AS ONE
Music by Laura Kaminsky
Libretto by Mark Campbell and Kimberly Reed
Conducted by Robert Wood | Directed by Mary Birnbaum
Featuring: Wes Mason (baritone), Blythe Gaissert (mezzo-soprano), and Fry Street Quartet

Saturday, January 27, 7:30 p.m. & Sunday, January 28, 2:00 p.m. | Talk-backs follow each performance
Michael and Ginger Frost Production Arts Building
712 E. 18th St., Kansas City, MO 64108
Seating is General Admission. Tickets are just $25.
Tickets on sale now at kcopera.org or by calling 816.471.7344
*$20 Group Rate tickets available for groups of 10 or more | Call 816.802.6079 for group orders

As One premiered in September of 2014 with American Opera Projects, in association with The Brooklyn Academy of Music at the BAM Fisher Center in New York. New York Classical Review said, “As One is everything we hope for in a contemporary opera; topical, poignant, daring, and beautifully written.” The New York Times said, “As One forces you to think, simultaneously challenging preconceptions and inspiring empathy... [with] winning humor and a satisfying emotional arc.” Subsequently, As One has become one of the most frequently produced contemporary operas nationwide.

CLICK HERE for more info about the opera | CLICK HERE to download the libretto
Journey to Self — An AS ONE Open House
Saturday, January 13 | 1:00 pm Reception; 2:00 pm Preview | Production Facility tours at 1:15 and 3:15
The Michael & Ginger Frost Production Arts Building | 712 E 18th St, Kansas City, MO 64108
Featuring a screening of Kimberly Reed’s appearance on The Moth Radio Hour, a taped interview with the creators, a selection from the opera sung by Lyric Opera’s Resident Artists, a performance by Transfinity KC | A Chorus for All Voices, and more!

Explore the Score – AS ONE
Tuesday, January 23 | 7:00 pm
The Michael & Ginger Frost Production Arts Building | 712 E 18th St, Kansas City, MO 64108
Conductor Robert Wood and director Mary Birnbaum take you through the music and story of As One. Learn how Laura Kaminsky’s gorgeous score creates the perfect backdrop for Hannah’s journey to self-realization.

The creators of As One

LAURA KAMINSKY (composer)
Laura Kaminsky is a composer with “an ear for the new and interesting.” (New York Times). Recently cited in The Washington Post as “one of the top 35 female composers in classical music,” her scores often address issues such as sustainability, war, and human rights. Her music is “full of fire as well as ice, written in an idiom that contrasts dissonance and violence with tonal beauty and meditative reflection.” (American Record Guide)
Recent collaborations with Mark Campbell and Kimberly Reed: Some Light Emerges (Houston Grand Opera) and Today It Rains (Opera Parallèle/American Opera Projects). Head of composition at Purchase College Conservatory of Music/SUNY, she is composer-in-residence at American Opera Projects.
www.laurakaminsky.com

MARK CAMPBELL (co-librettist)
Mark Campbell’s work as a librettist is at the forefront of the current contemporary opera scene in this country. He has written more than 18 librettos, his best known work is Silent Night, which received the 2012 Pulitzer Prize in Music. Other successful operas include Later the Same Evening, Volpone, Bastianello/Lucrezia, The Manchurian Candidate and The Shining. Premiers in 2017: Dinner at Eight for Minnesota Opera, Some Light Emerges at Houston Grand Opera, The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs at Santa Fe Opera, Elizabeth Cree at Opera Philadelphia, The Nefarious, Immoral but Highly Profitable Enterprise of Mr. Burke & Mr. Hare at Boston Lyric Opera.
www.markcampbellwords.com

KIMBERLY REED (co-librettist, filmmaker)
Kimberly Reed – featured on Oprah, CNN, NPR, MSNBC, The Moth Radio Hour – is one of Filmmaker Magazine’s “25 New Faces of Independent Film.” With regard to As One, The San Francisco Chronicle noted the “delicately atmospheric film” and libretto that “conjures up a blend of excitement, shame, self-fulfillment and fear with crisp efficiency.” She collaborated again with Campbell and Kaminsky on Some Light Emerges (Houston Grand Opera), and Today It Rains (Opera Parallèle/American Opera Projects). Reed’s debut film Prodigal Sons, a “whiplash doc that heralds an exciting talent” (SF Weekly), premiered at Telluride Film Festival, has since been shown at 100+ festivals, broadcast worldwide, and garnered 14 awards.
www.kimberlyreed.com
ROBERT WOOD (Conductor)
Maestro Wood founded UrbanArias in 2009. Under his guidance, the company has achieved national recognition as an innovator in the field of opera, and has given over 70 performances in Arlington, DC, and New York City. He has conducted UrbanArias’ productions of After Life/ Josephine (Cipullo), As One (Kaminsky), Blue Viola (Hilliard), Glory Denied (Cipullo), Before Breakfast (Pasatieri), The Filthy Habit (Hilliard), Photo-Op (Cummings), Paul’s Case (Spears), and Three Decembers (Heggie) to great acclaim. Maestro Wood made his debut with the San Francisco Opera in 2004 with Verdi’s La traviata. He recently conducted Three Decembers at Kentucky Opera, Die Fledermaus at Hawaii Opera Theatre, and Roméo et Juliette and Carmen at Opera Colorado.

MARY BIRNBAUM (Director)
Nominated for Best Newcomer of 2015 at the International Opera Awards in London, Ms. Birnbaum has been singled out as a young stage director to watch. Her recent production of The Rape of Lucretia at Juilliard garnered a rave from Anthony Tommasini at The New York Times who called it “viscerally overwhelming.” Other New York credits include Die Zauberflöte (Juilliard), the premiere of Jeremy Denk and Steven Stucky’s The Classical Style at Carnegie Hall in December 2014, and a 9-singer chamber version of Eugene Onegin, also for the Juilliard School, co-led by conductor Matt Aucoin. Internationally, her work has taken her to Taiwan, Melbourne, Costa Rica, and Tel Aviv. In the summer of 2016, she directed Otello at the Taipei Philharmonic.

WES MASON, baritone (Hannah-Before)
Hailed by Opera News as “a gifted and fiercely committed baritone whose voice is spacious and reverberant,” Mason has established himself as a strong, dramatic singer on stages throughout the country. Mason recently performed the roles Dax/Larry in the world première of Robert Paterson’s opera Three Way, which he reprises this season at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. He also reprises the role of Billy Bigelow in Carousel with Union Avenue Opera; sings Robert Paterson’s Crossing the Hudson with American Modern Ensemble at Carnegie Hall; and performs John Sorel in The Consul with Opera Saratoga, and Amos King in a NYC reading of All Dressed Up and Nowhere to Go, composed by Jimmy Roberts, which is being directed by Hannah Ryan, the Resident Director of Hamilton.

BLYTHE GAISSERT, mezzo-soprano (Hannah-After)
In the coming 2017-18 season, Ms. Gaissert will be creating the role of Walker Loats in Mikael Karlsson’s cutting edge one woman opera The Echo Drift at the Prototype Festival in NYC, singing Hester Prynne in the Professional Première of The Scarlett Professor at Amherst College, Sädie in the NY première of Ricky Ian Gordon’s Morning Star with On Site Opera, Berio’s Folk Songs with the Dallas Symphony, CAPTCHA by Robert Paterson with American Modern Ensemble at Carnegie’s Weil Hall, and finishes her season with singing Siegrune in Die Walküre with the Dallas Symphony. Ms. Gaissert has worked with companies such as the Metropolitan Opera, LA Opera, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Opera Colorado, Tulsa Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, Aldeburgh Festival in England, Lyrique en Mer in France, Opera Southwest, Opera Saratoga, and more.

FRY STREET QUARTET (Accompaniment)
This remarkable quartet - hailed as “a triumph of ensemble playing” by The New York Times - is a multi-faceted ensemble taking chamber music in new directions. Touring music of the masters as well as exciting original works from visionary composers of our time, the Fry Street Quartet has perfected a “blend of technical precision and scorching spontaneity” (Strad). Since securing the Grand Prize at the Fischoff National Chamber Music Competition, the quartet has reached audiences from Carnegie Hall to London, and Sarajevo to Jerusalem, exploring the medium of the string quartet and its life-affirming potential with “profound understanding...depth of expression, and stunning technical astuteness” (Deseret Morning News).
What does it mean to be Transgender?
(from the National Center for Transgender Equality)

Transgender people are people whose gender identity is different from the gender they were thought to be at birth. “Trans” is often used as shorthand for transgender.

When we’re born, a doctor usually says that we’re male or female based on what our bodies look like. Most people who were labeled male at birth turn out to actually identify as men, and most people who were labeled female at birth grow up to be women. But some people’s gender identity – their innate knowledge of who they are – is different from what was initially expected when they were born. Most of these people describe themselves as transgender.

A transgender woman lives as a woman today, but was thought to be male when she was born. A transgender man lives as a man today, but was thought to be female when he was born. Some transgender people identify as neither male nor female, or as a combination of male and female. There are a variety of terms that people who aren’t entirely male or entirely female use to describe their gender identity, like non-binary or genderqueer. Everyone – transgender or not – has a gender identity. Most people never think about what their gender identity is because it matches their sex at birth.

Transgender people are your classmates, your coworkers, your neighbors, and your friends. With approximately 1.4 million transgender adults in the United States – and millions more around the world – chances are that you’ve met a transgender person, even if you don’t know it.

Community Resources
Below is a list of organizations that support the transgender community

- National Center for Transgender Equality (advocacy)
- Kansas City Anti-Violence Project (advocacy)
- PFLAG Kansas City (support, advocacy)
- GLAAD (advocacy)
- GLSEN (advocacy for students)
- Transgender Law Center (legal services & advocacy)
- Gender Proud (advocacy)
- Sylvia Rivera Law Project (legal services)
- Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition (advocacy)
- Trans People of Color Coalition (advocacy)
- Trans Women of Color Collective (advocacy)
- Black Trans Advocacy (advocacy)
- Trans Latina Coalition (advocacy)
- Gender Spectrum (support for families, youth, educators)
- TransTech Social Enterprises (economic empowerment)
- SPART*A (advocacy for trans military service members)
- TransAthlete.com (info about trans athletes)
- TransLife Center at Chicago House (support services)
- Trans Youth Equality Federation (support for families & trans youth)
- Trans Youth Family Allies (support for families & trans youth)
- Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund (legal services)
- Transgender American Veterans Association (advocacy for trans veterans)

Transgender people come from every region in the United States and around the world, from every racial and ethnic background, and every faith community.