC School of the Arts presentation of *Oklahoma!*, which was filmed in HD and broadcast on North Carolina Public Television. In 2008 Kyle performed Giuseppe Naccarelli in the opera house premiere of Adam Guettel's *The Light in the Piazza* with Piedmont Opera.

### **Celia Hatton** (AOP Musician)

Ms. Hatton is enjoying a career that takes her around the world. As a founding member of Shattered Glass Chamber Ensemble, she has recorded for Warner Bros., toured the U.S., and held education workshop residencies. She has appeared in concert at Carnegie Hall, Jazz at Lincoln Center in collaboration with Paquito D'Rivera, Apollo Theatre, Merkin Hall, and the Vatican. She can be heard on the 2012 film *Robot* and Frank, and the modern movie remake of *Annie* coming to theatres in December 2014. She performed on NBC's *Saturday Night Live* as well as in a piano quartet representing *From The Top* on the *Today Show*. Ms. Hatton received her Master's Degree from Manhattan School of Music where she studied with Karen Dreyfus on full scholarship as the recipient of a William Randolph Hearst Scholarship. She also studied with Kim Kashkashian at New England Conservatory receiving a Presidential Distinction Award Scholarship.

### **Hollis Headrick** (Irondale Drums and Percussion/Irondale Board Chairman)

Hollis has performed and recorded with Irondale for over 20 years in the US and Russia. His last performance at Irondale was in a joint opera production with the Walter Thompson Orchestra and the Tours Soundpainting Orchestra. He plays with the Walter Thompson Orchestra in the US and Europe, most recently at last fall's Soundpainting Festival in Paris, France. He performs regularly with the Axiom Addicts and Karl Berger's Improvisers Orchestra. He has performed at Lincoln Center, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Knitting Factory, The Kitchen, and ShapeShifter Lab. He is also a consultant for arts and philanthropic organizations and was formerly the director of the Weill Music Institute at Carnegie Hall. He is the Chairman of the Board of Irondale.

### **Mila Henry** (AOP Assistant Conductor/Pianist)

Mila is a New York-based pianist who specializes in contemporary opera, musical theater, and chamber music. She is Resident Music Director with American Opera Projects (AOP), where she has

the Lyric Opera of Chicago in Fall 2008, and the 2002 Emmy-nominated broadcast at Lincoln Center. In Spring 2009 Mr. Carter sang with Jessye Norman in a Carnegie Hall production of Duke Ellington's *Sacred Works* presented at the historic cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. He has performed the roles of conjurers Simon & Luddud in Scott Joplin's opera *Treemonisha* as well as the role of Parson Alltalk. Other roles include Scarpia in Puccini's *Tosca* and Figaro in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*.

**Ras Dia** (AOP Chorus, baritone)

A recent graduate of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Ras has performed and recorded Trinculo in Lee Hoiby's *The Tempest* for Naxos Records, appeared as Don Giovanni with Barefoot Opera, Marchese d'Obigny (*La Traviata*) at Ateneo Internazionale della lirica (Sulmona, Italy), Marco (*Gianni Schicchi*) and Melchior (*Amahl and the Night Visitors*) at Purchase Opera, as well as Morales (*Carmen*) and Pritschitsch (*Merry Widow*) with Janiec Opera Company at the Brevard Music Center. His concert work includes Roger in both the London and Paris premieres of Jonathan Pontier's *Domestic Scenes*, *Die schöne Magelone* with Graham Johnson's Brahms Lecture Recital series, and Baritone soloist in T.J. Anderson's *Slavery Documents 2* with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra under Robert Spano.

**Leslie B. Dunner** (AOP Conductor)

Dr. Dunner most recently conducted Chicago's South Shore Opera Company's production of William Grant Still's *Troubled Island*, rated Chicago's best classical music/opera moment of 2013. Former Music Director of the Joffrey Ballet, Resident Conductor of the Detroit Symphony, and former Assistant Conductor to Kurt Masur at the New York Philharmonic, Mr. Dunner conducted at the Opening Ceremonies for the 2011 International Pan American Games in Mexico, South Africa's 2010 FIFA World Cup Games, and Mzilikazi Khumalo's opera, *Princess Magogo* with Opera Africa at Den Norske Opera in Oslo, Norway. With Dance Theatre of Harlem, Dr. Dunner conducted int'l tours to the Salzburg and Tivoli Festivals, the former Soviet Union, and their historic 1992 tour to South Africa, performing for Nelson Mandela. Their 1988 tour included a gala performance for Diana, Princess of Wales. Dunner has guest conducted in Canada, Mexico, Venezuela, Russia, Estonia, South Africa, Italy, and Spain. Ballet engagements include ABT, New York City, Washington, Orlando and Madison Ballets, London's Royal Ballet, Birmingham's Royal Ballet, Michigan Opera Theatre, and The South African Ballet Theatre. His two most recent recordings, *Five Movements in Color* by Mary Watkins, and the groundbreaking *Symphony in E minor* and *Piano Concerto in One Movement* by Florence Price, are available from Albany records.

**Patrice P. Eaton** (AOP Caroline, mezzo-soprano)

Ms. Eaton completed her young artist training with two seasons at the Caramoor International Music Festival. While at Caramoor, Ms. Eaton also covered the roles of Hedwige in *Guillaume Tell* (French) and Little Buttercup in H.M.S. *Pinafore*. Her roles include debuts as Mrs. Nolan in *The Medium* with Chelsea Opera, Marcellina in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Marthe Schwerlein in *Faust* with Amore Opera, and Carmen with Opera Classique. This upcoming season, Ms. Eaton will be making her debut as Adalgisa in *Norma* with Hudson Opera Theater. Ms. Eaton's recent concert engagements include soloist with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra in Marsalis' *Abyssinian: A Gospel Celebration*, the mezzo-soprano Soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Ode to Joy and Tchaikovsky's Ode to Joy with the Lehigh University Choral Arts and Handel's *Messiah* with New York's Abyssinian Baptist Church Orchestra and Choir. She has sung at the Edinburgh International Festival, Athens Epidaurus Festival, Vienna Arts Festival, and the Queens College Chamber Music Live Series.

**Karen Flood** (AOP Costume Design)

Ms. Flood has a BFA in painting from the School of Visual Arts in NYC. She owned a vintage shop in the east village from 1984-2004. She began costuming out of the shop, and continues to do so. Recent projects include the film *The Big Bad* (Gottaenk production), *Tyson vs. Ali* (PS 122/3LD Production; Coil Festival), and the NAACL (North American Cultural Lab) productions of *Struck*, *Shakespeare's Will*, and *The Weather Project*.

**Hannah Fuerst** (AOP Chorus, soprano)

Ms. Fuerst is a sought-after singer of operatic and chamber music. Favorite operatic roles include Blöndchen (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), Soeur Constance (*Les Dialogues des Carmelites*), Lady with a Hand Mirror (*Postcard from Morocco*), and Stravinsky's Rossignol. An active proponent of new music, Ms. Fuerst has created leading roles with the Encompass New Opera Theatre (*The Theory of*

**Harriet Tubman: When I Crossed That Line to Freedom is supported**, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council and a generous grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Art Works. The 2014 presentation of Harriet Tubman was also supported by New York City Council Discretionary Funding (Council member Letitia James, sponsor) and a New York State Legislative Initiative Grant (Assembly Member Hakeem Jeffries, sponsor).

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## **Bios**

### **Maurice Belle** (AOP Musician)

Maurice is an accomplished and versatile double bassist who has performed at major venues throughout the United States and abroad. In October of 2010, he had the opportunity to tour with the Sphinx Virtuosi (formerly known as Sphinx Chamber Orchestra) as the principal bassist around the Midwest. He has also attended the Spoleto USA in Charleston, South Carolina and National Repertory Orchestra as co-principal bass in Breckenridge, Colorado. In the summer of 2009, he attended the Pacific Music Festival in Japan where he performed in Sapporo, Osaka, and Tokyo. While in Japan, he worked with major conductors such as Christoph Eschenbach and Michael Tilson Thomas and performed with members of the Vienna Philharmonic. A frequent participant in several New York-based orchestras, Maurice performed at Carnegie Hall numerous times is a member of the Soulful Symphony (based in Baltimore), Distinguished Concerts International New York (which performs at Lincoln Center & Carnegie Hall), Harlem Symphony Orchestra. Maurice earned his undergraduate degree in double bass performance from The Manhattan School of Music and a graduate diploma from the Juilliard School.

### **Charlene Bishop** (AOP Musician)

Charlene began her violin studies at the age of six and was accepted into the Music Advancement Program (MAP) at the Juilliard School. She furthered her studies at the Mannes Pre-College and College of Music with Ann Setzer where she received her BA in Violin Performance and participated at Kinhaven and Fredonia summer music camps as well as the prestigious Meadowmount music camp. Through the years, Charlene has performed at the Gewandhaus in Leipzig, Germany, Fiddlefest in Zurich, Switzerland, the Kennedy Center, Madison Square Garden and Yankee Stadium and has collaborated with artists such as Arnold Steinhardt, Wyclef Jean, Madonna, N'Sync, Beres Hammond in Jamaica, and many more. Charlene currently freelances throughout the New York City area and teaches at Opus 118-Harlem School of Music (where she is an alumni) and the Thurnauer School of Music.

### **Hilarie Blumenthal** (Irondale Costume Designer)

Hilarie has been associated with the Ensemble since 1986, and was the company's lighting designer and costume designer for many years. During that time she also designed for Berkshire Opera, Ensemble Studio Theater, and Peterborough Players amongst many others. She "retired" from show business in 1998 to raise her two daughters; shortly thereafter she began a career as a free-lance jewelry designer, creating unique gold pieces featuring antique stones and "previously loved" diamonds. During that time she has continued to attend the Company's annual retreat at Camp Winnebago; and to consult as needed; she first returned as costume design consultant on Irondale's *Murrow's Boys*. She is a graduate of Bennington College.

### **Janinah Burnett** (AOP Harriet Tubman, soprano)

Ms. Burnett is a rising star whose talents have allowed her to grace the stages of Broadway, the Metropolitan Opera, and many of those in between. She played the role of Mimí in Baz Luhrmann's hit show *La Bohème on Broadway* for which she won an "Ovation Award" from the Los Angeles Theater Alliance. Other performances include, Bess in Cape Town Opera's production of *Porgy and Bess* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, Leila in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* with Opera Carolina and Syracuse Opera, Violetta in *La Traviata* with Opera Columbus, Micaela in *Carmen* with Michigan Opera Theater and Arizona Opera, as well as Margru in *Amistad* at the Spoleto Festival USA to name a few. Ms. Burnett joined the roster of the Metropolitan Opera in 2008 participating in the operas *Carmen*, *La Bohème*, *Iphigénie en Tauride*, and *Le Nozze di Figaro* and made her MET debut as Bianca in *La Rondine* in January of 2013. Ms. Burnett joins the MET roster this season for *The Enchanted Island*. Ms. Burnett is also well known for her versatility. She is an original cast member of Marion J. Caffey's *3 Mo' Divas* which premiered at the San Diego Repertory Theater and has recently performed her own sold out jazz show at the Metropolitan Room backed by an all-female Jazz ensemble. Upcoming performances include Margurite in *Faust* with Toledo Opera and Bess in *Porgy and Bess* with the Princeton Festival.

### **Charles D. Carter** (AOP Chorus, bass-baritone)

Mr. Carter most recently sang with the Lyric Opera of Chicago in their critically acclaimed 2012 production of *Showboat*. He sang in *Porgy and Bess* with The New Jersey State Opera in May 2010,