

KENTUCKY OPERA

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Kentucky Opera Names Ben Robinson as General Director and CEO

Acclaimed director and arts leader returns to roots to lead company's next chapter

LOUISVILLE, KY – [November 11, 2025] – Kentucky Opera has appointed Ben Robinson as its new General Director and CEO following a national search. An accomplished singer, stage director, and arts executive, Robinson brings creative vision, operational expertise, and a deep commitment to opera as a community-building force. He assumes the role on November 11.

Most recently, Robinson was General Director of Anchorage Opera and Managing Director of Lyric Fest in Philadelphia. In Anchorage, Robinson led a season that expanded community programming, forged new artistic partnerships, and closed with a six-figure operating surplus. He launched a regional artist development program, attracted new audiences through immersive, site-specific productions, and secured one of the largest endowment gifts in company history.

Robinson's leadership has emphasized opera's role in fostering community dialogue. At Anchorage Opera, he created a popular concert conversation series that brought together diverse community voices to explore social issues through music. His commitment to building meaningful community collaborations aligns closely with Kentucky Opera's mission, particularly its *Awakenings* series, which uses opera to bridge divides and spark conversation across the region.

For Robinson, the appointment is also a homecoming. He began his professional career as a Kentucky Opera Studio Artist, performing on the stage he will now lead. His mother is from Kentucky, and extended family live throughout the region.

Robinson and his husband, bass-baritone Michael Scarcelle, are relocating to Louisville.

"Returning to Kentucky Opera feels like coming full circle. This company shaped my path as an artist, and I'm honored to help shape its future. My husband Michael and I are excited to put down roots in Louisville, a city with tremendous energy and creative spirit. Opera builds bridges and fosters dialogue, and Kentucky Opera is uniquely positioned to lead that work here."

Robinson brings more than a decade of leadership across artistic and administrative roles. His directing work, spanning traditional and contemporary repertoire, is recognized for emotional depth and innovative storytelling. At Kentucky Opera, where executive and artistic leadership are combined, his dual background positions him to lead with both creative vision and operational strength.

"Ben brings a rare combination: artistic insight paired with organizational acumen, all rooted in genuine commitment to community," said Matthew Hamel, Chair of the Board of Trustees of Kentucky Opera. "His return is a homecoming for him and an exciting new chapter for this company and a thriving Kentuckiana arts community."

Robinson's appointment reflects Kentucky Opera's commitment to producing powerful, relevant work that connects people, celebrates diverse voices, and enriches cultural life in Kentucky and beyond.

Robinson will deliver the on-stage introduction of the company's season-opening production, *La traviata*, on November 11 and 13 at the Kentucky Opera Center for Cultural Health. Tickets and additional information for all events are available at [KYOpera.org](https://kyopera.org) or call 502.584.4500.

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About Kentucky Opera

For more than 70 years, Kentucky Opera has enriched the cultural and artistic landscape of the region. Designated the State Opera in 1982, Kentucky Opera is a producing company dedicated to sparking discovery, joy, and connection through the shared experience of music and theatre. We believe that the power of the arts invites a more empathetic, compassionate, and just community. For more information, visit [KYOpera.org](https://kyopera.org).