

# Black Opera Research Network

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Dear Reader,

We are excited to introduce BORN's quarterly newsletter. In this newsletter, we will keep you all up-to-date on BORN's activities, as well as bits of news from both the Working Team and our Affiliates. Such news will include job opportunities, award announcements, opera productions, and more! Please always feel free to send the Working Team an email if you would like something included in a newsletter.

Warm regards,

The BORN Working Team

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## BORN's Recent Events

Since we last saw most of you in June of 2021, BORN has been busy at work with our website makeover and organizing events. We've also been doing the tedious (but necessary!) work behind the scenes to secure funds for BORN. We are also working to make our website multilingual – it is a slow process, but we are working to provide select translations in isiXhosa. We are, of course, always eager to hear suggestions about BORN from you!

## Community Highlights

We have quite a few accolades to announce:

Working Team member **Mia Pistorius** has won the Kurt Weill Prize for her article, '[Inhabiting Whiteness: The Eoan Group \*La Traviata\*, 1956.](#)'

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## Upcoming Events

### 12 February 2022

Encore Metropolitan Opera performance in U.S. cinemas of *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* by Terence Blanchard.

### 26 March 2022

[Black Identities on the Operatic Stage: A Symposium with Music](#), Greensboro, NC, USA

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## Important Announcement

BORN has recently updated its website. Please keep a close eye on it, as we hope to add more accessible features in the upcoming months. You'll find drop-down menus on the main page, as well as easier access to our BORN forum. You will also find videos from our previous roundtables.

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## More Important News

Affiliate **Ryan Ebright** has also won the Kurt Weill Prize for his article, '[Doctor Atomic or: How John Adams Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Sound Design.](#)'

Affiliate **Kira Thurman** has won the Central European History Society Annelise Thimme Prize for the best article published in 2019-2020: '[Performing Lieder, Hearing Race: Debating Blackness, Whiteness, and German Identity in Interwar Central Europe.](#)'

Working Team member **Lena van der Hoven** has been appointed as an Assistant Professor of Musicology at the University of Bern. Lena will also present her research, 'Transforming Opera in South Africa: Activism in Opera against Gender Violence' at TOSC@ Bayreuth 2022.

Working Team members **Joy Calico, Hilde Roos, Kristen Turner, Brenda Mhlambi,** and **Allison Smith** will join Lena at TOSC@. Joy will be moderating a panel with Hilde, Kristen, Brenda, and Allison entitled, 'What is Black Opera?'

Affiliate **Nicholas Newton** played Daddy in Joel Thompson and Andrea Davis Pinkney's opera, *The Snowy Day*. The opera in December of 2021.

### Announcements and Opportunities

Lena van der Hoven would like to announce two open positions at the University of Bern. These positions are open for doctoral students with an emphasis on music theater or opera research. More details about these positions will be available on the BORN forum next week and are set to begin on 15 April 2022.

South Africa's Cape Town Opera has responded to the global suspension of performance activities due to Covid-19 in an unusual way. Read [a press release](#) about their fundraising initiative, *Cwaka: The Silence*, or watch [a brief video](#) about the project. Limited edition vinyl copies of the resultant album will be released for purchase this month.

Lena will host a hybrid-lecture performance of Dance/Rap/Opera, *The Nose*, choreographed by Jessica Nupen, in Bayreuth in May 2022.

## Upcoming Events

### 10 June 2022

BORN Roundtable: Structural Barriers to Participation in Opera

Panelists and Moderator TBA

### 23 June – 26 June 2022

TOSC@ Bayreuth Conference

## In Memoriam

Earlier this month the opera community bid farewell to American soprano [Maria Ewing \(27 March 1950 – 9 January 2022\)](#). Ewing's racial heritage and the way she negotiated this throughout her vibrant career continue to raise compelling questions about matters of colorism and passing—issues her daughter, Rebecca Hall, has begun to explore in her 2021 film, *Passing*.

