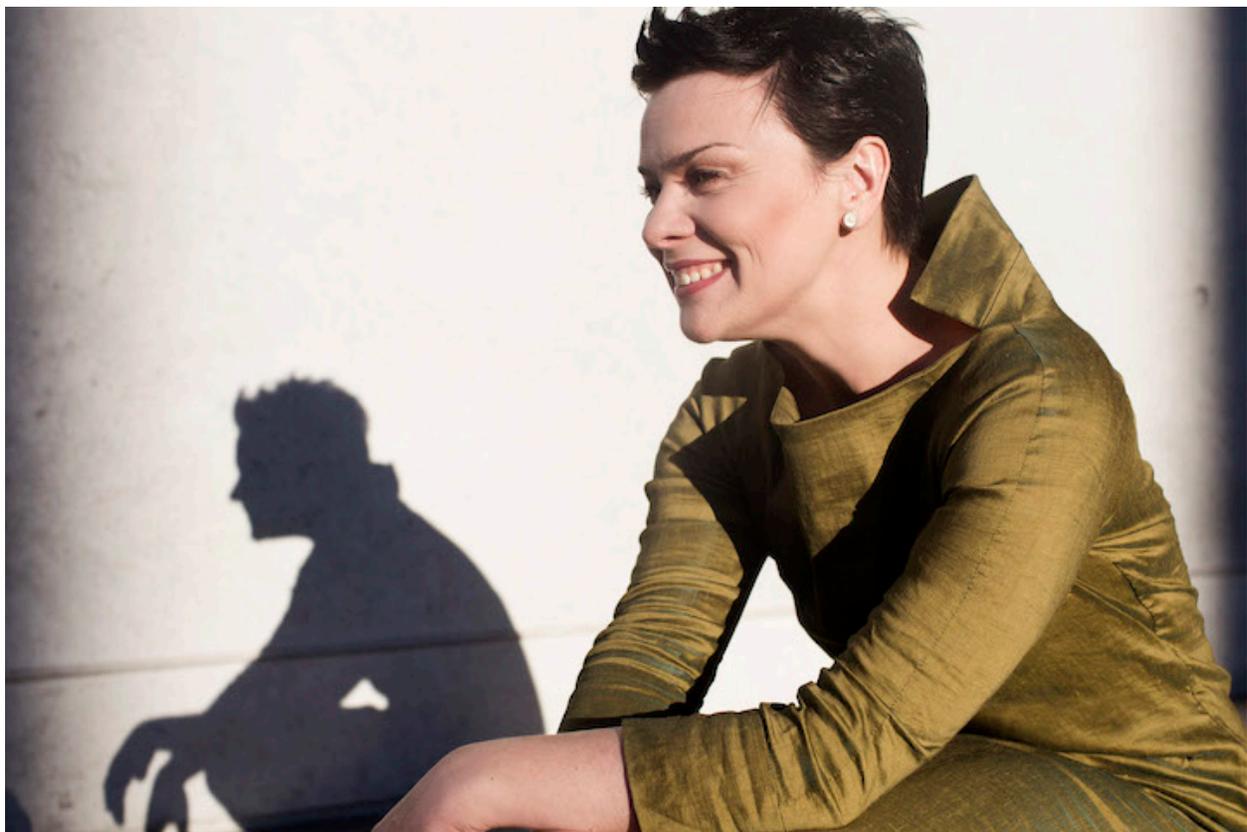


U.S. premiere of Korngold's "Heliane" highlights opera at Bard SummerScape

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Bard SummerScape 2019 Presents American premiere of Korngold's Grand Opera *The Miracle of Heliane* (July 26–Aug 4)

**Plus Exploration of "Operetta's America" (Aug 11) and Semi-Staged
Production of Korngold's *Die tote Stadt* (Aug 18) in 30th Bard Music Festival**



Ausrine Stundyte, Heliane in The Miracle of Heliane (photo: Schneider Photography)

"Botstein and Bard SummerScape show courage, foresight and great imagination, honoring operas that larger institutions are content to ignore." – *Time Out New York*

ANNANDALE-ON-HUDSON, NY: Committed since its inception to reviving important but neglected operas, [Bard SummerScape](#) has long proven itself **"an indispensable part of the summer operatic landscape"** (*Musical America*). This year's immersion in **"Korngold and His World"** is no exception, presenting as its operatic centerpiece the **long overdue American premiere of *The Miracle of Heliane*** ("Das Wunder der Heliane"), the grand opera that Erich Wolfgang Korngold considered his masterpiece. Featuring **Ausrine Stundyte, Daniel Brenna, Alfred Walker** and the **American Symphony Orchestra** under **Leon Botstein's** leadership in an original staging by German director **Christian R ath**, *The Miracle of Heliane* will run for five performances between **July 26** and **August 4**, with an Opera Talk, free and open to the public, before the matinee on July 28. SummerScape 2019 also provides the chance to sample some of the operettas written and arranged by Korngold and his contemporaries in **"Operetta's America"** (August 11) and to see his best-loved opera, *Die tote Stadt* ("The Dead City"; August 18), during the 30th anniversary season of the **Bard Music Festival**. Anchored by the **Bard Festival Chorus** under the direction of **James Bagwell**, all three presentations take place on Bard's glorious Hudson Valley campus in the striking Frank Gehry-designed Fisher Center. As the *Financial Times* notes, **"Some of the most important summer opera experiences in the U.S. are ... at Bard SummerScape."** Click [here](#) to see a celebration of opera at Bard SummerScape.

***The Miracle of Heliane* ("Das Wunder der Heliane," 1927)**

Erich Wolfgang Korngold (1897–1957), whose lush Romanticism would come to define the quintessential Hollywood sound, began his career as a classical prodigy in fin-de-si cle Vienna, becoming a respected opera composer at just 19. Yet, despite the success of his first three operas, the fourth – *The Miracle of Heliane* ("Das Wunder der Heliane," 1927) – was dogged by difficulties from the outset. First caught up in the musical politics of the time, then banned by the Nazis after its acclaimed Hamburg premiere, *Heliane* all but disappeared from the repertoire, and today, almost a hundred years later, has still never been staged in the United States.

This represents a considerable loss. *Heliane* features "Ich ging zu ihm," one of Korngold's best-loved arias, and the composer himself considered the opera his most important work. There are many who agree. Styling the opera **"a huge, triumphant song of love and liberation on the grandest scale,"** *The Guardian* explains:

"Korngold's music had always been rich and sensual, but he outdid himself in *Heliane*. He reached the limits of his language in adventurous textures and bold harmonies, stretching his lavish orchestral and vocal resources to the utmost."

Indeed, for Brendan G. Carroll, President of the International Korngold Society, *Heliane* is not only “**arguably the composer’s greatest work**,” but also one that stands “**among the masterpieces of Romantic opera**.”

Set to a libretto inspired by an Expressionist mystery play, *The Miracle of Heliane* takes place in an unnamed totalitarian state, where an erotic triangle develops between a ruthless despot, the Ruler; his beautiful wife, Heliane, with whom he has yet to consummate his marriage; and a young, messianic Stranger.

Marking the long overdue American premiere of *The Miracle of Heliane*, Bard’s new production is directed by German director **Christian Räth**, of whom Austria’s *Die Presse* writes:

“Räth tells the story with great skill, exactly as the composer intended. ... The interpersonal relationships are worked out so well that you not only hear the ambiguities and uncertainties, you see them too.”

Räth’s work has graced stages from the Vienna State Opera to New York’s Metropolitan Opera, where he is currently leading the revival of *La fille du regiment*. About the upcoming SummerScape production, he explains:

“*Das Wunder der Heliane* is a dark mystery play, an intimate psychodrama and an epic dystopian political thriller all at once. The opera makes us take part in the riveting emotional journey of a woman, who defies a brutal and contemptuous dictatorship by overcoming her fears and doubts and claiming her right to compassion, love and desire. Her feminine courage and her strength of belief in humanity represent the actual miracle that opens the gates to freedom and redemption.”

The opera’s sets and costumes are the work of **Esther Bialas**, the Berlin-based designer behind Barrie Kosky’s electrifying production of *The Magic Flute*, already the toast of three continents and coming to New York this summer. *Heliane* also features choreography by **Catherine Galasso**, whose work has been nominated for both “Bessie” and Isadora Duncan Dance Awards; lighting design by **Thomas Hase**, as seen at LA Opera, New York City Opera, and BAM Next Wave; and projections by **Elaine McCarthy**, whose work for the world-premiere production of *Moby-Dick* prompted the *New York Times* to marvel: “What truly set this production apart were Elaine J. McCarthy’s innovative projections.”

Lithuanian soprano **Ausrine Stundyte** will make a rare U.S. appearance in a reprise of the title role in which she recently gave a “transcendent performance” (*Bachtrack*) in Belgium. She is perhaps best-known for her debut in the Berlin State Opera’s *Salome* last year, where her “full-blooded, searing performance, replete with musical and psychological nuance,” impressed *Opera News* as “sensational.” The role of the Stranger will be sung by Wagner Award-winner **Daniel Brenna**, “one of the best-known heldentenors of his generation” (*Opera Wire*), with the Ruler of bass-baritone **Alfred Walker**, who proved “outstanding” as

Wagner's Flying Dutchman in Basel, where his interpretation impressed Germany's *Die Welt* as being both "fiery and chilling."

They will be joined by **Jennifer Feinstein** – "an expressive and vibrant mezzo" (*Opera News*) – as the Messenger; Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions Grand Prize-winning bass-baritone **Nicholas Brownlee** as the Porter; and tenor and regular Met principal **David Cangelosi** as the Blind Judge. The six additional judges will be sung by **Derek Taylor**, who boasts a "steely, substantial tenor" (*Opera Today*); bass-baritone **Nathan Berg**, "a brilliant actor and a palpable presence on stage" (*Financial Times*); bass **Scott Conner**, who recently appeared alongside Plácido Domingo in *Gianni Schicchi* at the Met; tenor **Richard Troxell**, "a dashing presence, a matinee idol with a big, ringing voice" (*Boston Phoenix*); baritone **Michael Hawk**, who made his LA Opera debut in *Satyagraha* earlier this season; and bass **Kevin Thompson**, whose "mountain of a voice, with resonance from the Escorial of Philip II, the throne of Boris Godunov, and the majestic court of Sarastro, ... delivered all the goods" (*San Francisco Classical Voice*).

"Operetta's America," Bard Music Festival Program 6

Korngold enjoyed a second, more lucrative career as an expert adapter and expander of classic Viennese operetta, and it was he who spearheaded the **Johann Strauss II** revival of the 1920s. Working with famed director and producer Max Reinhardt, he achieved his greatest success with *Rosalinda*, a restructured version of *Die Fledermaus* that – with choreography by George Balanchine and initially with Korngold himself conducting from the piano – ran for more than 600 performances on Broadway. The New World not only provided new audiences but also new inspiration for operetta, as the works excerpted in the Bard Music Festival's Program Six, "Operetta's America," reveal. These include such rarities as **Leo Fall's** *Rosen aus Florida*, which Korngold recreated from incomplete sketches provided by the composer's widow; *The Dollar Princess*, also by Fall, and adapted by musical theater legend **Jerome Kern**; **Emmerich Kálmán's** *Die Herzogin von Chicago*, which mingles Viennese waltz with jazz; and **Oscar Straus's** *Hochzeit in Hollywood*, the basis for a subsequent musical film.

Korngold's *Die tote Stadt* (1920), Bard Music Festival Program 12

In the years between the wars, Korngold was, after Richard Strauss, the most performed opera composer in the German-speaking world, due in no small part to the sensational success of his first full-length opera, *Die tote Stadt* ("The Dead City"). Composed in his early 20s to a libretto that he wrote under a pseudonym with help from his father, *Die tote Stadt* soon dominated the opera scene. Already a hit at its simultaneous premieres in Hamburg and Cologne, the work went on to triumph in Vienna, Berlin, and New York, where it was the first new German-language opera to be mounted at the Metropolitan Opera since the beginning of World War I.

Based on a novel by Belgian Symbolist poet Georges Rodenbach, *Die tote Stadt* is a heady, haunting story of love and obsession. It is set in a surreal version of Bruges, where

protagonist Paul is mourning the death of his saintly young wife, Marie. When he meets Marietta, a seductive dancer bearing an uncanny resemblance to Marie, Paul develops an unhealthy fixation with her, and finds himself torn between temptation and the memory of his wife. This internal struggle and the story's eerie, hallucinatory setting inspired some of Korngold's most intoxicating music, including such beloved arias as "Mariettas Lied" and "Pierrots Tanzlied." **"Sumptuously lyrical, theatrically vivid and glitteringly orchestrated"** (*New York Times*), *Die tote Stadt* suffuses the idioms of Mahler's Vienna with the lyricism of Italian verismo.

Anchored by **The Orchestra Now (TŌN)**, Bard's graduate training orchestra, under **Botstein's** leadership, Bard's semi-staged production of the opera is by Brooklyn-based opera, theater, and film director **Jordan Fein**. Fein's work in film has been recognized with three Cannes Lions awards, while his work in opera and theater has been produced and developed by companies including Opera Philadelphia, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Ars Nova, Brooklyn Arts Exchange, Joe's Pub, and Harvard's American Repertory Theater.

Soprano **Allison Oakes**, who swept the 2010 International Lauritz Melchior Wagner Competition, stars as Marie/Marietta, the dual role in which she proved herself "a singer who could scale the heights of Korngold's music with soaring beauty" (*Bachtrack*) in Hamburg last fall. Tenor **Clay Hilley**, acclaimed by the *New York Times* for his "vocal heft, clarion sound and stamina," returns to Bard to sing Paul, after headlining Dvořák's *Dimitrij* at SummerScape 2017. **Alexander Birch Elliott**, whose baritone impressed the *New York Times* with its "heated intensity and beguiling timbre of mahogany," rounds out the trio of principals as Paul's friend Frank/Fritz.

About opera at Bard SummerScape

Since the opening of the Fisher Center at Bard, **Botstein and the American Symphony Orchestra** have been responsible for championing and restoring to the stage a growing number of important but long-neglected operas. All these presentations and their remarkable stagings have been warmly received by audiences and critics alike. Last season, thanks to the composer's "rhapsodically lyrical" music, Bard's "sensitive reading of the opera," and the "surging, rich performance Mr. Botstein drew from the American Symphony Orchestra and the Bard Festival Chorale," the *New York Times* declared Anton Rubinstein's *Demon* to be "a winner." As *Musical America* recognizes: **"Bard's annual opera has become an indispensable part of the summer operatic landscape."**

Illustrating the scope and originality of the festival's programming, a list of Bard's previous operatic offerings follows below:

- 2018: Anton Rubinstein – *Demon*
Rimsky-Korsakov – *Mozart and Salieri* and *The Tsar's Bride*
- 2017: Dvořák – *Dimitrij* (first fully staged American production)
Moniuszko – *Halka*

- 2016: Mascagni – *Iris*
Puccini – *Il tabarro* and *Le Villi*; Massenet – *La Navarraise*; Busoni – *Turandot*;
Puccini/Berio – *Turandot*, Act III
- 2015: Smyth – *The Wreckers* (first fully staged American production)
- 2014: Weber – *Euryanthe* (first American revival in 100 years)
Schubert – *Fierrabras*; *Die Verschworenen*
von Suppé – *Franz Schubert*
- 2013: Taneyev – *Oresteia* (first fully staged production outside Russia)
Stravinsky – *Oedipus Rex*, *Perséphone*, and *Mavra*
- 2012: Chabrier – *Le roi malgré lui* (first staged revival of original version)
Saint-Saëns – *Henry VIII*
- 2011: Strauss – *Die Liebe der Danae* (first fully staged New York production)
- 2010: Schreker – *Der ferne Klang*
Hindemith – *Sancta Susanna*
Weill – *Royal Palace*
- 2009: Meyerbeer – *Les Huguenots*
- 2008: Szymanowski – *King Roger*; *Harnasie* (double-bill)
- 2007: Zemlinsky – *Der Zwerg*; *Eine florentinische Tragödie* (first U.S. double-bill production)
- 2006: Schumann – *Genoveva* (first U.S. professional production)
- 2005: Blitzstein – *Regina*
- 2004: Shostakovich – *The Nose* (first East-coast professional production)
- 2003: Janáček – *Osud* (first U.S. staged production)
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<http://fishercenter.bard.edu/bmf/>
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<https://www.youtube.com/user/fishercenteratbard>

Opera at Bard SummerScape 2019

Erich Wolfgang Korngold (1897–1957)

***The Miracle of Heliane* (American premiere; new production)**

Libretto by Hans Müller-Einigen, after play by Hans Kaltneker

American Symphony Orchestra

Conducted by Leon Botstein, music director

Directed by Christian Răth

Bard Festival Chorale

Conducted by James Bagwell

Set and costume designer: Esther Bialas
Choreographer: Catherine Galasso
Lighting designer: Thomas Hase
Projection designer: Elaine McCarthy

Heliane: Ausrine Stundyte, soprano
Ruler: Alfred Walker, bass-baritone
Stranger: Daniel Brenna, tenor
Messenger: Jennifer Feinstein, mezzo-soprano
Porter: Nicholas Brownlee, bass-baritone
Blind Judge: David Cangelosi, tenor
Judge No. 1: Derek Taylor, tenor
Judge No. 2: Nathan Berg, bass-baritone
Judge No. 3: Scott Conner, bass
Judge No. 4: Richard Troxell, tenor
Judge No. 5: Michael Hawk, tenor
Judge No. 6: Kevin Thompson, bass

Sosnoff Theater
July 26* at 7:30pm
July 28* & 31; August 4* at 2pm
August 2* at 4pm

Tickets start at \$25

Opening Night Reception for Members
July 26

Opera Talk with Leon Botstein
July 28 at 12pm
Free and open to the public

Opera and operetta in the 30th Bard Music Festival, "Korngold and His World"

"Operetta's America"

Members of the Bard Festival Chorale

James Bagwell, choral director

The Orchestra Now

Conducted by Zachary Schwartzman

With Rebecca Ringle, mezzo-soprano; Joshua Wheeler, tenor; Tyler Duncan, baritone; and others

Selections from:

Leo Fall (1873–1925)/ Erich Wolfgang Korngold (1897–1957):

Rosen aus Florida (1929)

Leo Fall/Jerome Kern (1885–1945):
The Dollar Princess (1909)
Oscar Straus (1870–1954):
Hochzeit in Hollywood (1929)
Emmerich Kálmán (1882–1953):
Die Herzogin von Chicago (1928)
Paul Abraham (1892–1960):
Die Blume von Hawaii (1931)
Bruno Granichstaedten (1879–1944):
Reklame! (1930)
Others TBA

Sunday, August 11
Program Six, "Operetta's America"*
Sosnoff Theater
4:30pm Preconcert Talk
5pm Performance

Tickets: \$25–\$75

Erich Wolfgang Korngold (1897–1957) ***Die tote Stadt*, Op. 12 (1920)**

Libretto by Paul Schott (aka Erich Wolfgang Korngold & Julius Korngold)

The Orchestra Now (TŌN)
Conducted by Leon Botstein
Bard Festival Chorale
Conducted by James Bagwell
Directed by Jordan Fein
Marie/Marietta: Allison Oakes, soprano
Paul: Clay Hilley, tenor
Frank/Fritz: Alexander Birch Elliott, baritone

Sunday, August 18
Program Twelve, "*Die tote Stadt*"*
Sosnoff Theater
4pm Preconcert Talk
5pm Performance

Tickets: \$25–\$75

* Round-trip transportation from Manhattan to Bard is available for this performance. The round-trip fare is \$40 and reservations are required; see further details below.

SummerScape 2019: other key performance dates by genre

MUSIC

Bard Music Festival, Weekend One: *Korngold and Vienna* (Aug 9–11)

Bard Music Festival, Weekend Two: *Korngold in America* (Aug 16–18)

DANCE

Ronald K. Brown/Evidence: *Grace and Mercy*

Original music for *Mercy* written and performed by Meshell Ndegeocello

Music from *Grace* performed live by Peven Everett and others

World Premiere/SummerScape commission

Sosnoff Theater

July 5* & 6 at 8pm

July 7* at 2pm

Tickets: \$25 to \$95

Opening Night Reception for Members: Thursday, July 5

Post-Performance Conversation: Friday, July 6

Pre-Performance Conversation: Sunday, July 7 at 1pm

THEATER

Acquanetta

Music by Michael Gordon

Libretto by Deborah Artman

Directed by Daniel Fish

LUMA Theater

July 11, 12*, 18, 19 & 20 at 8pm

July 13, 14*, 17, 20 & 21 at 2pm

Tickets: \$25 to \$75

Opening Night Reception for Members: Friday, July 12

Pre-Performance Conversation: Sunday, July 14 at 1pm

Post-Performance Conversation: Wednesday, July 17

FILM SERIES

"Korngold and the Poetry of Cinema"

Ottaway Film Center

July 25: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Max Reinhardt & William Dieterle, 1935, USA)

July 28: *Captain Blood* (Michael Curtiz, 1935, USA)

August 1 at 7pm: *The Ancient Law* (E.A. Dupont, 1923, Germany)

August 4 at 7pm: *Letter from an Unknown Woman* (Max Ophüls, 1948)

August 8 at 7pm: *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* (John Huston, 1948, USA)

August 11 at 7pm: *The Man Who Knew Too Much* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1956, USA)

August 15 at 7pm: *The Sea Wolf* (Michael Curtiz, 1941, USA); *King's Row* (Sam Wood, 1942, USA)

August 18 at 7pm: *2001: A Space Odyssey* (Stanley Kubrick, 1968, USA)

Tickets: \$10

SPIEGELTENT

Live Music, Cabaret, Festival Dining, and After Hours salon

Dates, times, and ticket prices vary

Bard SummerScape ticket information

Tickets for all Bard SummerScape events are now on sale. For tickets and further information on all SummerScape events, call the Fisher Center box office at 845-758-7900 or visit fishercenter.bard.edu/summerscape.

Venues:

SummerScape opera, theater, and dance performances and most Bard Music Festival programs are held in the **Sosnoff Theater** or **LUMA Theater** in Bard's **Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts**, designed by **Frank Gehry** and celebrated since its opening as a major architectural landmark in the region. Some chamber programs and other BMF events are in **Olin Auditorium**, and the **Spiegeltent** has its own schedule of events, in addition to serving as a restaurant, café, and bar before and after performances. Film Series screenings are at the **Jim Ottaway Jr. Film Center** in the Milton and Sally Avery Arts Center.

New York City Round-Trip Coach Transportation:

To make a reservation on the round-trip SummerScape coach provided *exclusively to ticket holders* for specific performances indicated by * in the listings above, call the box office at 845-758-7900 or select this option when purchasing tickets. The round-trip fare is \$40 and reservations are required. The coach departs from behind Lincoln Center, on Amsterdam Avenue between 64th and 65th Streets. Find additional details at: fishercenter.bard.edu/visit/transportation.

Full Schedule:

For a complete schedule of SummerScape and Bard Music Festival events (subject to change), follow the links given below. Updates are posted at the festival web site fishercenter.bard.edu/summerscape. Fisher Center members receive priority access to the best seats in advance, and those who join the Center's email list receive advance booking opportunities as well as regular news and updates.

Bard SummerScape: fishercenter.bard.edu/summerscape

Bard Music Festival: fishercenter.bard.edu/bmf

Tickets and Subscriptions: fishercenter.bard.edu/boxoffice; or by phone at 845-758-7900. Tickets to all mainstage events start at \$25.

Subscription Offers:

Create Your Own Series:

Save 25% and enjoy maximum flexibility, by choosing four or more events.

SummerScape Mainstage Package:

Save 30% and guarantee seats for dance, theater, and opera events.

Dining Packages:

Out-of-Town Package:

Save \$30 on a mainstage ticket, roundtrip bus from New York City, and three-course meal.

Night Out Package:

Save \$20 on a mainstage ticket (selected performances only) and three-course meal.

Updates: Bard's "e-subscribers" get all the news in regular updates. [Click here to sign up](#), or send an e-mail to fishercenter@bard.edu.

All programs are subject to change.

The 2019 SummerScape season is made possible in part through the generous support of Jeanne Donovan Fisher, the Martin and Toni Sosnoff Foundation, the Board of The Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College, the Board of the Bard Music Festival, and Fisher Center members, as well as grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

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