

MICHELLE ROFRANO

C O N D U C T O R

Michelle Rofrano is an Italian-American conductor with a keen interest in the intersection of art, storytelling, and social activism. An avid opera conductor, upcoming engagements include guest conducting *Cenerentola* with Toledo Opera, *L'Amant Anonyme* (Bologne) with Madison Opera, *Turandot* with Fargo Moorhead Opera, and a double bill of *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* (Poulenc) and *The Seven Deadly Sins* (Weill) with the Curtis Institute of Music.

The past several seasons have seen Rofrano lead productions of *La Traviata* and *Cendrillon* (Viardot) with City Lyric Opera; *Amelia al Ballo* (Menotti) with The Juilliard School, *The Turn of the Screw* with the Curtis Institute, *The Fall of the House of Usher* (Glass) with Orpheus PDX, *Don Quichotte at Camacho's Wedding* (Telemann) with Opera Saratoga, *Trouble in Tahiti* with The Glimmerglass Festival and Westminster Choir College, and a new production of Tchaikovsky's *The Queen of Spades* created by Francesca Zambello.

Rofrano has served as cover conductor for productions of *Dream of the Red Chamber* (Sheng/Hwang) with San Francisco Opera; the world premiere of *Proximity* (Adams/ Roumain/ Shaw) with Lyric Opera of Chicago; *La bohème* and *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Florida Grand Opera; *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *La Traviata*, *Blue* (Tesori/Thompson), and *Silent Night* (Puts/Campbell) with The Glimmerglass Festival; *Eugene Onegin* and *Salome* with Spoleto Festival USA; *L'elisir d'amore* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* with Juilliard Opera; *Man of La Mancha* with Opera Saratoga; and *La bohème* with Opera Birmingham.

While Rofrano has a particular passion for Italian opera, she also enjoys exploring contemporary and innovative projects. In 2022 she conducted the meditative opera *Song of the Ambassadors* (Skye/Allado-McDowell) at Alice Tully Hall, a groundbreaking opera in development that interweaves music, science, and technology. In 2023, Rofrano was Music Director for recording project *No One Is Forgotten: An Immersive Opera*, the first opera designed for 3D Spatial Audio adapted from the original play by Winter Miller, co-composed by Paola Prestini and Sxip Shirey. The recording will premiere on Dallas Opera.TV in fall 2023. Rofrano is also passionate about working with the upcoming generation of classical musicians and joined National Sawdust for the Juilliard Blueprint Bridge Fellowship Concert in December 2022, conducting five world premieres by Juilliard student composers.

A Taki Alsop Conducting Fellowship Mentee, Rofrano enjoys performing orchestral repertoire in addition to opera and has led concerts with the Spoleto Festival USA orchestra, CJMEA youth orchestra, and The Little Orchestra Society. Her recording of Fanny Mendelssohn's *Overture in C* from the Spoleto Festival's *Classical Showcase* in 2019 has been featured multiple times on the classical music radio program *Performance Today*, reaching a national audience.

In response to the US federal immigration ban of 2017, Rofrano organized and led *#NoBan*, an orchestral protest concert with an aptly-named ad-hoc ensemble PROTESTRA to raise donations for refugee aid organizations. In 2020, PROTESTRA formally incorporated as a non-profit with the mission of raising awareness about various social justice issues through the lens of classical music. The past several PROTESTRA seasons have included projects and performances such as a *Concert for Mental Health*, *Concert Against Gun Violence*, *Breaking the Bias: A Concert for Women's History Month*, *Concert for Climate Action*, and *Concert for Black Lives*. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the group created a virtual orchestral rendition of

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Florence Price's *Symphony No. 4 mvt II: Andante Cantabile*, the first-ever virtual performance of a Price symphony, which reached over 25,000 viewers online.

In addition to her recent work as the founder and Artistic Director of PROTESTRA, Rofrano is also a co-creator of Girls Who Conduct, an initiative that mentors young women and non-binary musicians in an effort to achieve gender parity on the conducting podium.

Rofrano completed graduate conducting studies at the Peabody Conservatory and counts Marin Alsop, Joseph Colaneri, Gustav Meier, and Markand Thakar among her mentors.