

LARA DOWNES

NEW VISIONS/NEW WORKS FOR PIANO AND ORCHESTRA

Honored as 2022 Classical
Woman of the Year by
Performance Today

"Lara Downes is a perfect artist for our time, a champion of new and neglected music, an extraordinary communicator, a passionate advocate for our art form."

- Maestra JoAnn Falletta

RHAPSODY IN BLUE @100 (reimagined)

In 2024, Lara celebrates the centenary of George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* with a radical new arrangement by the young Puerto Rican composer Edmar Colón, honoring Gershwin's vision of what he called "a musical kaleidoscope of America" with a new orchestration that reflects a century of immigration and transformation, and captures the multicultural sound of America in our own time. This exuberant new take on a beloved American classic launches Lara's multi-year project THIS LAND, a kaleidoscopic collection of new works by composers who represent many different versions of being and becoming American.



THIS LAND: *New Works by*

Billy Childs	Kian Ravaei
Arturo O'Farrill	Quinn Mason
Jimmy Lopez-Bellido	Viet Cuong
Christopher Tin	Iván Enrique Rodríguez

A commissioning opportunity for 2024 through 2026

DECLARATION

July 4, 2026 marks the 250th anniversary of the United States, founded on the principle that its citizens should be guaranteed the unalienable rights of "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness". Lara Downes observes this anniversary with a triptych of three new works for piano and orchestra that reflect on the complicated history of that audacious and elusive promise, and express the hope for its fulfillment.

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LARA DOWNES

Classical Pianist

"Expect glamour with substance"
- WQXR, New York's Classical Music Station

American pianist Lara Downes is an iconoclast and trailblazer whose dynamic work as a sought-after performer, a Billboard Chart-topping recording artist, an NPR personality, curator and arts advocate positions her as a cultural visionary on the national scene.

Called "an explorer whose imagination is fired by bringing notice to the underrepresented and forgotten" by the Log Journal, Lara seeks inspiration from the legacies of history and collective memory to create a series of acclaimed performances that serve as gathering spaces for her listeners to find common ground and shared experience.

Downes' recent and upcoming onstage adventures include guest appearances with the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Boston Pops, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Louisville Orchestra, Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, LA Master Chorale, and others.

Repertoire Highlights Include:

- Florence Price: *Concerto in One Movement*
- George Gershwin: *Rhapsody in Blue* (new arrangement by Edmar Colón)
- Billy Strayhorn/Chris Walden: *A Lovesome Thing*
- Duke Ellington: *New World A-Comin'*
- Adolphus Hailstork: *Piano Concerto #2, The Peaceable Kingdom* (for Lara Downes)
- Margaret Bonds: *Credo*

"Lara and I hit it off instantly! She is a thoughtful artist and a wonderful collaborator. Most importantly, she is a terrific human being."

Maestro Thomas Wilkins

LARA DOWNES with BRIAN STOKES MITCHELL

A NEW WORLD A-COMIN' - THE BIRTH OF THE AMERICAN SOUND

A musical ray of Hope."- NBC News

Broadway legend and two-time Tony Award Winning **Brian Stokes Mitchell** and trailblazing pianist Lara Downes join together for a revelatory evening of music and conversation reflecting on the transformative expansion of music from the first half of the 20th century. Celebrate the musical legacies of George Gershwin, Duke Ellington and other pivotal composers who shaped the sound and spirit of American music as we know it today.

In a project originated with the Boston Pops, the artists perform beloved classics including "Sophisticated Lady", "Lush Life", and "Rhapsody in Blue", as well as rare musical gems from a Golden Age of American music.

