



The Mother of Us All

July 30, 2022

About the Opera

Music by: Virgil Thomson

Libretto by: Gertrude Stein

For one performance only, Chautauqua's Amphitheater once again rings with the voice of Susan B. Anthony in Virgil Thomson and Gertrude Stein's joyfully surrealist homage to one of the foremothers of our country and the suffrage movement in America. This performance bookends Chautauqua Institution's Week Five programming, themed "The Vote and Democracy."

Production Dedication

This production of *The Mother of Us All* has been many years in the making, and its postponement in 2020 was one of the most heartbreaking moments in our company's history. Tonight I dedicate this performance to all of the individuals—singers, designers, director, production, administration and music staff-- who were originally contracted for the 2020 season and have joined us at Chautauqua this summer to finally bring it to life. Your dedication to this opera and the stories it tells is a continuing inspiration, and it is an honor to have shared the rehearsal room and now the Amphitheater stage with you!

- Steven Osgood

Notes from the General & Artistic Director

I first started dreaming of this production of *The Mother of Us All* in the Chautauqua Amphitheater eight years ago when I had become a semi-regular guest conductor with Chautauqua Opera Company. I learned that Susan B. Anthony had spoken in the Amphitheater during the Suffrage movement, and I knew that 2020 would mark the centenary of the 19th Amendment. I had come to know Virgil Thomson and Gertrude Stein's delightfully quirky, lyrically rich, and ultimately deeply moving opera through conducting a production and recording of the piece at Manhattan School of Music and I was desperate for another chance to conduct it.

Flash forward a few years and I find myself in my new leadership position at Chautauqua, and able to start putting my money (well, our money) where my mouth was. I was delighted when Keturah Stickann, who had by then directed two of our productions in the Amphitheater, signed on to be my partner in this production which would headline a 2020 season with powerful women at the center of all three operas. My dream was going to come true.

Well, flash forward another FOUR years to get past the worst of our COVID shutdowns, and here we are at the end of Chautauqua Opera Company's 2022 Festival Weekend. Mukhtar Mai has inspired Chautauquans in four performances of *Thumbprint*, and Tosca has murdered Scarpia and still lost Cavaradossi to his villainy three times. We close our 2022 mainstage season tonight with rich poetry and wordplay; hymns, waltzes and marches from the heartland of America; a challenging look at the rights of women and other historically marginalized Americans; and resounding echos from the Suffrage movement which had western New York as one of its central locations.

The Mother Of Us All is an opera which rewards repeated listening. Every day I find a new favorite phrase in the libretto, and I am touched by a new musical phrase. If this is your first time with the opera, I invite you to let the music and words wash over you, to laugh and cry with the imagery which accompanies our production, and to revisit the opera in recordings. If this is NOT your first time with *The Mother Of Us All*—welcome back. May this be an

exciting dive back into what remains one of the most original and unique works in the American opera canon. Thank you ALL for being here!

Director's Note

On the first page of the score for *The Mother of Us All*, it states, *The Mother of Us All* is a pageant. Its theme is the winning in the United States of political rights for women. Its story is the life and career of Susan B. Anthony.” All of this is true, but the piece is so much more. Like everything Gertrude Stein wrote, she used this platform as a space for autobiographical thought. Therefore, this is also a piece about Ms. Stein and how much she felt fame and respect eluded her throughout her life. Yes, the main theme and story revolves around Susan B. Anthony and her political life, but the panoply of characters from both history and Gertrude Stein’s brain create a landscape that allows us to also explore the ongoing fight for equal rights for all people in this country.

Working on a piece with no linear narrative, made up of the repetitive and absurdist poetry of Stein, is at once frustrating and liberating for a director. I have a narrative brain, and the more I tried to make sense of the story as having a beginning, middle, and end, the less I could see the shape of the piece itself. It was when I finally released myself from “story” and wrapped my arms around “emotion” and “cause” that the pieces of this extraordinary opera started to tumble into place. Here are a few things I learned along the way:

One, the characters are varied because voters are varied. The character list is extensive and has people such as John Quincy Adams and Thaddeus Stevens, who existed in the 1850’s and 1860’s, as well as made-up characters such as Jo The Loiterer (based on a real person) and his paramour, Indiana Elliot (based on a conglomerate), whom I’ve placed in the 1960’s, another tumultuous time in our history. The varied characters, who all interact and exist in the same plane, are there to show us our differences as well as our similarities. We are all strange and lonely and desirous of love and respect. We are all worthy of having the vote; of having a say over our futures.

Two, Gertrude Stein and Virgil Thomson are characters in their own opera, and that meta quality allows Gertrude the chance to interact with Susan B, with whom she felt great affinity. I’ve taken this even farther and given Gertrude and Virgil the opportunity to comment on their work even as it’s being presented in today’s world. I felt that if Gertrude wanted to be there, then she should be there.

Three, I was surprised at how funny the opera is. I think, because of the subject matter, we have a tendency to walk into this piece thinking we need to take everything very seriously. In actuality, the fact that we get to laugh uproariously makes the moving moments (and there are some incredibly moving moments) hit that much harder.

Four, and this is the most important, Gertrude Stein’s poetry is not meant to always be taken literally. Give yourself permission (as I did) to let her use of language wash over you. Let her odd turns of phrase make you laugh, let her repetitions enter you like a heartbeat. Sometimes Stein is quite cogent, and sometimes her words are there to express a deep emotional state.

This is a perfect time to be presenting *The Mother of Us All*, as the tumult our country is experiencing right now makes the opera more thematically important and relevant than ever. Watching Susan B. question herself forces all of us to question what we believe and why, and Gertrude Stein’s evocative language, coupled with Virgil Thomson’s patriotically laced music, offers us a window into the absurdity of America’s political landscape.

Cast, Creative, Orchestra, & Production

Cast:



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Susan B. Anthony: Wendy Bryn Harmer
Gertrude S.: Olivia Johnson
Anne: Talin Nalbandian
Virgil T.: Bernardo Medeiros
Daniel Webster: Alan Held
Jo the Loiterer: Chauncey Packer
Chris the Citizen: Jake Skipworth
Indiana Elliot: Hilary Grace Taylor
Angel More: Emily Michiko Jensen
Henrietta M.: Nicole Heinen
Henry B.: Luke Harnish
Anthony Comstock: James Eder
John Adams: John Kun Park
Thaddeus Stevens: Felix Aguilar Tomlinson
Constance Fletcher: Samina Aslam
Isabel Wentworth: Meredith Smietana
Gloster Heming: John Potvin
Anna Hope: Stephanie Perez
Lillian Russell: Nicola Santoro
Jenny Reefer: Max Potter
Ulysses S. Grant: Phillip Lopez
Herman Atlan: Troy Sleeman
Donald Gallup: Bernardo Medeiros
Andrew Johnson: Eric Botto
Brother of Indiana Elliot: Rolfe Dauz

Ensemble:

Natalie Adame
Megan Fleischmann
Marcus Jefferson
Evan Katsefes
Scott LaMarca
Marquita Richardson

Creative:

Stage Director: Keturah Stickann
Conductor: Steven Osgood
Assistant Conductor: Kristin Roach
Chorus Master: Carol Rausch
Lighting & Video Designer: Michael Baumgarten
Costume Designer: B.G. FitzGerald
Wig & Makeup Designer: Martha Ruskai
Musical Preparation:
Miriam Charney
Emily Jarrell Urbanek
Allison Voth
Assistant Directors:
Cassandra Lovering
Diane Machin
Supertitles: Allison Voth
Principal Coach/Rehearsal Pianist: Miriam Charney
Assistant Coach: Emily Jarrell Urbanek
Artistic Assistant: Kerwin Young

Chautauqua Opera Orchestra:



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Violin 1:

Vahn Armstrong - Concertmaster
Ming Gao - Assistant
Amanda Gates
Adrienne Finet
Anton Shelepov
Liana Koteva Kirvan
Leslie Anderegg
Irina Shelepov

Violin 2:

Simon Lapointe - Principal
Lara Sipols - Assistant
Jonathan Richards
Patricia Quintero Garcia
Maalik Glover
Emilia Mettenbrink
Mwakudua waNgure
Heejin Welsbrod

Viola:

Christopher Fischer - Principal
Karl Pedersen - Assistant
Eva Stern
Jennifer Jensen
Javier Otorala
Robert Switala

Cello:

Jolyon Pegis - Principal
Daryl Goldberg - Assistant
Igor Gefter
Maximillian Opeltz
Samantha Powell

Bass:

Owen Lee - Principal
P.J. Cinque - Assistant
Caitlyn Kamminga

Flute:

Richard Sherman - Principal

Oboe:

Alexis Porcaro - Principal

Clarinet:

Dan Spitzer - Principal
Andrew Seigel

Bassoon:

Benjamin Atherholt - Principal

Horn:

Mark Robbins - Principal
William Bernatis

Trumpet:

Les Linn - Principal



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Peter Lindblom

Trombone:

Christopher Wolf - Principal

Timpani:

Jeremy Levine - Principal

Percussion:

Thomas Blanchard - Principal

Pedro Fernandez

Harp:

Beth Robinson - Principal

Piano/Keyboard:

Emily Jarell Urbanek

Personnel Manager: Marian Tanau

Principal Librarian: Lara Siplos

Production:

Technical Director: John P. Woodey

Production Stage Manager:

Valerie Wheeler

Assistant Stage Managers:

Hanna Atkinson

Hailey Delaney

Julie Welch

Props Director: Wendy Ann

Production Aid: Jaaven Middleton

Leadership and Staff

General and Artistic Director: Steven Osgood

Music Administrator: Carol Rausch

Managing Director: Daniel Grambow

Director of Production: Michael Baumgarten

Arts Marketing Specialist: Makayla Santiago-Froebel

Company Scheduler: Rick Hoffenberg

Company Managers:

Claudia Torres

Austin Terris

Music Staff:

Miriam Charney

Rick Hoffenberg

Dottie Randall

Carol Rausch

Kristin Roach

Emily Jarrell Urbanek

Allison Voth

Arts Marketing Associate: Jessica Mack



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Cast Bios



Wendy Bryn Harmer, Soprano

Susan B. Anthony

An alumna of the Metropolitan Opera's prestigious Lindemann Young Artist Development Program, soprano Wendy Bryn Harmer continues to maintain a strong relationship with the company, having appeared in their productions of *Le nozze di Figaro*, *War and Peace*, *Khovanshchina*, *Parsifal*, *Die ägyptische Helena*, *Jen?fa*, and the complete Ring Cycle. She also appeared in the Met's HD broadcasts of the Ring Cycle and *The Magic Flute*, which have subsequently been released on DVD (Deutsche Gramophon). Other opera engagements have included the title role in *Ariadne auf Naxos* and Adalgisa in *Norma* at the Palm Beach Opera, Leonore in *Fidelio* at Opera Omaha and with Boston Baroque, Senta in *Die fliegende Holländer* at the Seattle Opera, Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus* at the Houston Grand Opera, and Mimì in *La bohème* at the Utah Opera Festival.

In concert, Ms. Harmer has appeared with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, Montreal Symphony Orchestra, and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, and at the Tanglewood Festival and Lincoln Center. In 2005, she made her New York recital debut under the auspices of The Marilyn Horne Foundation, and was presented by the George London Foundation in a recital with Ben Heppner at the Morgan Library. Her many awards include a 2010 Richard Tucker Grant, the 2007 Jensen Award, the 2005 George London/Leonie Rysanek Award, and an award from The Marilyn Horne Foundation.



Olivia Johnson, Mezzo-soprano

Gertrude S.

Mezzo-soprano Olivia Johnson was hailed by *Opera News* as a "standout... commanding and reassuring, with the timbre of a contralto and the astounding upper extension of a dramatic mezzo" in her recent portrayal of Girlfriend 3 in Michigan Opera Theatre's production of Jeanine Tesori and Tazewell Thompson's opera *Blue*.

Before this triumph Ms. Johnson had completed a Fellowship at the Vocal Institute of Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, CA, where she received an Encouragement Award in the Marilyn Horne Art Song Competition. In December 2021, Ms. Johnson was selected as a winner of the Michigan District in the Metropolitan Opera's Laffont Competition. Within the same month, she also made her debut in the lead role of Conchetta with Opera NexGen, in their virtual live stream of Carlos Simon's and Sandra Seaton's chamber opera, *Night Trip*. After completing a young artist residency at Toledo Opera during the 2020-2021 season, Ms. Johnson became the new artist-in-residence for AEPPEX Contemporary Ensemble for their 2021-2022 season. Ms. Johnson also appeared with Michigan Opera Theatre in the roles of Wellgunde (*Twilight of the Gods*), La Ciesca (*Gianni Schicchi* and *Buoso's Ghost*), and Girlfriend (*The Summer King*). In addition, she has been a soloist or has done roles with Opera MODO, Rackham Choir, and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and has participated in summer festivals, including Martina Arroyo's "Prelude to Performance" and the American Institute of Musical Studies (AIMS).

Olivia earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in 2014 from East Carolina University, and she completed her Master of Music degree in voice performance at the University of Michigan in 2017 under the tutelage of Professor George Shirley.



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Talin Nalbandian, Mezzo-soprano

Anne

A native of Los Angeles, CA, Talin Nalbandian is an Armenian-American mezzo-soprano who is currently attending the University of Texas, Austin, for a Doctor of Musical Arts degree. For the 2021-22 season, she sang Ravel's *Shéhérazade* in concert, Der Trommler in Ullmann's *Der Kaiser von Atlantis*, and the title role in Bizet's *Carmen*. She recently performed La Ciesca in *Gianni Schicchi* with Livermore Valley Opera and was a Second-Place winner for the Mildred Miller International Voice Competition. In 2019, she sang the roles of Hansel and Sandman in *Hansel and Gretel*, and Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly* with Opera San José. That summer she also returned to Music Academy of the West to sing the role of Ruby in the west coast premiere of Jennifer Higdon's *Cold Mountain*. Additionally, Talin won first prize at the Henry and Maria Holt Vocal Competition and the Burbank Philharmonic Kennings-Fischer Competition, as well as being a district winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. She has also received awards from the Butler Opera International Competition and the Mentoris Project Vocal Competition. Her concert work includes a performance as the alto soloist in Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with Symphony Silicon Valley. Talin has worked with Virginia Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, Sarasota Opera, and Wolf Trap Opera. Her roles include Maddalena (*Rigoletto*), 1st trio member (*Trouble in Tahiti*), Caverna (*L'Opera Seria*), Bianca (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), First Nursemaid (*Street Scene*), Marcellina (*Le nozze di Figaro*), and Mallika and Mistress Bentson (*Lakmé*), as well as covering Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*) and Mrs. Jones (*Street Scene*). Talin holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Pepperdine University and a Master of Music degree from the Manhattan School of Music.



Bernardo Medeiros, Baritone

Virgil T & Donald Gallup

Brazilian-American baritone Bernardo Medeiros holds a B.M. in Music Education from Oklahoma State University, as well as a master's degree and, most recently, a Performance Certificate, from the University of Houston in May of 2020. During his time in Houston, Bernardo had the opportunity to perform several roles, most notably Horace Tabor in *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, David in *L'amico Fritz*, Count Almaviva in *Le nozze di Figaro* and Capulet in *Roméo et Juliette*. In 2017, Bernardo was an Apprentice Artist at Opera in the Ozarks, where he portrayed the title role in *Le nozze di Figaro*, as well as Reverend Olin Blicht in *Susannah*. In the summer of 2019, he made his professional debut with the North Shore Music Festival, singing the role of Malatesta in *Don Pasquale*. Last summer Bernardo worked for Central City Opera, where he covered and performed his dream role, *Rigoletto*. This past season, Bernardo was a Resident Artist at Indianapolis Opera, where he portrayed the roles of Masetto in *Don Giovanni* and Jigger Craigin in *Carousel*.



Alan Held, Bass-baritone

Daniel Webster

Recognized as one of the leading singing actors today, American bass-baritone Alan Held has appeared in major roles in the world's finest opera houses, including the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Washington National Opera, Canadian Opera Company, the Royal Opera House, Paris Opera, Teatro alla Scala, Vienna State Opera, and the Munich State Opera. His many roles include Wotan in Wagner's *Ring Cycle*, the title roles in *Wozzeck* and *Der fliegende Holländer*, Kurwenal in *Tristan und Isolde*, Hans Sachs in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Scarpia in *Tosca*, Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, the Four Villains in *Les Contes d'Hoffman*, Jochanaan in *Salome*, Don Pizzaro in *Fidelio*, Orestes in *Elektra*, and Balstrode in *Peter Grimes*.



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Equally at home on the concert stage, Mr. Held has performed with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, and Berliner Philharmoniker. He has also appeared at the Salzburg, Tanglewood, and Saito Kinen festivals and at the BBC Proms.

A native of Washburn, Illinois, Mr. Held received his vocal training at Millikin University and at Wichita State University, where he was most recently named Associate Professor, The Ann and Dennis Ross Faculty of Distinction. He is a recipient of numerous honors and awards, including the Birgit Nilsson Prize and the 2014 Dora Mavor Moore Award for Outstanding Male Performance in an Opera, and is also a noted clinician who regularly gives master classes at Yale University.

Alanheld.com



Chauncey Packer, Tenor

Jo the Loiterer

Chauncey Packer recently appeared at the Metropolitan Opera as Spinner in Blanchard's *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, a role he reprised in 2022 with Lyric Opera of Chicago. Other recent and upcoming engagements include the Witch in *Hansel and Gretel* with New Orleans Opera, Sportin' Life in *Porgy and Bess* with the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra Hamburg and Scalia in *Scalia/Ginsburg* at Chautauqua Opera, as well as postponed or cancelled performances as Robbins and Crab Man in *Porgy and Bess* with Greensboro Opera and Howard Boucher in *Dead Man Walking* with The Metropolitan Opera.

Mr. Packer has performed with Nashville Opera, Mobile Opera, Pensacola Opera, Utah Festival Opera, Opera Grand Rapids, Des Moines Metro Opera, Opera Pacific, and New Orleans Opera. He has sung the roles of Rodolfo (*La bohème*), Alfredo (*La traviata*), Pong (*Turandot*), the title role in *Werther*, Pinkerton (*Madama Butterfly*), Sam (*Susannah*), Ruggero (*La rondine*), Dr. Blind (*Die Fledermaus*), Tamino (*The Magic Flute*), Arturo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Amon (*Akhnaten*), and Sportin' Life, Mingo, and Robbins (*Porgy and Bess*).

Mr. Packer has performed in concert with Edmonton Opera, Baton Rouge Symphony, Nashville Symphony, Mobile Symphony, Gulf Coast Opera, Shreveport Opera, Grand Rapids Symphony, Pensacola Symphony, Arkansas Symphony, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfonica de Mineria, Louisiana Philharmonic, Signature Symphony, and Torun Symphony Orchestra. He was also featured in a concert at Théâtre des Champs-Élysées with the Orchestre Symphonique de la Garde Républicaine benefiting the organization Women of Africa.

chauncey-packer



Jake Skipworth, Baritone

Chris the Citizen

Baritone Jake Skipworth makes a return to Chautauqua this summer after being a 2016 Studio Artist with Chautauqua Opera and attending the Voice School in 2015. His most recent performance was with the Butler Opera Center as Escamillo in *Carmen*. Jake has

also performed with Sarasota Opera, St. Pete Opera, Tallahassee Bach Parley, Opera Kansas, Wichita Grand Opera, Heartland Opera Theatre, and the Kent Philharmonic Orchestra. Roles include Belcore in *L'elisir d'amore*, Silvio in *Pagliacci*, the title role and Monterone in *Rigoletto*, Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*, Filiberto in *Il signor Bruschino*, Fiorello in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Moralès and Zuniga in *Carmen*, Haly in *L'italiana in Algeri*, the Commissioner in *La traviata*, Schauard in *La bohème*, Baron Grog in *The Grand Duchess of Gérolstein*, Rucker Lattimore in *Cold Sassy Tree*, Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, Frank in *Die*



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Fledermaus, Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte*, Marco in *Gianni Schicchi*, and King Melchior in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. He completed his Master of Music degree in Opera Performance at Wichita State University, where he studied with world renowned bass-baritone Alan Held. Jake holds a Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance from Oakland University. He is currently pursuing a Doctor of Music Arts degree in Opera Performance at the University of Texas at Austin, where he studies voice with Donnie Ray Albert.



Hilary Grace Taylor, Mezzo-soprano

Indiana Elliot

Hilary Grace Taylor, mezzo-soprano, is a native of Dallas and is in her third season as an Education Outreach Young Artist with The Dallas Opera. Most recently she was a Young Artist with Chautauqua Opera in their 2020 virtual season and recorded and filmed the role of Sappho in Mark Adamo's *Lysistrata* with Pittsburgh Festival Opera. Last season, Hilary was a Semifinalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, a Finalist in the Mildred Miller International Voice Competition, and a Semifinalist in the TCO NEXT: Virtual Voice Competition. She is also the First Place Winner of the Lewisville Lake Symphony International Voice Competition and a winner of the University of North Texas Concerto Competition. Role credits include Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), Principessa (*Suor Angelica*), Giovanna (*Rigoletto*), and with the University of North Texas she has performed Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*), Desirée Armfeldt (*A Little Night Music*), Madame de Croissy (*Dialogues des Carmélites*), Dritte Dame (*Die Zauberflöte*), Marthe (*Faust*), Mrs. Jones (*Street Scene*), Regina (*Regina*) and Gertrude Stein (*After Life by Tom Cipullo*).



Emily Michiko Jensen, Soprano

Angel More

Praised for her “theatrical instincts and intriguingly versatile instrument,” Japanese-American soprano Emily Michiko Jensen is thrilled to return to Chautauqua Opera as an Apprentice Artist, covering the title role in *Tosca*, and singing Angel More in *The Mother of Us All*, while covering Susan B. Anthony. As a 2016 Studio Artist, Emily sang 2nd Soprano in Missy Mazzoli's *Song from the Uproar* and covered Annina in *La traviata*. Again as a Studio Artist, she covered Soprano 2 in *Hydrogen Jukebox* in 2017. This season, Emily joined Pensacola Opera as an Artist-in-Residence, making her company debut as First Lady while covering Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*. She also covered Berta in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Emily made her Florentine Opera debut as Jessie in Weill's *Mahagonny: Ein Songspiel* in May 2021 as a Baumgartner Studio Artist. She was scheduled to perform Maguelonne in Viardot's *Cendrillon* and to cover the title role, as well as covering Mimì in *La bohème*, but the contracts were cancelled due to the pandemic. During the 2019-2020 season, Emily debuted the title role in *Suor Angelica* at the Indiana University Opera Theater. She sang Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*) at Boston Opera Collaborative, where she made her company debut as Marguerite (*Faust*) in 2016. Originally from San Diego, CA, Emily received a Graduate Diploma and M.M. degree in Vocal Performance from The New England Conservatory. She holds a B.M. Degree in Vocal Performance from the Eastman School of Music. Emily is currently pursuing a Performance Diploma at IU as an Associate Instructor scholarship recipient, studying with Timothy Noble.



Nicole Heinen, Soprano

Henrietta M.

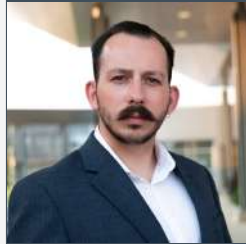
Noted for her “golden-voiced” singing (*Voix des Arts*) and “deft hand at verbal and physical comedy” (*The Isthmus*), American soprano Nicole Heinen has dazzled audiences with her commanding stage presence. During the 2021-2022 season she was a featured concert



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soloist with the New Orleans Opera Association. Nicole has also been a finalist in the Opera Mississippi John Alexander Vocal Competition, semi-finalist in the Premiere Opera Foundation Competition and a Regional Finalist for the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition. As a Baumgartner Studio Artist during the 2018-2019 season, Nicole made her debut with the Florentine Opera, portraying Miss Frayne and Margaret Hughes (cover) in Carlisle Floyd's *Prince of Players*, Fortuna/Valletto in Claudio Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* and was soloist in Florentine Opera's 85th anniversary gala. During this time she won the Wisconsin District as part of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and the IAET Award in the Casa Italia Competition. During the 2017-2018 season Nicole made both her debut appearances as a summer concert artist in residence with the Florentine Opera and performer at the Ravinia Festival. In addition to her debuts, Nicole was a finalist in the 2017 International Handel Aria Competition, in part with the Madison Music Festival. Her repertoire includes, but is not limited to, *Die Königin der Nacht (Die Zauberflöte)*, *Gilda (Rigoletto)*, *Konstanze (Die Entführung aus dem Serail)*, *La Fée (Cendrillon)*, *Marie (La fille du régiment)* and *Cleopatra (Giulio Cesare)*.



Luke Harnish, Bass-baritone

Henry B.

Praised for his "luxuriant baritone," Luke Harnish is quickly establishing himself as a nuanced performer of opera, oratorio, and recital repertoire. Recent roles include Dr. Chillingworth (*The Scarlet Letter*), Nardo (*La finta giardiniera*), and Bob (*The Old Maid and the Thief*), all with Wichita State Opera Theatre. Last summer, he made his Opera Kansas debut as Walter Beech and Roy McPhetridge in the world premiere of *Staggerwing*. Harnish was an apprentice artist with Opera NEO during the '19 and '20 summer seasons, where he most recently performed the role of Papageno in the company's cinematic adaptation of *Die Zauberflöte*. The previous year he sang the title role in *Eugene Onegin*. Mr. Harnish worked closely with Nashville Opera from '18 to '20, performing several roles with the company, including Professor Trixie and Gus (*The Cradle Will Rock*), the Imperial Commissioner (*Madama Butterfly*), and the Page (*Amahl and the Night Visitors*). In concert, he has sung the role of Jesus in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* with Vanderbilt University, the title role in *Elijah* with Wichita State University, and the Baritone Soloist for *Serenade to Music* with the Nashville Symphony Orchestra. On the recital stage, he has presented full performances of Schumann's *Dichterliebe* and Schubert's *Schwanengesang*. During the '22-'23 season, Mr. Harnish will join Lyric Opera of Kansas City as a Resident Artist. There, he will portray Zuniga (*Carmen*), Dottore Grenvil (*La traviata*), and King Balthazar (*Amahl and the Night Visitors*). Harnish is a district winner of the '22 Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition.



James Eder, Bass

Anthony Comstock

James Eder is a bass from Columbus, OH. His voice has been acclaimed as a "solid bass" that is "robust" and "resonant" and having "ample quality and quantity." He has performed in a variety of concerts and in roles ranging throughout the operatic and theater repertoire. His dramatic interpretations have been hailed as "inspired," "laugh-out-loud funny," "a comic delight" and "marvelously sinister and threatening." In the winter of 2021, James returned to Sarasota Opera to perform the roles of Vespone in Pergolesi's *La serva padrona* and Ormondo in Rossini's *L'inganno felice*, and in the spring, James reprised Ormondo with Opera Southwest. In 2020, James was in Sarasota covering the roles of Frère Laurent in *Roméo et Juliette* and Alcindoro in *La bohème* when the season was brought to a halt by shutdowns across the world. Despite challenges surrounding the operatic community, James was fortunate enough to continue to make music, and during the summer of 2020 and was a young artist with Chautauqua Opera, notably performing in the world premiere song cycle, *In Our Silence*. Other recent engagements include Colline in *La bohème* with Cleveland Opera Theater, Truffaldino in *Ariadne auf Naxos* with Cincinnati Opera, The High Priest of Baal in *Nabucco* with Sarasota Opera and The Judge in Cincinnati Opera's



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production of *Another Brick in the Wall* by composer Julien Bilodeau and librettist Roger Waters of Pink Floyd (based on the Pink Floyd album of the same name). James earned a M.M. in Vocal Performance degree from The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and a B.M. in Vocal Performance degree from The Ohio State University. Additionally, James has worked with opera companies including Sarasota Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Opera Southwest, Chautauqua Opera, Opera Columbus, Knoxville Opera, Pittsburgh Festival Opera, Cleveland Opera Theater, Chattanooga Symphony & Opera, Opera Project Columbus, Opera Theater of Pittsburgh, and Brevard Music Center's Janiec Opera Company.



John Kun Park, Tenor

John Adams

John Kun Park is a Korean-American tenor from Los Angeles, CA, whose instrument has been described as “a tenor voice that floats its high notes with ease and emotional fervor.” John is excited to be joining the summer 2022 season of Chautauqua Opera, where he will be covering the role of Mario Cavaradossi in Puccini's *Tosca*, and singing the role of John Adams in Gertrude Stein and Virgil Thomson's *The Mother of Us All*. The 2021 season began with John being a semi-finalist for the Cardiff Singer of the World Competition (digital auditions). He also participated in the Annapolis Opera Vocal Competition, where he was a finalist and received an Encouragement Award. John joined Des Moines Metro Opera and spent the summer performing in their summer season where he covered both Adolfo Pirelli and Beadle Bamford in Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd*. In October, John joined the Los Angeles Philharmonic to workshop the role of Florestan in Beethoven's *Fidelio* in collaboration with Deaf West Theater, and will be returning again in 2022.

John has appeared in the title role in *Faust*, Ismaele (*Nabucco*), and Don José (*Carmen*), and is making strides toward the dramatic and Wagnerian repertoire. He has appeared nationally with companies such as Sarasota Opera, Central City Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, Pittsburgh Festival Opera, West Bay Opera, and Long Beach Opera.



Felix Aguilar Tomlinson, Tenor

Thaddeus Stevens

Felix Aguilar Tomlinson is a Mexican-American lyric tenor from Minneapolis, MN, completing his Graduate Performance Diploma at the Boston Conservatory. Felix has performed extensively in Boston and Minnesota, excelling in roles that are colorful, sympathetic, and demanding — musically, dramatically, and vocally. At the Conservatory, Felix has performed the roles of Tito in *La clemenza di Tito*, Peter Quint in *The Turn of the Screw*, Ernesto in *Don Pasquale*, Younger Thompson in *Glory Denied*, The Magician in *The Consul*, and L'Aumônier in *Dialogues des Carmélites*, and has covered the roles of Father Grenville in *Dead Man Walking* and Lenski in *Eugene Onegin*. Active in the musical theater and opera scene in Minnesota, Felix has performed several roles, including Logan in *The Frat Party* (Really Spicy Opera), Monostatos in *Die Zauberflöte* (Lakes Area Music Festival), Lamar in *Godspell* (Theatre in the Round Players), Ralph Rackstraw in *H.M.S. Pinafore* (The Minneapolis Pops Orchestra) and The Defendant in *Trial by Jury* (Gilbert & Sullivan Very Light Opera Company). In Boston, Felix has been hired as a chorister for the Boston Lyric Opera, Odyssey Opera, the Boston Pops with the Metropolitan Chorale, and the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras. Dedicated to the performance and production of new works, Felix is a founding member of Strange Trace – a fledgling opera company that commissions new digital works of opera from around the world. In addition to his duties as a performer, Felix has been able to explore his passion for directing, filming, and producing in the seven new works he has created with that organization since autumn 2020.



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Samina Aslam, Soprano

Constance Fletcher

Praised by the *Boston Musical Intelligencer* for her “velvet tone that can build to a powerful clarion,” Pakistani-American soprano Samina Aslam is rapidly gaining attention for her stunning interpretations of the lyric soprano repertoire. Ms. Aslam debuted with Chautauqua Opera in 2022 as Mukhtar Mai in Kamala Sankaram’s *Thumbprint* and Constance Fletcher in *The Mother of Us All*.

In previous seasons, Ms. Aslam debuted as Nedda (*I pagliacci*), and the title role in Holst’s rarely performed one-act opera *S?vitri* with New Camerata Opera. She joined Opera NEO to debut the fiery title character in Gluck’s masterpiece *Armide* and to cover Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*). The *San Diego Story* lauded her performance of *Armide*, stating “Samina Aslam’s ample voice displayed the requisite range of colors to embody the gamut of emotions her character displayed...she was most persuasive in furious declamation.”

Ms. Aslam was a Resident Artist at the Boston University Opera Institute, where she received their prestigious Performer’s Certificate. Her repertoire included the title role in Massenet’s *Cendrillon*, Zina (*Dark Sisters*), Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*), and Micaëla (*La Tragédie de Carmen*).

Ms. Aslam completed her graduate studies at the Cincinnati College- Conservatory of Music, where she sang Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*). Ms. Aslam made her professional operatic debut as the Second Spirit (*Die Zauberflöte*) with Opéra Louisiane while completing her bachelor’s degree at Louisiana State University and took First Prize in the Louisiana NATS Competition.



Meredith Smietana, Mezzo-soprano

Isabel Wentworth

Meredith Smietana, mezzo soprano originally hails from Buffalo, New York. Meredith is a graduate of The Mannes School of Music, where she received her Master’s in Vocal Performance. Meredith participated has in the Chautauqua Voice Program for four seasons.

Previous roles include Mutter (*Hansel und Gretel*) Orfeo (cover) Monitress (*Suor Angelica*) Alma March (*Little Women*) and Dido (*Dido and Aeneas*). Meredith is excited to join the Chautauqua Opera Company in *The Mother of Us All* where she is singing the role of Isabel Wentworth and covering Indiana Elliot.



John Potvin, Baritone

Gloster Heming

John Potvin, baritone, is a native of Aiken, SC. He completed his undergraduate study at Furman University, where he received a B.M. Vocal Performance and a B.A. German Studies. He studied voice with Dr. Grant Knox. With Furman Lyric Theater he has performed the roles of Pandolfe in Massenet’s *Cendrillon*, the Baker in Sondheim’s *Into the Woods*, and this past spring the title role in Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*. This fall he will be attending Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music to pursue a M.M. in Voice, where he will study with Kenneth Shaw.



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Stephanie Perez, Mezzo-soprano

Anna Hope

Stephanie Perez is a Mexican-American mezzo-soprano currently based in Los Angeles, California. In her 2019/20 season, she had an upcoming performance as La Zia Principessa in Puccini's *Suor Angelica* with Mannes Opera. Due to COVID 19, Stephanie's performance engagements were postponed. While attending The Mannes School of Music, Stephanie has performed on multiple occasions, including recitals, opera scenes concerts, and productions such as Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*, and her most recent role as Madame Larina in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*. She has also performed partial roles as Carmen (*Carmen*), Charlotte (*Werther*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), Emilia (*Otello*), Marcellina (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Marthe (*Faust*), Mother Marie (*Dialogues of the Carmelites*), Mrs. Quickly (*Sir John in Love*), and Tisbe (*La Cenerentola*). Stephanie has collaborated with Symphony Irvine as the alto soloist in Handel's *Messiah*, as well as being featured with the La Sierra University Orchestra as the alto soloist in *Mass from Two Worlds* by Ariel Quintana. Also, she has appeared in various productions with OPERA AT LA SIERRA, including the role of Zita in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*. Stephanie is currently pursuing a Professional Studies Diploma at The Mannes School of Music, where she was awarded the Presidential Scholarship. She holds a Master of Music in Voice from the Mannes School of Music and a Bachelor of Arts in Music from La Sierra University.

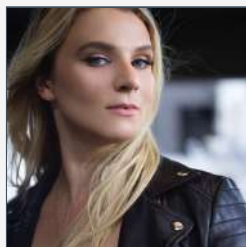


Nicola Santoro, Soprano

Lillian Russell

Soprano Nicola Santoro is quickly establishing herself as a foremost interpreter of contemporary music. This season she was an Artist-In-Residence with Promenade Opera Project and premiered the role of Zoo Director in *The Bedbug* in October 2021. Previously, she starred in the collegiate premiere of *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* as Chrisann Brennan. Additional role credits include Mrs. O'Malley (*It's a Wonderful Life*), Lauretta (*Gianni Schicchi*), and Papagena (*Die Zauberflöte*).

In prior seasons, she received the Encouragement Award in the Boston District of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Awards, was a prize winner in the National Society of Arts and Letters Competition two years in a row, a semifinalist in the Orpheus Competition, and a recipient of the distinguished Georgina Joshi International Fellowship. She has had the opportunity to participate in young artist programs at the Dandelion Opera Institute, SongFest and The CoOperative Program. Nicola was scheduled to be the soloist for Dan Forrest's *Jubilate Deo* with the Columbus, IN, Philharmonic before the concert's cancellation due to the pandemic. She has also sung as a soloist with the Thüringer Symphoniker in The Handel Project (*Alexander's Feast*), and with euphoniumist Demondrae Thurman (*A Summer's Journey*). Nicola earned her Bachelor of Music degree from Westminster Choir College and her Master of Music degree from Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music.



Max Potter, Mezzo-soprano

Jenny Reefer

Praised by *Opera News* for her "relish and energy," mezzo-soprano Max Potter is an up-and-coming artist known for her warmth of tone and dramatic presence. The 2020-21 season featured her main stage debut with Opera Santa Barbara as Flosshilde in the Jonathan Dove reduction of Wagner's *Das Rheingold*, for which she also covered the role of Fricka. Last season also featured her debut of an innovative staging of Berlioz's *Les nuits d'été* at Opera Santa Barbara, the world premiere recording of Constantine Carvasilis' song cycle *Epiphany* for mezzo-soprano and cello, and a concert series with The Muse's Creative Artistry Project



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with a gala performance at the Arkansas Governor's Mansion for Governor Asa Hutchinson. For the 2021-22 season she joined the American Opera Project as a resident singer for the company's "Composers and the Voice" Fellowship, and makes her symphonic debut as the Alto Soloist in Mendelssohn's *Elijah* at The Washington National Cathedral.

Highlights from Max's previous engagements include covering the role of Ortrud in Wagner's *Lohengrin* with Opera Southwest, making her main stage debut with Opera Southwest as Clarina in Rossini's *La cambiale di matrimonio*, and covering the role of Sister Helen Prejean in Jake Heggie's contemporary opera *Dead Man Walking* with Des Moines Metro Opera. Previous roles also include Charlotte (*Werther*), Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), and Concepción (*L'heure espagnole*). Equally at home on the concert stage and in the recital hall, Max has shown her natural affinity for new works. Highlights include *The Sacred Feminine*, an innovative performance piece celebrating the work of Emily Dickinson through spoken word and art song, with New Camerata Opera, and Heggie's *The Breaking Waves* with Des Moines Metro Opera, which she performed in recital for the composer.



Phillip Lopez, Bass-baritone

Ulysses S. Grant

Bass-baritone Phillip Lopez is from Avon, IL, and is a graduate of the Yale School of Music. He also holds degrees from Wichita State University and Millikin University. Recently performed roles include Monterone (*Rigoletto*), Masetto (*Don Giovanni*), Nick Shadow (*The Rake's Progress*), Sancho (*Don Quichotte*), and Riolobo (*Florencia en el Amazonas*). He was also featured in Schubert's complete *Winterreise* cycle. With Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, he has been seen as Antonio (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Major Rose/Spc. Austin Haldemann (*An American Soldier*), Traffic Cop/Peach Checker (*The Grapes of Wrath*), and the Imperial Commissioner (*Madama Butterfly*). Other roles include the title role in *Gianni Schicchi*, Frank Maurant (*Street Scene*), Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*) and Polyphemus (*Acis and Galatea*). Phillip was a member of the Artist-in-Residence Program at Opera Colorado for the 2021-22 season, during which he performed in touring productions of *The Barber of Seville* as Don Bartolo, and in *The Pirates of Penzance* as the Sergeant of Police, as well as in roles for the company's main stage productions – Angelotti (*Tosca*), Senator (*The Shining*) and Zuniga (*Carmen*).



Troy Sleeman, Bass-baritone

Herman Atlan

Troy Sleeman is a senior at the University of Louisville, and he is currently studying Vocal Performance with Professor Chad Sloan. He is in the Collegiate Chorale and the Cardinal Singers directed by Dr. Kent Hatteberg. He is a 2017 GSA alumni and participated in the Kentucky Ambassadors of Music the following year, also directed by Dr. Kent Hatteberg. Troy would like to thank Dr. Wayne Pope from Western Kentucky University for his role in helping him develop his craft and to find new opportunities to express his love for making music, and Professor Chad Sloan for recommending the Chautauqua program. He'd also like to thank Professor Alexander T. Simpson from Bellarmine University for coaching Troy during his time at GSA in 2017. Troy is a bass-baritone, and his most recent role was Belcore in *L'elisir d'amore*, directed by Professor Kimcherie Lloyd and Professor Michael Ramach.



Eric Botto, Tenor

Andrew Johnson

Tenor Eric Botto, a Houston native, is best known for his vocal and dramatic versatility onstage. He has triumphed in leading tenor roles such as Alfredo (*La traviata*), Rodolfo (*La bohème*), Roméo (*Roméo*



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et Juliette), and Nadir (*Les pêcheurs de perles*), but also thrives in comic and character roles such as Earl Tolloller (*Iolanthe*), the Magician (*The Consul*), and Le petit vieillard (*L'enfant et les sortilèges*). He has performed in Italy, as well as across the United States – in New York, California, Texas, Florida, Colorado, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. In the summer of 2020, Eric experienced his first season with Chautauqua Opera, and was honored to be part of the world premiere of *In Our Silence*, an a cappella song cycle composed by Frances Pollock with text by Jerre Dye, drawing on interviews with each of the company's young artists about their experiences during the COVID-19 isolation. Eric equally enjoys performing concert repertoire, and has credits as a soloist in Heinrich Schütz's *Musikalische Exequien*, Uriel in Haydn's *The Creation*, and as the tenor soloist in Christopher Powell's 2021 world premiere of *Rest: A Requiem*. Eric holds music degrees from Colorado State University and the University of Mobile, and is currently pursuing an Artist Diploma at the University of Colorado Boulder under the tutelage of Dr. John Seesholtz.



Rolfe Dauz, Baritone

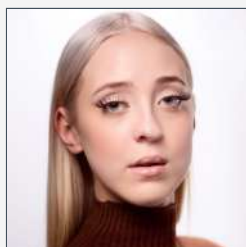
Brother of Indiana Elliot

San Francisco native, Filipino-American baritone Rolfe Dauz's performance highlights include Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*), Leporello and Masetto (*Don Giovanni*), Figaro and Il Conte (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Achilla (*Giulio Cesare*), Claudio (*Agrippina*), and Dulcamara (*L'elisir d'amore*). In 2016 Rolfe was invited to the Banff Centre's Open Space: Opera in the 21st Century, performing the role of Junius in Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*, directed by Paul Curran.

Dauz received his master's degree from the Graduate Vocal Arts Program at the Bard College Conservatory of Music in 2017, where he worked with Sanford Sylvan and Dawn Upshaw. At Bard, Dauz sang the role of the Sprecher in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* and was a soloist in Handel's *Messiah*.

He is a recent graduate of the Dutch National Opera Academy and is a recipient of the Holland Scholarship and the Non-EU Talent Grant. Outside of the DNOA, Rolfe has been a soloist singing Bach cantatas with the Bach Collegium's Hertogenbosch. He covered Leporello in Orchestra of the 18th Century's production of *Don Giovanni* and has been on tour with Opera2Day's production of Philip Glass's *The Fall of the House of Usher*. Recently, Dauz gave a Grote Zangers live stream concert in the Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ and was seen at the 2021 Holland Festival in *Ine Aya*, a new opera by Indonesian composer Yadi Nursalim Anugerah. His vocal-piano duo, Youth and Love, in which he collaborates with Lithuanian pianist Gabriel? Žemaityt?, was recently awarded 2nd prize at the 2021 Copenhagen Lied-Duo Competition.

prdauz.com



Natalie Adame, Mezzo-soprano

Ensemble

Mexican-American mezzo-soprano, Natalia Adame (she/her), is a rising senior at the University of Cincinnati-College Conservatory of Music studying with Amy Johnson and Stuart Skelton. Ms. Adame most recently performed the role of Cupid in *Orpheus in the Underworld* with CCM's Opera d'arte. Last summer, Ms. Adame performed the role of Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro* at the International Opera Summer Festival of Morelia. In 2022 Ms. Adame has received awards from various competitions including the Delta Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competition (Vocal Division Winner), Musician's Club of Women Vocal Competition in Chicago (Nerenberg Award- Second Prize Recipient), ENKOR International Music Competition (Grand Prize Winner), Hal Leonard Collegiate Vocal Competition (Second Prize), the New York Laureate International Music Competition (First Prize Winner), and the Classical Singer University Division (First Prize Winner). This summer, Ms. Adame is covering the roles of Gertrude Stein and Anna Hope in Chautauqua



Megan Fleischmann, Soprano

Ensemble

Megan Fleischmann is a soprano pursuing her bachelor's degree at Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music in the studio of Theresa Brancaccio. At Northwestern she has had the opportunity of singing Adele in *Die Fledermaus*, Miles in *The Turn of the Screw*, and Phyllis in *Iolanthe*. Megan was most recently seen as an Emerging Artist with the Seagle Festival, where she sang the role of Susan Twichell in the world premiere of *Harmony*, an opera by Robert Carl and Russell Banks. In April 2021, Megan was named a finalist and recipient of the Friends of the Opera award in Opera Grand Rapids' Collegiate Vocal Competition. In previous years she was an Apprentice Artist at Miami Beach Classical Music Festival, where she sang Barbarina in *Le nozze di Figaro*. Born and raised in Northern California, Megan has had the pleasure of touring the San Francisco Bay Area with Lamplighters Music Theatre in a number of their productions, most recently singing the role of Rose Maybud in *Ruddigore*. In February 2022 Megan sang the role of Selena in Jake Heggie's *If I Were You* at Northwestern University. Megan is thrilled to join Chautauqua Opera Company for their 2022 season.



Marcus Jefferson, Tenor

Ensemble

Marcus Jefferson is originally from Wayne, NJ, and holds an M.M. degree from the Manhattan School of Music and a B.M. degree from the Eastman School of Music. He currently studies with Jonathan Beyer and Marlena Malas. Marcus's stage credits include Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*) with Oswego Opera Theater, Elder Hayes and Little Bat (*Susannah*) and Benvolio (*Roméo et Juliette*) with the Janiec Opera Company, as well as Don Ottavio, Tenor 2 (Ricky Ian Gordon's *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*), Nutrice (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*) and Major-General Stanley (*The Pirates of Penzance*) with the Eastman Opera Theater. In scenes programs Marcus has appeared as the title character in *Idomeneo*, Giles Corey (*The Crucible*) and Dr. Caius (*Falstaff*) with the Manhattan School of Music Opera Theater. In concert, he has performed as a soloist in major choral works by Mendelssohn, Mozart, and Bach. His recent recording projects include solo works by H. Leslie Adams with the New Muses Project with the Yale School of Music.



Evan Katsefes

Ensemble

Evan Katsefes, tenor, from New York City is a rising second year undergraduate student at the Manhattan School of Music, where he studies with Marlena Malas. This is Evan's third consecutive Summer, but his first in-person experience as student in the voice program. In addition to his participation in the Opera Conservatory, he will cover the role of Andrew Johnson in *The Mother of Us All* and participate in a reading of *The House on Mango Street* at Chautauqua Opera. Evan's time spent outside of his life in music is filled with adventurous travel, cooking, and supporting the arts in and around New York City, which he calls home.



Scott La Marca, Tenor

Ensemble

Scott Rubén La Marca is an American tenor who hails from New York City. He is pursuing his masters of vocal performance at the



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Manhattan School of Music, and his recent credits include Gastone in The Lighthouse Opera Company's production of Verdi's *La traviata*. He also appeared in concert with City Lyric Opera, and in spring of 2022, he made his role debut as Camille in Franz Lehár's, *The Merry Widow* at the Aaron Copland School of Music Opera Studio, under the stage direction of Dorothy Danner and baton of Mark Powell. At The Chautauqua Institution, Mr. La Marca will appear in the Chautauqua Opera Company's production of *The Mother Of Us All*, covering and performing the role of Thaddeus Stevens. Scott Rubén was a Young Artist with the Opera Company of Middlebury, in their production of Tchaikovsky's, *The Maid of Orleans* - under the stage direction of Douglas Anderson and the musical direction of Michael Sakir. Mr. La Marca has also been on the rosters of prestigious intensives such as Classic Lyric Arts - Italy and France, Classical Singing and New York in June, and in the summer of 2020, he was to originate the role of Giorgio for the world premiere of Jake Landau's opera *Pieta*, written for the Narnia Festival in Narni, Italy. Unfortunately, this production was canceled due to COVID-19. Mr. La Marca is passionate about language studies, literature, history, and is a visual artist - having also attended the Pratt Institute for architecture and construction management.



Marquita Richardson, Soprano

Ensemble

Marquita Richardson is a full lyric soprano and voiceover artist from Pottstown, Pennsylvania, now based in Lexington, Kentucky. Having originally pursued medicine, Marquita started taking voice lessons with Dr. Lloyd Mallory, Jr. and returned to school at Delaware State University in 2017. In the spring of 2018, Marquita won an Alltech Scholarship and transferred to the University of Kentucky, where she currently studies with Dr. Everett McCorvey.

Marquita has performed leading roles for the University of Kentucky Opera Theatre (Mimi in *La bohème*, 2022; Abigail Williams in *The Crucible*, 2021; Suor Angelica in *Suor Angelica*, 2019; covering Cio-Cio San in *Madama Butterfly*, 2018). She has sung as a chorus member with Cincinnati Opera and Kentucky Opera, and as a featured soloist with the Louisville Orchestra. This fall, Marquita will perform as Musetta in Kentucky Opera's production of *La bohème* and serve as a 2022-2023 Barbara & Halsey Sandford Studio Artist. She has voiced audiobooks, commercials, and radio show characters, and sung in concert across the United States and abroad. Marquita believes in creating a more empathetic world through art and great storytelling.

Special Thanks

The Chautauqua Institution and the Chautauqua Opera Company would like to acknowledge the continuing generosity of the Norton and Richards families through the Ralph and Elizabeth Norton Philanthropic Trust, and the following major donors who have created endowment funds for opera, and support the opera program through annual giving, and through major capital gifts:

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Young Artist Program

Renowned throughout the United States, Chautauqua Opera Company's Young Artist program is among the most respected training opportunities available for developing singers who are on the threshold of full-time professional careers. This year, General and Artistic Director Steven Osgood and Music Administrator Carol Rausch selected 17 Young Artists from over 900 applications. The singers on this select roster receive intensive training in all facets of performing, including diction, movement, stage combat, career management, and musical and dramatic coaching. Young Artists make up the core of the company and perform in all mainstage Chautauqua Opera productions, in concert with the Chautauqua Symphony, in "Afternoon of Song" recitals in the Athenaeum Parlor and the Opera Invasion series. Chautauqua Opera Company's Young Artist program is proud to have been a training ground for many alumni who have become leading artists with opera companies throughout the United States, Canada and Europe.

Chautauqua Opera Guild

The Chautauqua Opera Guild serves as the advocacy group in support of the Chautauqua Opera Company. Memberships support our Young Artists, the Children's Opera Education Program, and grant access to events all summer long.

[Join today!](#)

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Jack Connolly and Peg Barrett

Virginia H. Cox

Paula Gierszal and Lisa Ann Gierszal

Cheryl Gorelick and Jake Zeigler

Nancy Langston

Jay Lesenger

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Credits

Scenery constructed by Local #266 I.A.T.S.E.

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