



About Nkeiru Okoye



Composer Nkeiru Okoye creates works that are “emotionally charged and musically sublime,” according to the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*. A native New Yorker of African-American and Nigerian descent, her music is a patchwork quilt stitching together diverse musical styles.

She developed her first opera, *HARRIET TUBMAN: When I Crossed that Line to Freedom* (2014), with American Opera Projects with the support of a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. A of the 2016 Chicago premiere proclaimed, “The music is irresistible, invigorating, and vivid, building to an unforgettable and thrilling conclusion. It is a great American opera.”

Dr. Okoye is the recipient of a 2018 NYSCA Individual Artist Composer Commissioning Grant, a 2017 Opera America Female Composer Commissioning Grant, and a 2016 Opera America Female Composer Discovery Grant. She is also a winner of Houston Grand Opera’s “Song of Houston” competition. Current commissions include *Tales from the Briar Patch* for American Opera Projects, and an orchestral work for the Charlotte Symphony, in celebration of the city’s 250th anniversary.

Her orchestral works have been performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra, Detroit Symphony, Virginia Symphony Orchestra, and more. Her recently premiered *Invitation to A Die-In* (2017) pays tribute to unarmed African American men who have been killed by police officers, and was commissioned by Mt. Holyoke College Orchestra. Her most frequently performed orchestral work, *Voices Shouting Out* (2002), was commissioned by the Virginia Symphony Orchestra. Her narrated orchestral showcase *PHILLIS WHEATELY* (2005) was commissioned by the Boston Landmarks Orchestra and recorded by the Moscow Symphony.

She is a current John Duffy Institute for New Opera Fellow, a composer in the “First Glimpse” program of American Opera Projects, and a former Resident Artist of American Lyric Theater’s Composer Librettist Development Program. She has garnered additional commendations from Meet the Composer, MetLife Creative Connections, Composer’s Collaborative, Inc., the Walt Whitman Project, and the Yvar Mikhaylov Trust for New Music. Dr. Okoye is a board member of Composers Now. She holds degrees from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and Rutgers University.