

JANÁČEK

*Lyric*

# JENŮFA



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Tristram Kenton/Royal Opera House

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# Welcome to your Lyric

# From the Chair and the General Director

Dear Lyric Community,

The Ken Pigott Stage at Lyric Opera of Chicago is, of course, no stranger to great masterpieces and legendary artists.

Janáček was one of the greatest of operatic composers and reintroducing one of his extraordinary works to Lyric's repertoire is long overdue. *Jenůfa* is a towering masterpiece from the first part of the 20th century. It is truly unforgettable: profoundly moving, as well as being both exhilarating and thought-provoking. As scholar and philosopher Martha Nussbaum notes in her insightful program essay, it is a work whose theological and ethical considerations resonate strongly in our own day.

Our artistic lineup for *Jenůfa* couldn't be more exciting: With the Lyric debuts of Lise Davidsen, Pavel Černoch, Richard Trey Smagur, and Marianne Cornetti, as well as the debuts of our conductor Jakub Hrůša and director Claus Guth, and the return to Lyric of Nina Stemme, our *Jenůfa* performances are sure to have a searing intensity that will do justice to Janáček's overwhelming music drama.

Lyric's ability to bring you thrilling and varied opera seasons of world-class quality is entirely dependent on your passion, generosity, and support. Thank you, as always, for being our partners in bringing these masterpieces to visceral, vibrant life.

As always,



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# Divas Ablaze

Nina Stemme and Lise Davidsen arrive to Lyric at the height of their powers.

*By Roger Pines*



Katharina Schilli / Konieczny Ensemble  
Bill Cooper / Royal Opera House

**On London's classical-music scene,** the most coveted engagement for any artist is surely the *Last Night of the Proms*, the concluding event of the Royal Albert Hall's prestigious BBC Promenade Concerts. A singer appearing as the featured performer on the *Last Night* program is invariably someone who has achieved truly exceptional eminence worldwide. The fact that both Nina Stemme (2017) and Lise Davidsen (2023) have headlined the show says much for the stature each holds among today's operatic elite.

There's much else that connects Stemme and Davidsen. They both hail from Scandinavia—Davidsen is Norwegian, Stemme Swedish. Each owns a dramatic voice of astonishing size and breadth, deployed with deeply impressive musicality—and greeted by unrivaled critical acclaim. Among Stemme's past roles are six that Davidsen now includes in her repertoire.

At both the Metropolitan Opera (*Elektra*) and the Deutsche Oper Berlin (*Die Walküre*), the Stemme/Davidsen partnership has provided some of the most memorable performances of recent seasons. Now these two incandescent artists are paired again, this time at Lyric.

Here's a brief overview of their recent triumphs, showing why they are ideally suited to the fearful demands of their roles in *Jenůfa*.

## NINA STEMME

**The Swedish soprano's Isolde has set new standards** for that most intimidating of roles. Stemme exudes consuming rage in the first act, noble womanliness in the

second, and deeply moving, unearthly exultation in the "Liebestod" of Act Three. When she sings Isolde's final blissful notes, we can almost see them floating into the infinite.

Watch and listen to Stemme's Brünnhilde, in *Götterdämmerung*. In phrase after phrase, she colors her voice with such expressive eloquence that one can hardly imagine hearing the role being sung any other way. At the same time, she confirms her reputation as one the most

utterly natural physical actresses in opera, completely believable is every move she makes. Following her 2017 performance at the Bavarian State Opera, France's distinguished journal *L'Avant-Scène Opéra* reported that "her Immolation Scene reached historic heights. At the final curtain, when she appeared alone, the audience rose to their feet, screaming their joy."

Aida is often a perilous role for Wagner sopranos. Stemme sails through not just the grand-scale outbursts but also the most softly floated moments. Her portrayal reveals the pride of Verdi's heroine as well as the hurt—and when she's coaxing her lover into fleeing Egypt

with her, it isn't just Radamès who's seduced.

Those portrayals exemplify the ease with which Stemme has mastered the pinnacles of dramatic-soprano repertoire. By mid-career it became abundantly clear that she was the true heir of her compatriot, the late Birgit Nilsson. Stemme's voice navigates with unshakeable confidence in high climaxes, but she also boasts a glorious warmth in the lower-middle range that didn't figure in Nilsson's mighty vocal armory. Hearing Stemme in



Nina Stemme as Isolde at the Metropolitan Opera.

Kristian Schüller / Metropolitan Opera

**Opposite: Nina Stemme (left) as Ortrud in *Lohengrin* at the Vienna State Opera and Lise Davidsen (right) as Elizabeth of Valois in *Don Carlo* at the Royal Opera House.**

Elektra's opening phrases, it's as if one could dive into the richness of that sound.

Having begun her career in lyric roles, Stemme moved into more dramatic territory only when she knew her instrument could handle it. Typical is *Jenůfa*: luminous as the heroine two decades ago, she's now taking on the Kostelnička. Portraying one of opera's most formidable female characters, one can expect Stemme to bring to it all the musical and dramatic gifts that make her one of the world's most distinguished singing actresses.

## LISE DAVIDSEN

### Ninety years ago,

Norwegian soprano Kirsten Flagstad created a sensation in her debut at the Metropolitan Opera, revealing herself as the greatest operatic artist her nation had ever produced. Norway waited a long time to give the world a soprano with the potential to scale Flagstadian heights. They've finally found her in Lise Davidsen.

Here is a voice that can truly envelop a listener, as it reaches out effortlessly into the largest theaters. But what repeatedly astonishes Davidsen's listeners isn't just that her singing boasts luscious timbre and heroic size; it's the extraordinary command with which Davidsen can pull her sound back to create true intimacy. It enables Davidsen to launch the opening of the *Rosenkavalier* trio in glistening *pianissimo* phrases. At the same time, of course, her full-voiced high B in the trio's climactic finale is radiance itself.

It has been exhilarating for opera-lovers to watch Davidsen move from strength to strength in her still-evolving career. Both her voice and her glowing stage

presence are making a deep impression as the most womanly characters in the German repertoire. *Opera* magazine described her Royal Opera House portrayal of Leonore in *Fidelio* as "glorious...[her aria was] not just a perfect demonstration of the singer's musicality but also a moment of exquisite beauty." She has also been a memorably heartfelt Chrysothemis (*Elektra*), Eva (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*), and Ariadne; an exceptionally gracious Marschallin (*Der Rosenkavalier*); and a heartstoppingly passionate Sieglinde (*Die Walküre*).

She has brought similar luster to heroines of Verdi and Tchaikovsky.

From the moment Davidsen first attracted international recognition eight years ago, the press instantly envisioned her singing opera's heaviest soprano roles. But like Flagstad before her (and like Nina Stemme), Davidsen is an intensely disciplined artist who respects her voice. She's not in a hurry—she wants the voice to last. As she continues to broaden her repertoire, she's wisely looking to roles in which warm femininity of voice and person have always been the hallmarks. Now at Lyric, in witnessing her first staged *Jenůfa*, all who hear Davidsen can revel in

the voice and artistry that have given audiences such joy—and, indeed, such glorious hope for the future of opera. **L**

*Roger Pines, former dramaturg at Lyric, is a contributing writer to Opera News, Opera (U.K.), and major recording labels. A faculty member of Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music, he has been a panelist on the Metropolitan Opera's Opera Quiz since 2006.*



Lise Davidsen in *Tannhauser* at the Royal Opera House.

Clive Barda



*Lyric*

Janáček's *Jenůfa* is a dark and stunning masterpiece, one of the great works of the past century. In this profoundly moving story, the Kostelníčka secretly drowns her foster-daughter Jenůfa's illegitimate child, hoping to save Jenůfa—and herself—from shame and humiliation. When the murder is discovered, the Kostelníčka accepts the consequences, but Jenůfa ends the opera with hope for the future. Performing Janáček's magnificent score is an enthralling cast led by Czech maestro Jakub Hrůša in Claus Guth's mesmerizing production.



Asmik Grigorian as Jenůfa and Elena Zilio as Grandmother Buryja at the Royal Opera House.

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**Jenůfa**



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# Jenůfa

**New-to-Chicago production**

Music by **Leoš Janáček** | Opera in three acts in Czech

Libretto by **Leoš Janáček** and **Gabriela Preissová**

November 12m, 15m, 18, 21, & 26m, 2023

## CHARACTERS IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

Jenůfa  
Grandmother Buryja  
Laca  
Jana  
Foreman  
Kostelnička  
Števa  
Barena  
Shepherdess  
Mayor  
Mayor's Wife  
Karolka

**Lise DavidSEN<sup>+</sup>**  
**Marianne Cornetti<sup>+</sup>**  
**Pavel Černoch<sup>+</sup>**  
**Kathryn Henry<sup>•</sup>**  
**Laureano Quant<sup>•</sup>**  
**Nina Stemme**  
**Richard Trey Smagur<sup>+</sup>**  
**Lindsey Reynolds<sup>•</sup>**  
**Sophia Maekawa<sup>++</sup>**  
**Wayne Tigges<sup>++</sup>**  
**Katherine DeYoung<sup>++</sup>**  
**Lucy Baker<sup>++</sup>**

Dancers:

**Chase Buntrock, Sam Crouch, Adeline "A" Else<sup>+</sup>,  
Katy Fedrigon<sup>+</sup>, Kara Hunsinger, Maddy Joss<sup>+</sup>,  
Morgan Reed McDaniel, Martín Ortiz Tapia,  
Ashley Rivette<sup>+</sup>, Brandon Talbott<sup>+</sup>**

Conductor  
Original Director  
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**Jakub Hruša<sup>+</sup>**  
**Claus Guth<sup>+</sup>**  
**Axel Weidauer**  
**Michael Levine**  
**Cliona Ní Mhocháin<sup>+</sup>**  
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**Francesco Milioto**  
**Eric Weimer**  
**Susan Miller Hult**  
**Greg Smith**  
**Klára Moldová**  
**Samantha Kaufman**

First performed at Mahen Theatre, Brno, Czechia on January 21, 1904.  
First performed by Lyric Opera of Chicago on November 2, 1959.

<sup>+</sup> Lyric debut

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# Synopsis

PLACE | **A village in Moravia**

TIME | **19th century**

## **ACT I:** *The Buryja Mill*

Jenůfa waits anxiously to hear if her beloved Števa will be drafted, for she is carrying his child, and her secret will soon be known. She is relieved to learn that he has not been called up and so can marry her before the pregnancy becomes obvious. Števa's jealous half-brother Laca secretly loves Jenůfa. A drunken Števa staggers in with some other recruits and breaks into a rowdy dance. Their behavior incurs the disapproval of Jenůfa's stepmother, the Kostelnička (not her name but her title—it means "village sacristan"), who tells Števa he can marry Jenůfa only after a year of abstaining from drink. Left alone, Jenůfa begs Števa to marry her as soon as possible. They are interrupted and Števa runs off declaring that he will never abandon Jenůfa. After Števa has left, Laca tries to incite Jenůfa's anger against Števa; failing that, he impulsively slashes her cheek with a knife. The worker Barena, who has been looking on, tells the others it was an accident, but the Foreman, who knows of Laca's true feelings for Jenůfa, accuses Laca of hurting her deliberately.

## **INTERMISSION**

## **ACT II:** *The Kostelnička's house, five months later*

While everyone thinks Jenůfa has been sent away, the Kostelnička has hidden her away at home, where she has given birth to a boy. Though Jenůfa loves the child, the Kostelnička cannot bear the shame. Having secretly sent for Števa, the Kostelnička gives Jenůfa a sleeping potion. When Števa arrives the Kostelnička tells him about the baby and begs him to marry Jenůfa and acknowledge his son. Števa refuses: he is now engaged to Karolka, the Mayor's daughter. Distraught, the Kostelnička turns to Laca, who is eager to marry Jenůfa. He is so upset to hear about the baby that the Kostelnička impulsively lies, claiming that the child is dead. Taking the baby, she heads for the freezing river to drown him. Jenůfa wakes, disoriented, just as the Kostelnička returns; the Kostelnička tells her she has been in a fever for two days during which the baby has died. She also tells her of Števa's forthcoming marriage. Laca returns and offers himself to Jenůfa. He insists that he loves Jenůfa despite everything, and she agrees to become his wife.

## **INTERMISSION**

## **ACT III:** *Two months later*

The marriage between Jenůfa and Laca is about to take place. Just as the couple are about to receive the Kostelnička's blessing, a commotion outside interrupts the ceremony; the body of a baby has been found in the thawing river. Jenůfa realizes this must be her own child. Everyone now turns on Jenůfa, but the Kostelnička confesses her crime, begging the crowd to hold Jenůfa blameless. As the Kostelnička is led away to face her punishment, Jenůfa forgives her stepmother. **L**

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***Jenůfa* is produced in association  
with the Royal Opera House, Cov-  
ent Garden. This production was  
first seen at the Royal Opera House,  
Covent Garden on September 28,  
2021.**

**Lyric Opera of Chicago thanks its  
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## **APPROXIMATE TIMINGS**

**This production will be performed  
with two intermissions.**

## **Running time**

Act I	45 minutes
Intermission	25 minutes
Act II	55 minutes
Intermission	25 minutes
Act III	35 minutes

**TOTAL** 3 hours 5 minutes



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# Director's note

Innovative director Claus Guth illuminates the contemporary aspects of *Jenůfa*.



**I've always had a slight hesitation** about staging Janáček, most of all because of the unfamiliar language, but also because of the considerable density of the text that operas from this cultural sphere tend to have. As a director, when coming to grips with an opera and how to stage it, I'm very strongly influenced by the music. And over the years I've become increasingly enthralled by Janáček's musical language, primarily because of its blend of extreme emotional intensity and formal rigor. Janáček's style is minimalistic in that it articulates only what is necessary to produce the maximum emotion. This strikes me as very modern, very contemporary.

What also fascinates me are the distinctly unoperatic features of his style. There are many passages where other composers would have composed an entire aria out of Janáček's few bars of music, whereas he prefers to break off and start developing a new idea. I am also hugely interested in Janáček's extensive use—in his setting of the text as well as in the music itself—of insistence and repetition, forever ratcheting up the tension. That completely subverts the cliché that his works are purely naturalistic representations.

I heartily contradict the notion that this work is set

merely in a (historical) village context and functions exclusively within that realistic framework. During the rehearsal process, again and again we noticed that singers as well as members of the production team came up against themes they recognized from their own lives—a particularly striking example being the kind of repetitive impulse that's seen in certain family histories.

Once a problem or a failing has manifested itself, it seems inescapable that the same problem will be passed on from generation to generation, like a family curse. It's as though all the force and frenzy we apply to blocking it actually summons it into being. It's an interesting notion, and one that's deeply rooted in this opera. On the other hand, the opera describes very precisely the narrowness of this world, from which there is hardly any escape. Only through an extreme experience such as that which befalls Jenůfa does a possibility for a different life open up at the end, despite all the horror that this entails.

So while telling a very clear and realistic story, the opera also functions as a parable, looking outside and beyond itself. That is the core of our interpretation. While appreciating the mood and music of the opera, we also want audiences to realize the universality of the story. **L**



A scene from the Royal Opera House's production of *Jenůfa*.

Tristram Kenton/Royal Opera House

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Music Director  
**Enrique Mazzola**

# Conductor's note

A conversation with Jakub Hrůša on the challenges and enduring impact of his countryman's opera.



**Janáček is of course a fellow Czech—does that similarity give you particular insight into his work?**

It's true that because of where I was born I'm often asked to do Janáček's work. But if I may speak personally, it's very close to my heart and background—an essential point of my knowledge and experience. *Jenůfa* in particular is, to this day, a piece which among all operas of all times has one of the deepest and most powerful emotional impacts on me. In other words, I'm always moved and in tears.

**It can be a rather shattering piece.**

The story is not easy to bear. I've spoken to singers who have found it very uneasy or difficult to do—especially parents. The problem with Janáček is that he goes inside your heart and doesn't give you distance from what you see and hear. But the music helps us with a catharsis, as in an old Greek drama. Really, the outcome of this terrible, cruel story is that you feel emotionally purified. If someone has gone through a very difficult stage of life and sheds many tears, then at the end of the process, there's a better feeling. This is a very strong piece of drama which guides you through very deep and very personal emotions.

**Where do you place this opera among the composer's work—and among his contemporaries?**

Among Janáček's works, it's definitely the most accessible—a masterpiece, but one that hews closely to Romantic traditions. Opera lovers who are very much at home in the idiom of the 19th century, in Verdi and in Wagner, in Gounod or Massenet—they will still find a very easy connection to *Jenůfa*. I've heard that the piece hasn't been done for some time at Lyric, and hopefully it will be a very beautiful discovery for the audience.

**You're saying that *Jenůfa* is more accessible than *The Cunning Little Vixen*?**

Musically, for sure—much more. *The Cunning Little Vixen* is considered a fairy tale with animals and interesting stories, accessible to children and so on. But in terms of musical language, in terms of soundscape, it makes you a little uneasy. And also it's extremely difficult to stage.

**What else draws you to *Jenůfa*?**

*Jenůfa* is the first outburst of Janáček's originality and his creative power. I first saw it as a teenager—and it seemed to me greater than any other piece in the theater. But who wouldn't feel that way? Once you are willing to be drawn into the drama, it's inevitable to be touched. Janáček will not let you leave the theater indifferent. Sometimes his reputation is that he's too harsh and somehow too radical and not easy to listen to. But very often it's because it hasn't been managed well. It's a challenging piece of music, always. You have to take care to really play it well. If you do, it works.

**You're very accomplished in both operatic and orchestral repertoire. Do you approach them in any different way?**

Yes and no. There are different genres, but of course, music is music. So the essence of my work as conductor is the same. On a profound level, though, opera requires more teamwork. And I have always liked it because I think with more people, points of view, and art forms involved—once they achieve true harmony and collaboration—the effect can be even stronger. I realized quite early on that opera as a genre is kind of a climax or the peak of what a musician can do. But I also realized that very often it gets compromised in quality. You cannot presume that every single project you do will be exactly according to your wishes—so opera for me is the genre to try to do as best as possible in the hope that—at least several times in your life—it will be really fantastic. ■



# Jenůfa's Radical Love

At its core, the work is a searing tale of profound forgiveness.

By Martha C. Nussbaum



Asmik Grigorian as Jenůfa and Nicky Spence as Laca in the Royal Opera House production.

**Leoš Janáček's *Jenůfa* combines bold** musical originality with stunning insight into concrete characters who are forced to grapple with difficult ethical and emotional dilemmas. Also called *Její pastorkyňa* (*Her Stepdaughter*, from the title of a stage play by Gabriela Preissová, produced in 1890, that was the composer's basis for his libretto), *Jenůfa*, Janáček's first opera, had its premiere in January 1904—in Brno, because personal enmity had denied the composer a premiere in Prague. At first only a local success, it eventually became an international triumph in 1916 with its Prague premiere (in an inferior revised version, now never performed, made by a fashionable conductor), when the composer was over 60 years old.

*Jenůfa* took its composer nine years to write, and it was completed during a time of great personal tragedy; his daughter, Olga, age 20, died of typhoid fever in 1903. (His only other child, a son, had died young in 1890.) Olga, always frail, took a passionate interest in the opera during its composition, imploring her father to play it for her on the piano because, she said, "I won't live to hear it." It is dedicated to her memory.

Janáček (1854–1928), born in the small Moravian town of Hukvaldy, is one of three distinguished Czech composers of this period, the other two being Dvořák (1841–1904) and Smetana (1824–1884). He is the only one to be Moravian rather than Bohemian, and the customs and people of Moravia were dear to him throughout



**Saimir Pirgu as Števa and Asmik Grigorian as Jenůfa in the Royal Opera House production.**

his life. Like the other two, he took great interest in folk songs and their expression of national identity. But his primary interest was always in individual people and the dilemmas they faced in rigid societies. Three of his greatest operas (*Jenůfa*, *Kát'a Kabanova* (1921), and *The Makropulos Affair* (1926)) all focus on the plights of women. Janáček was unique in his focus on the music of everyday speech; he notated “speech melodies” wherever he was. Even while sitting by his daughter’s sickbed, he notated her sighs as she was breathing her last—not out of hard-heartedness, but in the belief that the music of speech was at the heart of a person’s humanity. He therefore disliked poetic libretti, and is probably the first composer of opera to use prose. In place of poetry, he often uses repetition of short phrases, and *Jenůfa* is full of many such repetitions.

Above all, Janáček’s interest is in the individual trying to achieve ethical freedom and a meaningful life in a world in which many choices are taken from her by social constraints. In *Jenůfa* he grapples with two weighty ethical issues: infanticide and the nature of forgiveness. On both issues the opera offers subtle and original insights, focusing, always, on the individual and her freedom, or lack of freedom.

The Kostelnička’s decision to kill Jenůfa’s infant is often seen as simply monstrous, a sign that she has lost her sanity. Critics, however, rarely consider her choice as that of a real person in a concrete historical and social context, and we must now do so.

Infanticide is forbidden by Christianity, Judaism, and Islam (though it was a respectable practice among the ancient Greeks, where “exposure” of an infant was a common practice). In the 18th and 19th centuries, the Christian cultures of Europe treated both the unwed mother and her illegitimate child with immense

harshness, even when the mother could show that she was seduced by false promises, or even raped, often by a man of greater wealth or higher social station. A lot of infanticide was probably covered up by the fact that stillbirths did not have to be registered.

But when infanticide could be proven, much sympathy was shown—not by society as a whole, but by a whole chorus of eminent writers, who treated the act as wrong but urged sympathy on account of the untenable social situation of the unwed mother in a rigidly moralistic society. The most famous such case in literature is Marguerite in Goethe’s *Faust*, who kills her baby and is sentenced to die, but whose penitent soul ascends to heaven with the help of an army of angelic intercessors. Goethe’s earlier *Urfaust* ended with a harsh judgment: *Sie ist gerichtet* (“She is judged.”). But by the time he published *Faust* Part One in 1808, he had altered this to *Sie ist gerettet*—“She is saved.”

Even the highly moralistic George Eliot, in *Adam Bede* (1859, based on a real legal case), allows Hetty Sorrel (who abandons her illegitimate child to die of exposure, and is initially sentenced to death) to be transported, instead, to Australia, where she can begin a new life.

Here Eliot, well-read in philosophy, echoes the view of none other than the most rigid defender of capital punishment in the history of philosophy, Immanuel Kant. For even Kant—a prime contender otherwise for first place in philosophy’s misogyny sweepstakes—insists in his *Doctrine of Right* (1797) that indulgence should be shown to the woman who commits infanticide in harsh social circumstances. It is the one case where, in his view, capital punishment for murder is not required. Penal law “finds itself in a quandary,” so that law must be “either cruel or indulgent.” The act is bad and should be punished, and yet the unwed mother is a victim of social circumstances that put her outside legal justice in a “state of nature.” The passage is so unlike Kant that commentators have found it surprising, but it is clear that he treats the woman as not a monster but a rational agent choosing a bad act out of lack of alternatives.

Literature also shows us clearly that society bore down harshly upon the woman who chose to keep the baby, and on her illegitimate offspring. The heroine of Mrs. Gaskell’s *Ruth* (1853), seduced by an aristocrat with false promises of marriage, is urged by a sympathetic dissenting cleric to move elsewhere and pass herself off as a widow. She does so successfully for many years, and is about to get married when her seducer turns up in town and the truth is somehow revealed. Ruth loses her employment, her fiancé, and even the love of her righteous now-adult son (who repents only at her graveside).

As for illegitimate children, they did better in some places than in others. Pierre, in Tolstoy’s *War and Peace* (1867) even inherits his father’s estate. In the more puritanical Britain, illegitimacy was freighted with severe social and financial disadvantages—although Anthony



Trollope, in *Doctor Thorne* (1858), put in a plea for acceptance, and Wilkie Collins, in *No Name* (1862), issued an eloquent call for reform of punitive inheritance laws.

**This is the intellectual and artistic** context for Janáček's opera. *Jenůfa* is set in a Moravian town whose Protestant faith is enforced by severe social codes not unlike those of Victorian Britain. Had Jenůfa kept her child, she might possibly have been socially forgiven if Števa had married her. But once that possibility is off the table, the life that looms ahead is extremely bleak, both for her and for the little child. The Kostelnička (whose name means The Church-Wardeness, from her prior marriage) knows this well, and she loves her stepdaughter. She finds out that for Laca, who loves Jenůfa very deeply, the presence of his brother's child is disqualifying for marriage. With the baby, then, there will be no marriage and no happy future. Nor will Jenůfa herself entertain the thought of infanticide—and if she did she would be punished, probably with death.

On the far side of infanticide the Kostelnička can see a happy future for Jenůfa—and of course she sees rightly, as the opera's hopeful ending shows. But for this future to exist the infanticide must be done, and done by her alone, with Jenůfa utterly ignorant. In short, she must sacrifice her own moral purity to save her beloved step-daughter. (She notes that the infant has been baptized and thus will not be outside God's salvation.)

The Kostelnička knows that she will be committing a terrible crime, and yet if she does not commit it she will be ensuring lifelong misery for the person she loves most. Her dilemma is tragic—the clash of “right with right” characteristic of Greek tragedy (to which the opera has usefully been compared). She is truly in Kant's “state of nature,” where the usual boundaries of law and morality fail to fit the situation. Her choice is both rational and horrible, and it is dictated above all by love. It is an altruistic sacrifice of her own future life. She becomes deranged by guilt not because she is a moral monster, but because, having made a choice for the sake of love, she must bear the moral weight of the choice she has made, rather like Orestes pursued by the Furies, as Janáček shows us with devastating dramatic and musical clarity. If she were not a highly moral woman she would not suffer as she does. The opera's compelling and original twist to Goethe's well-known Marguerite scenario thus lies in the presence of a third party who chooses to bear the weight of guilt in order to spare another.

Now to forgiveness. The opera is always described as a story of forgiveness, and this is not wrong. But

because interpreters do not examine different accounts of forgiveness known to religion and philosophy, they do not clarify the radical nature of Jenůfa's and Laca's moral achievement. Christian forgiveness comes in several varieties, and the most usual type, which I shall call “transactional forgiveness,” is not a pure good, but, very often, an ally of punitive attitudes of humiliation and domination. As defined for centuries by the Church, it is a practice involving the waiving of angry attitudes—but only if the sinner confesses, abases him or herself before the wronged party, and vows to be different in the future. It may ultimately be before an imagined angry God that the penitent must plead for forgiveness, but agents of the Church or of social authority are all too eager to assume this role. The practices of confession and contrition are suffused with shame and humiliation, as the penitent grovels in fear.

The Gospels contain some examples of transactional forgiveness, but Jesus more often commends two

other attitudes: unconditional forgiveness, and unconditional love. Unconditional forgiveness looks a lot more morally attractive, in its respect for the sinner's autonomy, but the organized Church, not surprisingly, had little use for it because the Church lacked a central role in the process. Furthermore, even unconditional forgiveness is at times suspect. St. Paul, for example, urges people to forgive an enemy, “for in so doing you will heap coals of fire upon his head” (*Romans 12:20*). This gloating attitude of superiority is all too common in social life, where

people seek to demonstrate their own superiority by behavior that is “holier than thou.”

From the very beginning, Jenůfa's version of Christianity is utterly different. In her Act II prayer to the Virgin Mary, she addresses Mary and Jesus as loving and merciful patrons of all exiles and sinners. No groveling is required here: God is a source of pure unconditional love. This attitude too is found in the Gospels, in Christ's simple injunction to “love your enemies,” and especially in the parable of the Prodigal Son, in which the father runs out to receive his son without any demand of confession or abasement, motivated solely by intense love. But such generosity tends to get short shrift in organized religion and in hierarchical societies.

Jenůfa models her own conduct on this idea of a radical unconditional love.

Thus, she never asks Laca to beg forgiveness for his earlier act of aggression. She dismisses the very idea: “I forgave you long ago.” (We might call this true unconditional forgiveness, purified of its assumption of moral superiority.) And she refuses her stepmother's attempt to kneel and beg forgiveness: “Do not kneel,

“... what words  
cannot convey is the  
depth of Janáček's  
music, as he finds  
daring musical  
expression for ideas  
of surging love....”



Asmik Grigorian as Jenůfa and April Koyejo-Audiger as Barena in the Royal Opera House production.

dear mother. There's already been enough humiliation and torment." Like the Prodigal Son's father, she simply leaves the moral work to her: "We should not curse her, and we should not condemn her: give her time to atone."

The love of Jenůfa and Laca is emotionally convincing and deep because it is founded on a shared view of unconditional love. Jenůfa has noticed "the generous way in which you behaved to me while I was kept in hiding"—not condescending, not assuming superiority—and right away, her love acknowledging his own unconditional love, she sees that he is the man for her. (Thus Janáček is able to eliminate a long scene in Preissova's play in which Laca convinces Jenůfa of his love.) At the end of Act II, seeing already that he is willing to take her with all her sorrow and hardship, she says, "Then I'll gladly share the good as well as the ill that may befall us." And when they are left alone, at the end of Act III, saying, "You were always the best and finest man of all," she gives him one last chance to leave her, and Laca passes the test, saying: "What does the world matter, if we are together." Joined in a love as

radical as it is rare, they transcend society's conceptions of sin and forgiveness.

The libretto gives us all this, but what words cannot convey is the depth of Janáček's music, as he finds daring musical expression for ideas of surging love, unconditionality, and the transcendence of mere social forms. Among comparable composers only Mahler (who, invited by Janáček in 1904 to attend a performance of *Jenůfa*, replied asking for a German-language vocal score, but never got a response, since no such score was available) has a similar musical affinity for these ideas, and he never wrote an opera. Only Janáček, then, has been able to embody a radically unconventional religious vision in vibrant individual lives. So, as the final music swells upward, with Jenůfa's "Oh Laca, dearest Laca! Oh come! Come!," they go forth into the new universe of inner freedom that their love has created. ■

*Martha C. Nussbaum is a Professor of Law and Philosophy at the University of Chicago. She is the author, among other books, of Anger and Forgiveness (2016).*

# Artist profiles



**LISE DAVIDSEN**  
**JENŮFA**  
*Lyric debut*

This season's highlights for the Norwegian soprano include the *Last Night of the Proms* at the Royal Albert Hall, a solo recital on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera, and role debuts as Salome at the Opéra national de Paris and as Leonora in a new production of *La forza del destino* at the Metropolitan Opera. She also returns to the roles of Giorgetta/*Il Tabarro* and Lisa/*The Queen of Spades*, both at the Bayerische Staatsoper. She will appear in recital in Santa Monica at BroadStage Theatre; the Wiener Staatsoper; Teatro de Zarzuela in Madrid; Wigmore Hall in London; and Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia in Valencia. She will sing Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder* with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and Yannick Nézet-Séguin at Carnegie Hall; and a program of Verdi and Strauss at Teatro Real in Madrid. Other recent role debuts include Marschallin/*Der Rosenkavalier* at the Metropolitan Opera, Giorgetta/*Il Tabarro* at Gran Teatre del Liceu, and Elisabetta/*Don Carlo* at Royal Opera House, where she also appeared as Elisabeth/*Tannhäuser*. Last season she appeared at the Metropolitan Opera as Eva in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, the title role in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and Chrysothemis in *Elektra*. In summer 2022, she returned to the Bayreuth Festival as Sieglinde in a new *Ring* tetralogy and as Elisabeth/*Tannhäuser*. Her discography includes two solo orchestral recitals on Decca, a recording of Grieg songs with fellow Norwegian Leif Ove Andsnes, and the Grammy-nominated Concert for Ukraine with the Metropolitan Opera.



**NINA STEMME**  
**KOSTELNÍČKA**  
*Previously at Lyric:* Elektra/*Elektra* (2018/19).

The Swedish-born soprano is known for her portrayals of some of the most challenging roles in the repertoire, including Isolde, Brünnhilde, Kundry, Salome, Elektra, Fanciulla, and Turandot. Highlights of this season include *Tristan und Isolde* at the Teatro San Carlo in Naples, at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, and at the Vienna State Opera; her long-awaited debut as Ortrud/*Lohengrin* at the Vienna State Opera; a new production of *Die Frau ohne Schatten* (as the Dyer's wife) at the San Francisco Opera; and recitals in Geneva, Toulouse, Stockholm, and Budapest, and at the Wigmore Hall (London). After a successful debut as the Dyer's wife in the anniversary production of *Frau ohne Schatten* at the Vienna State Opera, she most recently debuted the role of the Kostelníčka in *Jenůfa* at the Theater an der Wien. In May 2022, Nina Stemme performed Brünnhilde for the last time in a complete *Ring* cycle at the

Vienna State Opera, a role she had sung with great success worldwide for more than 10 years. In 1993, she won the Operalia competition.



**PAVEL ČERNOCH**  
**LACA**  
*Lyric debut*

The tenor's highlights this season include his signature role the Prince in *Rusalka* at the Wiener Staatsoper and in a new production at Staatsoper Berlin, as well as returns to the Opéra national de Paris as Albert Gregor in *The Makropulos Affair* and to Staatsoper Hamburg as Sergei/*Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*. Last season, Černoch had his role debut as Apollo in Romeo Castellucci's new production of *Daphne* at Staatsoper Berlin; sang the Prince in Philipp Stölzl's new production of *Rusalka* at Dutch National Opera and at home in Prague; and the title role of *Faust* at Staatsoper Hamburg. Other recent highlights include a role debut as Florestan/*Fidelio* at Staatsoper Berlin and as Max/*Der Freischütz* at Bayerische Staatsoper, as well as performances of some of his most beloved roles: Cavaradossi/*Tosca* at Staatsoper Hamburg and the National Theatre Opera in Prague; Laca/*Jenůfa* at Theater an der Wien; The Prince/*Rusalka* in a new production by Christoph Loy at Semperoper Dresden and in Prague; and Pinkerton/*Madama Butterfly*, again in Hamburg. Other recent highlights include Cavaradossi in a new production of *Tosca* at La Monnaie and in performances at the National Theatre Opera in Prague; Vladimir in Barrie Kosky's new production of Borodin's *Prince Igor* at Opéra national de Paris; his company debut with Canadian Opera Company in the role of Prince in Dvořák's *Rusalka*; the title role of *Don Carlo* with Staatsoper Hamburg; Giasone/*Médée* at the Salzburg Festival, and Sergei/*Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* at Opéra national de Paris.



**RICHARD TREY SMAGUR**  
**ŠTEVA**  
*Lyric debut*

This season's highlights for the American tenor include Adorno/*Simon Boccanegra* at Opera Philadelphia, Laca/*Jenůfa* at English National Opera, Don José/*Carmen* at Austin Opera, and Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* with the Vancouver Symphony. Last season, Smagur appeared in *Der fliegende Holländer* as the Steuermann at the Metropolitan Opera and as Erik at the Santa Fe Opera. He made role and house debuts with Virginia Opera in their *Ring* Cycle as Siegmund, and had symphonic engagements including *Carmen* in concert with the Reno Philharmonic and Beethoven's 9th with the Tucson

Desert Song Festival Orchestra. Other recent highlights include Don Jose in *Carmen* at Houston Grand Opera as well as his house debut at Opera San Jose. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut in the holiday presentation of *The Magic Flute* as First Armored Man, and performed with the Reno Philharmonic for their presentation of Beethoven's 9th Symphony. He also made role debuts as Alfredo in *La traviata* at Wolf Trap and as Gounod's *Faust* in his home state of Georgia. Previously, he returned to Houston Grand Opera to make his role debut as the Witch in a streamed broadcast of *Hansel and Gretel*, as well as role debuts there as Gastone in *La traviata*, Young Servant in *Elektra*, and Count Almaviva in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Smagur has been a fellow at the Steans Music Institute at Ravinia Music Festival, and was a participant in Houston Grand Opera's 2012 Young Artists Vocal Academy.



**MARIANNE CORNETTI**  
**GRANDMOTHER BURYJA**  
*Lyric debut*

In early 2024, the internationally renowned mezzo-soprano will play the role of Cieca in *La Gioconda* at the Deutsche Oper in Berlin and the role of Madame Croissy in Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites* with Amigos Canarios de la Opera in the Gran Canary Islands. Cornetti opened the 2022/23 Season with performances as Ježibaba in *Rusalka* with Pittsburgh Opera (where she was last seen as the Witch in *Hansel and Gretel*), and also joined the company in her signature role of Azucena in *Il trovatore*, which she also reprises with Opera Hong Kong in the spring. She has performed the role also at the Teatro alla Scala, Metropolitan Opera, Arena di Verona, Bregenz Festival, National Theatre of China in Beijing, Teatro San Carlo in Naples, Gran Teatre del Liceu, Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich, Israeli Opera in Tel Aviv, and Teatro Regio in Parma. Other career highlights include Ulrica in *Un ballo in maschera* at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Abigail in *Nabucco* at Metropolitan Opera and at New National Theatre Tokyo, Lady Macbeth in *Macbeth* at Deutsche Oper Berlin, Ortrud in *Lohengrin* at Opéra national de Paris, Brangäne in *Tristan und Isolde* at Teatro dell'Opera di Roma, and Principessa di Bouillon in *Adriana Lecouvreur* at Opéra de Monte-Carlo.



**LAUREANO QUANT**  
**FOREMAN**

*Previously at Lyric:* Notary/*The Daughter of the Regiment* (2023/24) and Dancaire/*Carmen* (2022/23).

A second-year member of the Ryan Opera Center Ensemble and a native of Barranquilla, Colombia, the baritone holds a Master of Music degree from the Manhattan School of Music and a Master of Musical Arts degree from Yale University. Highlights of his repertoire include Belcore/*The Elixir of Love*, Guglielmo/*Così fan tutte*, Figaro/Saverio Mercadante's *I due Figaro*, Maguire/Tobias Picker's *Emmeline*, Zurga/*The Pearl Fishers*, Vittorio and the Boarder/Nino Rota's *I due timidi*, Demetrius/*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and the Captain and Prince Ragotsky/*Candide*. In the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, Quant was

awarded Second Place in both the Western Region (2022) and the Southeastern Region (2020). He has also won the Luminarts Cultural Foundation Men's Voice Fellowship (2023), the Online Audience Award in Houston Grand Opera's Concert of Arias (2020), and First Prize in the Premio de Canto Ciudad de Bogotá (2018). *Laureano Quant is sponsored by Lead Sponsor Peter Scheuermann.*



**KATHRYN HENRY**  
**JANA**

*Previously at Lyric:* Passenger 1/*Proximity* (2022/23).

Soprano Kathryn Henry is a second-year soprano with Lyric Opera's Ryan Opera Center. In the summer of 2021, she portrayed Lucy Harker/John Corigliano's *The Lord of Cries* (world premiere) at the Santa Fe Opera, a role she has since recorded. A former Baumgartner Studio Artist at Milwaukee's Florentine Opera, she appeared there as Barbarina/*The Marriage of Figaro*, Micaëla/*La tragédie de Carmen*, and the title role/Pauline Viardot's *Cendrillon*. As a Toulmin Foundation Scholar at New York's Juilliard School of Music, Henry portrayed Arminda/*La finta giardiniera*. A native of Sheboygan, Wisconsin, the soprano has appeared at the Harris Theater's *Beyond the Aria* series alongside Lawrence Brownlee as well as with the National Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra, and Civic Orchestra of Chicago. She was invited to participate in Carnegie Hall's 2022 SongStudio with Renée Fleming and Ravinia's 2020 Steans Music Institute. Henry was a finalist in the 2015 Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition and the 2018 Houston Grand Opera Eleanor McCollum Competition, among others. For the 2023 Aspen Music Festival, she starred as Roxane Coss/*Bel Canto*. She will appear at Lyric later this season in *Aida*. *Kathryn Henry is sponsored by Lead Sponsor The C.G. Pinnell Family and cosponsors Patricia A. Kenney and Gregory J. O'Leary.*



**LINDSEY REYNOLDS**  
**BARENA**

*Previously at Lyric:* Very Loud Girl and Passenger 2/*Proximity*, Alice/*Le Comte Ory* (both 2022/23).

The soprano, a native of New Orleans, is a second-year member of the Ryan Opera Center. In 2021/22, she portrayed Despina/*Così fan tutte* and Betty/Marc Blitzstein's *Triple-Sec* (film adaptation) with Curtis Opera Theatre and served as an Emerging Artist with Opera Philadelphia, where she sang the Page/*Rigoletto*. Among the many leading roles Reynolds has performed are Zerlina/*Don Giovanni*, Adina/*The Elixir of Love*, Giulietta/*I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, Miss Wordsworth/*Albert Herring*, and Monica/*The Medium*. She has appeared in concert with the Curtis Symphony Orchestra under Yannick Nézet-Séguin, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Civic Orchestra of Chicago. Recipient of an Emerging Artist Award from Opera Index, Reynolds has been awarded first place in many competitions, among them the Musicians Club of Women, Camille Coloratura Awards,

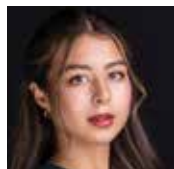


James Toland Vocal Arts Competition, Young Patronesses of the Opera/Florida Grand Opera Competition, Hal Leonard Art Song Competition, and National Association of Negro Musicians Competition. She will appear at Lyric later this season in *Cinderella*. *Lindsey Reynolds* is sponsored by an **Anonymous Donor, Fred & Phoebe Boelter, and Donna Van Ekeren & Dale Connolly.**



**LUCY BAKER**  
**KAROLKA**  
*Lyric debut*

A first-year mezzo-soprano with the Ryan Opera Center from Wilmington, North Carolina, Baker has performed the title role/*Ariodante*, *Dorabella/Così fan tutte*, the Hostess/Blitzstein's *Triple-Sec*, and *Marquise de Merteuil* (cover) in Susa's *The Dangerous Liaisons* with Curtis Opera Theatre. Previous roles include *Cherubino/Le nozze di Figaro* and *Hansel/Hansel and Gretel* with DePaul Opera Theatre and Justice Ginsburg (cover) in Wang's *Scalia/Ginsburg* with Chautauqua Opera Company. In concert, Baker has appeared with the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society and Chautauqua Symphony, and she sang the national anthem for the Chicago Bulls. She received the Edith Newfield Award from the Musicians Club of Women and first prize in her category from the Chicago Chapter of the NATS competition. A 2022 fellow at Ravinia's Steans Music Institute, Baker holds a Bachelor of Music from DePaul University and a Master of Music from the Curtis Institute of Music. *Lucy Baker* is sponsored by **Pamela Crutchfield and Ms Gay K. Stanek.**



**SOPHIA MAEKAWA**  
**SHEPHERDESS**  
*Lyric debut*

The first-year mezzo-soprano with the Ryan Opera Center from Kyoto, Japan, was a 2022 Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Artist, understudying *Rosina/Il barbiere di Siviglia* and *Comrade Chin and Shu Fang/M. Butterfly*, and a 2021 Gerdine Young Artist with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, understudying *Kadin/On the Edge*. She recently received her Bachelor of Music degree from the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. While there, the mezzo performed in *Ariodante* (title role), *Albert Herring*, and *L'enfant et les sortilèges*. Other roles in her repertoire include *Hermia/A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Annio/La clemenza di Tito*, *Mercédès/Carmen*, *Second Woman/Dido and Aeneas*, and *Mrs. Nolan/The Medium*. Concert appearances include the Wichita Symphony and Curtis Symphony Orchestra with Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Maekawa was a finalist at the 2022 Opera Grand Rapids Competition and semi-finalist in the 2021 Houston Grand Opera Eleanor McCollum Competition. She will appear at Lyric later this season in *Cinderella*. *Sophia Maekawa* is sponsored by **David and Janet Fox, Richard W. Shepro and Lindsay E. Roberts, and Mark and Gale Kozloff.**



**KATHERINE DEYOUNG**  
**MAYOR'S WIFE**

**Previously at Lyric:** Four roles since 2020/21, most recently *Mercédès/Carmen* and *Sibyl/Proximity* (both 2022/23).

The American mezzo-soprano, an alumna of Lyric's Ryan Opera Center, appeared at Lyric as *Giovanna* in *Ernani* (2022/23). This season, she performs as *Hansel* in *Hansel and Gretel* with San Antonio Opera, and in concert, she joined Dayton Opera in their season opening concert as *Prince Orlofsky* in scenes from *Die Fledermaus*, and Santa Fe Symphony as the alto soloist in Beethoven's 9th Symphony. Previous seasons have included performances as the *Second Lady* in *Barrie Kosky's The Magic Flute*, and in Lyric's annual *Rising Stars* concerts. Other recent highlights include Verdi's *Requiem* with Michigan State University. As a member of the Michigan Opera Theatre (now Detroit Opera) Studio program, DeYoung performed the *Sandman* in *Hansel und Gretel*, the *Old Lady* in *Candide*, the *Mother* in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, and *Mae* in *The Grapes of Wrath*. In 2018 and 2019, she was an Apprentice with the Santa Fe Opera. A native of Traverse City, Michigan, DeYoung holds an undergraduate degree in voice from Michigan State University and a Master's Degree in Voice Performance from the University of Houston where she performed *Isabella* in *L'Italiana in Algeri*, *Fidalma* in *The Secret Marriage*, *Gertrude* in *Roméo et Juliette*, *Elizabeth Proctor* in *The Crucible*, and *Lady Sneerwell* in the world premiere of *The School for Scandal*. She also performed the title role in *Carmen* with Opera in the Ozarks.



**WAYNE TIGGES**  
**MAYOR**

**Previously at Lyric:** Nine roles since 2002/03, most recently *Owen Hart/Dead Man Walking* (2019/20) and *Basilio/The Barber of Seville* (2007/08).

The bass-baritone, a Ryan Opera Center alumnus, has portrayed *Owen Hart/Dead Man Walking* in Washington, Atlanta, and Des Moines. Among his other roles in contemporary works are *Sgt. Aaron Marcum/An American Soldier* (world premiere, St. Louis), *Howie Albert/Champion* (Washington), *Henry Isaacson/Oscar* (Philadelphia), *Joe St. George/Dolores Claiborne* (world premiere, San Francisco), *Gideon March/Little Women* (Omaha), *Blitch/Susannah* (Milwaukee), *Willy Wonka/The Golden Ticket* (European premiere, Wexford Festival), *Roy Cohn/Angels in America* (New York City), and *John Proctor/The Crucible* (Santa Barbara). Other highlights include the title role in *Don Giovanni* (Costa Mesa, Austin), *Escamillo/Carmen* (Glyndebourne), *Don Basilio/The Barber of Seville* (Detroit), *Wagner's Dutchman* (Atlanta), and *Baron Douphol/La traviata* (Los Angeles). Tigges has appeared with the Teatro Regio di Parma Orchestra and the major orchestras of Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, and Cleveland, among many others.



**CHASE BUNTROCK**  
**DANCER**

**Previously at Lyric:** *Carmen* (2022/23).

After attending Chicago Academy for the Arts, Buntrock received his Bachelor of Fine Arts from The Juilliard School. He then joined Ballet BC under the direction of Emily Molnar in Vancouver, BC. He has performed works on international stages by Crystal Pite, Sharon Eyal, Merce Cunningham, Roy Assaf, and more. He is a collaborator with PARA.MAR Dance Theatre, Ballare Carmel located in Carmel-by-the-Sea, and the Bay Area's Post:Ballet. Apart from dance, Buntrock is a stylist and movement director spanning multiple mediums. Most recently, he assisted movement direction for the critically praised Wiederhoeft fashion show at NYFW.



**SAM CROUCH**  
**DANCER**

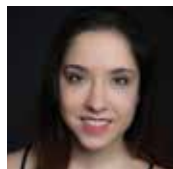
**Previously at Lyric:** *The Pearl Fishers* (2017/18).

Crouch received his BFA from Western Michigan University in 2016, where he performed in works by Lew Christensen, Antony Tudor, Gerald Arpino, and many other choreographers. Since moving to Chicago, he has danced with *The Queens Ball: A Bridgerton Experience*, Dance in the Parks, South Chicago Dance Theater, Hot Crowd, Aerial Dance Chicago, and Same Planet Performance Project. He has also worked with Zikr Dance Ensemble in Colorado as company dancer and rehearsal director, *The Queens Ball: A Bridgerton Experience* in Minnesota, the Lyric Opera of Kansas City and Quixotic Fusion in Missouri, and Wellspring Cori Terry and Dancers in Michigan. He has recently done choreography work for Dance in the Parks, Momenta, and Hot Crowd.



**ADELINE "A" ELSE**  
**DANCER**  
**Lyric debut**

The artist has worked with an abundance of renowned choreographers including Mark Caserta, Meredith Dincolo, Joseph A. Hernandez, Alysia Johnson, and Terence Marling. Professional credits include COMMON Canvas, DanceWorks Chicago, Luminous Tour, and Symbiosis Arts.



**KATY FEDRIGON**  
**DANCER**  
**Lyric debut**

Fedrigon graduated magna cum laude from the University of Arizona with a BFA in dance. She began her career with Inaside Chicago Dance then danced as a company member with Nomi Dance Company and Still Inspired. She has been a guest artist with Peckish Rhodes Performing Arts Society, Thodos New Dances, and Wake Up! Waltz, and performed at the House of Blues alongside The Prince Experience. Fedrigon is currently assistant director and company dancer with the Chicago-based Dance in the Parks company.



**KARA HUNSINGER**  
**DANCER**

**Previously at Lyric:** *Carmen* (2022/23).

The Modesto, California native attended the University of Arizona where she performed works by George Balanchine, Nacho Duato, Autumn Eckman, Ohad Naharin, Alexei Ratmansky, and Christopher Wheeldon. Upon graduating magna cum laude, Hunsinger joined DanceWorks Chicago and spent three years with the company. She has since worked with Brendan Fernandes, Visceral Dance Chicago, PARA.MAR Dance Theatre, and New Dances, and is currently a dancer, Artistic Associate, and Rehearsal Director with Boykin Dance Project. Hunsinger has also trained with Alonzo King LINES Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Ballet West, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Ate9, Share Dance Intensive, and San Francisco Conservatory of Dance.



**MADDY JOSS**  
**DANCER**  
**Lyric debut**

Joss began her dance education in Oak Park at the Academy of Movement and Music under the direction of Stephanie Clemens. She received her BFA in Dance at the University of Michigan where she performed works by Meredith Monk, Ohad Naharin, Shannon Gillen, and others. After graduating, Joss studied under Emio Greco of ICK Dans Amsterdam and obtained her certification in the Double Skin Double Mind movement methodology, which she teaches across Chicago and New York. Joss has performed as a company member with House of Dov, Khecar, and Nimbus Dance, and will debut this season with Little House Dance.



**MORGAN R. MCDANIEL**  
**DANCER**

**Previously at Lyric:** *Carmen* and *West Side Story* (both 2022/23).

The dancer graduated from the Ailey/Fordham BFA program, where she worked with esteemed choreographers including Jae Man Joo, Francesca Harper, Elizabeth Roxas-Dobrich, and Tina Bush, and performed with the Metropolitan Opera in their production of *The Flying Dutchman*. She joined South Chicago Dance Theatre as an emerging artist, and she spent a season with Visceral Dance Chicago. McDaniel had a residency with Ballare Carmel in Monterey, California, where she performed work by Noelle Kayser, Jennifer Archibald, and Ihsan Rustem.





### MARTIN ORTIZ TAPIA DANCER

**Previously at Lyric:** *West Side Story* (2018/19 and 2022/23).

Ortiz Tapia spent nearly a decade touring with Giordano Dance Chicago as a company member. He has appeared in productions of *Saturday Night Fever*, *Newsies*, *Cabaret*, *Mary Poppins*, and most recently *A Chorus Line*. He earned a BFA from University of Wisconsin Stevens Point, and has trained also at Luna Negra Dance Theater and Thodos Dance Chicago.



### ASHLEY RIVETTE DANCER

**Lyric debut**

The Chicago-based freelance dancer began her training in Stuttgart, Germany, where her family was stationed for eight years. In 2021, she received a BFA in Dance from Shenandoah Conservatory. She apprenticed with Christopher K. Morgan & Artists during their 2019 and 2020 seasons, then danced for two seasons with DanceWorks Chicago (DWC) under the direction of Julie Nakagawa. Her DWC repertoire included works by Robert Battle, Charissa-Lee Barton, Joshua Manculich, Mark Caserta, Demis Volpi, Hanna Britson, Drew Lewis, and Brian Enos. She was a member of the 2022 NewDances company, performing works by Chicago artists Trey Johnson and Marco Pizano. Rivette currently dances with Boykin Dance Project, founded by Brian Martinez.



### BRANDON TALBOTT DANCER

**Lyric debut**

A veteran of numerous competitive TV dance shows, Talbott studied at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts where he appeared in work by choreographers Doug Varone, Ashley Lindsey, Juel D. Lane, and Stephanie Martinez, and in the school's annual production of *The Nutcracker*. Brandon joined Visceral Dance Chicago in 2021, and has performed with AJA Talent, PARA.MAR Dance Theatre, the Candlelight Series, Zikr Dance Ensemble, Freckled Sky, and Symbiosis Arts.



### JAKUB HRŮŠA CONDUCTOR

**Lyric debut**

Born in the Czech Republic, Hrůša is Chief Conductor of the Bamberg Symphony, Principal Guest Conductor of the Czech Philharmonic, and Principal Guest Conductor of the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia. Formerly Principal Guest Conductor of the Philharmonia Orchestra, in the 2025/26 season he will become the new Music Director of the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, London. He has led productions for the Salzburg Festival (*Kát'a Kabanová* with the Vienna Philharmonic), Vienna State Opera and Zurich Opera (*The Makropulos Affair*), Royal Opera House, Covent

Garden (*Carmen* and *Lohengrin*), and Opéra national de Paris (*Rusalka*). He has also been a regular guest with Glyndebourne Festival, conducting *Vanessa*, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Carmen*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *Don Giovanni*, and *La bohème*, and served as Music Director of Glyndebourne on Tour for three years. He is a frequent guest with many of the world's greatest orchestras, performing regularly with the Vienna Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, Bavarian Radio Symphony, Munich Philharmonic, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Staatskapelle Dresden, Tonhalle Orchester Zürich, Lucerne Festival Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, NHK Symphony, and the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, and in the U.S. with The Cleveland Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and Boston Symphony Orchestra. Most recently, he received the Opus Klassik Conductor of the Year award and the ICMA prize for Symphonic Music for his recording of Bruckner's Symphony No. 4, and the Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik for his recording of Mahler's Symphony No. 4, both with Bamberg Symphony. His recording of the Dvořák Violin Concerto with the Bavarian Radio Symphony and Augustin Hadelich was nominated for a Grammy Award.



### CLAUS GUTH ORIGINAL DIRECTOR

**Lyric debut**

Born in Frankfurt, the renowned artist began his career directing productions in Munich, Mannheim, and Hamburg to international acclaim. He worked at Theater an der Wien, contributing to the Monteverdi trilogy and staging versions of Handel's *Messiah* and Schubert's *Lazarus*, as well as Handel's *Orlando*. He has collaborated also with Milan's Teatro alla Scala, Royal Opera House in London, Dutch National Opera, Opéra national de Paris, Teatro Real Madrid, Glyndebourne Festival, Staatsoper Berlin, Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, the Metropolitan Opera, and Deutsche Oper, among others. Guth's experience with Wagner's operas include remarkable productions including *Lohengrin* at La Scala, *Tannhäuser* at the Wiener Staatsoper, *Tristan und Isolde* at Opernhaus Zürich, and the complete *Ring Cycle* for the Hamburg Staatsoper. He opened the 2022/23 season at Teatro San Carlo in Naples with the new production of *Don Carlo*, followed by *Elektra* at Oper Frankfurt, and *Semele* at Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich. At the Park Avenue Armory he reimaged Franz Schubert's *Schwanengesang* as *Doppelgänger*, a production that is part performance and part installation performed by the tenor Jonas Kaufmann.



### AXEL WEIDAUER REVIVAL DIRECTOR

**Previously at Lyric:** Revival Director/  
*Don Carlos* (2022/23).

The freelance director and assistant director has extensive international opera experience, at Berlin (Dale Duesing's production of *L'Etoile* and Christof Loy's *Falstaff*), Barcelona (a revival of Loy's *Abduction from the Seraglio*, *Arabella*,

*Don Giovanni*, and *Turco in Italia*), Paris (*Alcina*), Copenhagen (*Alceste*), Vienna (where he assisted on *Intermezzo*, *Der Prinz von Homburg*, and *La Donna del Lago* at the Theater an der Wien, and worked on *Alceste* at the Staatsoper), Amsterdam (assisting Loy's *Les vœpres siciliennes* and *Königskinder*), and Los Angeles (*Turco in Italia*). His own directing projects at the Frankfurt Opera include *The Excursions of Mr. Brouček to the Moon and to the 15th Century* by Janáček, *Curlew River* by Benjamin Britten (which received a restaging at the Teatr Wielki in Warsaw), and Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*. A longtime collaborator at the Teatro Real in Madrid, Weidauer's productions there include *Lulu* (2009), *Rodelinda* (2017), *Don Carlo* (2019), and *Rusalka* (2020), and he will return for the revival of Loy's *Arabella* this season.



**MICHAEL LEVINE**  
SET DESIGNER

**Previously at Lyric:** Seven operas since 1991/92, most recently *Eugene Onegin* (2016/17) and *Tannhäuser* (2014/15).

The Canadian designer was awarded Designer of the Year at the 2022 International Opera Awards for *Madame Butterfly* (Bregenz Festival) and the Olivier Award for Best New Opera in 2020 for *Billy Budd* (Royal Opera House), as well as the 2019 Dora Award for Outstanding Scenic Design and Costume Design for *Eugene Onegin* (Canadian Opera Company). Among his numerous opera credits are *Madame Butterfly* (Bregenz Festival); *Peter Grimes* (Opéra de Paris, Royal Opera House, Teatro Real Madrid); *The Magic Flute* (Metropolitan Opera, Aix-en-Provence, English National Opera, Dutch National Opera); *Jenůfa*, *The Flying Dutchman* (Royal Opera House); *Semele*, *The Cunning Little Vixen* (State Opera Munich); *Turandot*, *Carmen* (Dutch National Opera); *Iphigenie en Tauride*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Madame Butterfly*, *Wozzeck*, *The Queen of Spades* (Zurich); *Billy Budd* (Madrid, Rome, ROH); *The Rake's Progress*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Aix-en-Provence); *Die Tote Stadt* (Komische Oper); *Le Petit Prince* (National Ballet Canada); *Between Worlds*, *The Magic Flute*, *Madame Butterfly* (ENO); *Parsifal* (Metropolitan Opera, Lyon); *Rape of Lucretia*, *Poppea* (Glyndebourne); *A Dog's Heart* (Amsterdam, ENO, La Scala, Lyon); *Candide* (Châtelet, ENO, La Scala, Japan); *Elektra*, *Rusalka*, *Nabucco* (Paris Opera); *Mefistofele* (San Francisco); *Don Giovanni* (*La Scala*); *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (Paris Opera, La Scala); *Rigoletto* (Teatro Real Madrid, Rome); *Siegfried*, *Das Rheingold*, *The Ring Cycle* (Canadian Opera); *Tannhäuser* (ROH, Chicago); *Rigoletto* (Canadian Opera Company, ENO); *Dialogues of the Carmelites* (La Scala, Canadian Opera Company, Nice, Vienna).



**CLÍONA NÍ MHOCHÁIN**  
ASSISTANT SET DESIGNER

**Lyric debut**

The designer has worked as a production manager for numerous operas including *Rusalka*, *Theodora*, *Jenůfa*, *Seven Deadly Sins* & *Mahagonny Songspiel*, *Don Pasquale*, *The Return of Ulysses*, *The Monstrous*

*Child*, and *ATTHIS*, at the Royal Opera House. Her ballet credits include *Royal Ballet: A Diamond Celebration* and *Unknown Soldier* at the Royal Opera House; *Mad Hatter's Tea Party* (Royal Opera House, Zoonation, Roundhouse); and *Kin and Quatrain* (Birmingham Royal Ballet). She has worked on theater productions in various roles at the Young Vic, National Theatre of Scotland, Sonia Freedman Productions, St. Ann's Warehouse, Sheffield Theatres, Longborough Festival Opera, Royal Opera House Muscat in Oman, Perth International Arts Festival, Darwin Fringe Festival, Mayor's London Festival, Galway International Arts Festival, Wexford Festival Opera, Cúirt Festival, and Druid Theatre Company.



**GESINE VÖLLM**  
COSTUME DESIGNER

**Lyric debut**

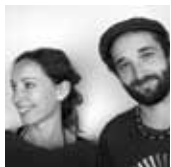
Since 1998, Völlm has designed the costumes for many German and international productions for opera, theater, and dance theater. She has worked with stage directors such as Stefan Herheim in Bayreuth, at the Salzburg Festival, and in many European opera houses. Starting in 2020, she has collaborated frequently with director Claus Guth, starting with *Jenůfa* at the Royal Opera House, followed by *Il Viaggio*, *Dante*, composed by Pascal Dusapin, and Handel's *Semele* at the Munich National Opera. Earlier highlights include *Parsifal* at the Bayreuth Festival, *Die Meistersinger* at the Salzburg Festival, *Sicilian Vespers* at the Royal Opera House, and *Rosenkavalier* at the National Opera Stuttgart, all with director Stefan Herheim, for which she was named Costume Designer of the Year in Germany three times. *Gesine Völlm is supported by the Richard P. and Susan Kiphart Endowed Chair.*



**JAMES FARNCOMBE**  
LIGHTING DESIGNER

**Lyric debut**

The designer's numerous opera credits include *Lessons in Love and Violence* (Gran Teatre del Liceu, Dutch National Opera, Opéra de Lyon, Hamburg State Opera); *Theodora* (Royal Opera House, Covent Garden); *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Metropolitan Opera, LA Opera); *Le Vin Herbé* (Berliner Staatsoper); *Innocence* (Helsinki, Covent Garden); *Pelléas et Mélisande* and *Alcina* (Bolshoi), *Tristan und Isolde* (Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg), *Ariadne auf Naxos* and *Trauernacht* (Aix-en-Provence); *La traviata* (Opéra de Paris, Wiener Staatsoper); *Street Scene* (Teatro Real, Madrid); *Der Zwerg* (Dutch National Opera); *Francesca da Rimini* (Opéra national du Rhin); *Miranda* (Opéra Comique); *The Barber of Seville* (Glyndebourne); *Marriage of Figaro* (Opera North); *Carmen*, *Der Fliegende Holländer*, and *Ariodante* (Scottish Opera); *Pelléas et Mélisande* (Den Norske Opera); *Benjamin*, *dernière nuit* (Opéra de Lyon); and *Blue* and *Die tote Stadt* (English National Opera). *Lighting designers are supported by the Mary-Louise and James S. Aagaard endowment in honor of Duane Schuler.*



**rocafilm**  
**VIDEO DESIGNER**  
*Lyric debut*

Film and video production company rocafilm was founded in 2010 by Carmen Maria Zimmermann and Roland Horvath. Their work focuses on documentaries and video production for opera and theater. Recent opera highlights include a new production of *Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno* for the Salzburger Festspiele with director Robert Carsen, and a new production with director Damiano Michieletto of *La Cenerentola* at Semper Oper in Dresden. In 2022, at the Whitsun Festival in Salzburg, with director Rolando Villazón, they created videos for *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. In 2020 they created a new production of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* at Oper Köln, and later that year collaborated with director Jürgen Flimm on the theater production *Don Karlos* by Friedrich Schiller at Schauspiel Köln. Frequent collaborators with director Claus Guth, rocafilm's recent highlights include *Bluthaus* at the Bayerische Staatsoper (music by Georg Friedrich Haas), *Il Viaggio, Dante* at Festival Aix-en-Provence, *Don Carlo* at the Teatro San Carlo in Naples, and *Semele* at Bayerische Staatsoper.



**MICHAEL BLACK**  
**CHORUS DIRECTOR**

The Australian Chorus Director is in his 11th season at Lyric, having held this position at Opera Australia in Sydney from 2001 to 2013. Black has served in this capacity for such distinguished organizations as the Edinburgh International Festival, Opera Holland Park (London), the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and, in Australia, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, the Philharmonia Choir, Motet Choir, the Cantillation chamber choir, and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. Other activities include preparing *The Damnation of Faust* chorus and Haydn's *Creation* at the Grant Park Music Festival, where he has worked for five seasons. He has served as chorus director for close to 140 different operas on four continents, and his work has been recorded and/or aired on ABC, BBC, PBS, for many HD productions in movie theaters, and on television. *Michael Black is supported by the Howard A. Stoffer Chorus Director Endowed Chair.*



**TERESA ROTEMBERG**  
**CHOREOGRAPHER**  
*Lyric debut*

The versatile choreographer and director founded her own company, MAFALDA, in Zurich in 1999. She is a prolific producer of dance pieces, recently developing a particular focus on productions for young audiences. In 2019, she received the Swiss Dance Award in the category of Current Dance Creation for the production *Vicky Sets*

*Sail*. Engagements as a choreographer for opera have taken her to the Vienna State Opera, the Zurich Opera House, the Opéra national de Paris, the Salzburg Festival, and the Royal Opera House, among numerous others. In 2023, she directed *Maria Stuarda* by Gaetano Donizetti at the Vorarlberger Landestheater in Bregenz. She previously directed *Der Ring des Polykrates* by Erich Maria Korngold at the Theater Freiburg (2020), and *Greek* by Mark-Anthony Turnage at the Konzert Theater Bern (2015). Rotemberg has worked regularly as a stage director since 2005 and has since staged, among others, *4.48 Psychosis* by Sarah Kane, *Scorched* by Wajdi Mouwad, *Mefisto forever* by Tom Lanoye (based on the novel *Mephisto* by Klaus Mann), and *Brother of Sleep* (based on the novel by Robert Schneider). Since the 2021/22 season, Rotemberg has been director of the young audience department at the Lucerne Theater.




**NOELLE KAYSER**  
**ASSISTANT CHOREOGRAPHER & BALLET MISTRESS**

*Previously at Lyric:* Dancer & Assistant Choreographer/*Carmen*(2022/23).

The Chicago-based performer, choreographer, and educator has performed with numerous companies including PARA. MAR Dance Theatre, LED Boise, Open Space Dance, NW Dance Project, Visceral Dance Chicago, The Cambrians, Fly on a Wall, gloATL, and Luna Negra Dance Theater. Recent choreographic commissions include Open Space Dance, DanceWorks Chicago, Ballare Carmel, SALT Dance LINK Choreography Festival, Visceral Dance Chicago Trainees, Chicago Dance Crash, Boykin Dance Project, COMMON Conservatory, Cerqua Rivera Dance Theater, Kit Modus, and Moonwater Dance Project. Kayser has taught at PARA.MAR Dance Theatre, NW Dance Project, Visceral Dance Chicago, and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, among others, and was the founding rehearsal director for PARA.MAR Dance Theatre. She has performed in theater productions with The Alliance Theater, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, 7 Stages, Theater for the Stars, and Scrap Theater Group.



**SARAH HATTEN**  
**WIGMASTER & MAKEUP DESIGNER**

Lyric's wigmaster and makeup designer has worked in a wide repertoire at Des Moines Metro Opera, Detroit Opera (formerly Michigan Opera Theatre), Columbus Opera, Toledo Opera, the Cabrillo Music Festival, and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. She has also worked at the Glimmerglass Festival and the major opera companies of Los Angeles, Omaha, Cleveland, Sarasota, and Central City, as well as Wisconsin's American Players Theatre and, in Los Angeles, the Pantages Theatre and the Geffen Playhouse. *Sarah Hatten is supported by the Marlys A. Beider Wigmaster and Makeup Designer Endowed Chair.* 

# Orchestra & Chorus

## MUSIC STAFF

Kedrick Armstrong  
Michael Banwarth  
William C. Billingham  
Tiffany Chang  
Patrick Furrer  
Susan Miller Hult  
Keun-A Lee  
Noah Lindquist  
Francesco Milioto  
Jerad Mosbey  
Stefano Sarzani  
Eric Weimer  
Dean Whiteside<sup>^</sup>

## ORCHESTRA

### Violin I

Robert Hanford, *Concertmaster*,  
*Mrs. R. Robert Funderburg*  
*Endowed Chair*  
Emily Nebel,  
*Assistant Concertmaster*  
Alexander Belavsky  
Kathleen Brauer  
Laura Miller  
Liba Shacht  
Heather Wittels  
Bing Jing Yu

### Violin II

Yin Shen, *Principal*  
John Macfarlane, *Assistant*  
*Principal*  
Diane Duraffourg-Robinson  
Ann Palen  
Irene Radetzky  
John D. Robinson  
David Volfe

## Viola

Carol Cook, *Principal*  
Terri Van Valkinburgh,  
*Assistant Principal*  
Patrick Brennan  
Amy Hess  
Melissa Trier Kirk

## Cello

Calum Cook, *Principal*  
Mark Brandfonbrener  
William H. Cernota  
Paula Kosower\*\*  
Walter Preucil

## String Bass

Ian Hallas\*, *Principal*  
Samuel Shuhan,  
*Acting Principal*  
Andrew L. W. Anderson,  
*Acting Assistant Principal*  
Gregory Sarchet  
Collins R. Trier

## Flute

Marie Tachouet, *Principal*  
Dionne Jackson, *Assistant Principal*  
Alyce Johnson

## Piccolo

Alyce Johnson

## Oboe

Paul Lueders, *Principal*  
Judith Zunamon Lewis,  
*Acting Assistant Principal*

## English Horn

Judith Zunamon Lewis

## Clarinet

Heesoo Kim, *Principal*  
Susan Warner\*,  
*Assistant Principal*  
Trevor O'Riordan\*\*,  
*Acting Assistant Principal*

## Bass Clarinet

Trevor O'Riordan\*\*

## Bassoon

Preman Tilson, *Principal*  
Lewis Kirk, *Assistant Principal*

## Contrabassoon

Lewis Kirk

## Horn

Jonathan Boen\*, *Principal*  
Fritz Foss, *Acting Principal*  
Robert E. Johnson, *Third Horn*/  
*Acting Assistant Principal*  
Brian Goodwin\*\*  
Samuel Hamzem  
Neil Kimel

## Trumpet

William Denton, *Principal*  
Rebecca Oliverio,  
*Acting Assistant Principal*

## Trombone

Jeremy Moeller, *Principal*  
Mark Fisher, *Assistant Principal*  
Mark Fry\*\*

## Bass Trombone

Mark Fry\*\*

## Tuba

Andrew Smith, *Principal*

## Timpani

Edward Harrison, *Principal*

## Percussion

Douglas Waddell,  
*Acting Principal*  
Eric Millstein,  
*Acting Assistant Principal*

## Harp

Lynn Williams, *Principal*

## Librarian

John Rosenkrans, *Principal*

## Stage Band Contractor

Christine Janicki

## EXTRA MUSICIANS

Jennifer Cappelli, *violin*  
Laura Chen, *violin*  
Injoo Choi, *violin*  
Lisa Fako, *violin*  
Renée Gauthier, *violin*  
Rika Seko, *violin*  
Beatrice Chen, *viola*  
Rebecca Swan, *viola*  
Mara McClain, *cello*  
Isidora Nojkovic, *cello*  
Jeremy Attanaseo, *bass*  
Tim Shaffer, *bass*  
Rachel Blumenthal, *flute/*  
*piccolo*  
Amy Barwan, *oboe*  
Theresa Zick, *clarinet*  
Hanna Sterba, *bassoon*

## STAGE BAND

Renée Vogen, *horn*  
Ryan Williamson, *horn*  
Dave Inmon, *trumpet*  
Rich Janicki, *percussion*  
Cristina Bučiu, *violin*  
Sheila Hanford, *violin*  
Rose Armbrust Griffin, *viola*  
Nomin Zolzaya, *cello*  
Kit Polen, *bass*

\* On leave, 2023/24 Season

\*\* Season Substitute

<sup>^</sup> Solfi Foundation U.S. Opera Residency

The Lyric Opera Orchestra string sections utilize revolving seating. Players behind the front desk change seats systematically and are listed alphabetically in the roster above.

## CHORUS DIRECTOR AND HEAD OF MUSIC

Michael Black

*The Howard A. Stotler  
Endowed Chair*

## REGULAR CHORUS

### Soprano

Sharon Garvey Cohen  
Cathleen Dunn  
Desirée Hassler  
Rachael Holzhausen  
Laureen Janeczek-Wysocki  
Kimberly McCord  
Heidi Spoor  
Stephani Springer  
Sherry Watkins

### Mezzo-Soprano

Marianna Kulikova  
Yvette Smith  
Marie Sokolova  
Emma Sorenson  
Maia Surace  
Corinne Wallace-Crane  
Pamela Williams  
Michelle K. Wright

### Tenor

Geoffrey Agpalo  
Timothy Bradley  
Hoss Brock  
William M. Combs  
John J. Concepcion  
Kenneth Donovan  
Jared V. Esguerra  
Joseph A. Fosselman  
Cullen Gandy  
Cameo T. Humes  
Tyler Samuel Lee  
Thomas L. Potter  
Joe Shadday

### Bass

David DuBois  
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Alaina Bartkowiak  
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 Adrienne Bader  
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 Bill Walters  
*Assistant Stage Managers*

*To keep opera a must-see, must-hear experience, the art form needs outstanding artists who can convey through singing and acting the emotional range and engaging storytelling that are opera's hallmarks. Lyric, through The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center, identifies exceptionally talented emerging artists from around the world and provides them with comprehensive training and performance opportunities. On the world's stages, the Center's impressive roster of alumni continually proves the value of training at Lyric.*



Back L-R: Ryan Capozzo, Ian Rucker, Lucy Baker, Ron Dukes, Travon D. Walker, Christopher Humbert, Jr., Donald Lee III, Michael Banwarth, Alejandro Luévano  
Front L-R: Sophia Maekawa, Laureano Quant, Kathryn Henry, Lindsey Reynolds, Tess Naval, Wm. Clay Thompson, Luther H. Lewis III

*Lyric*

# Ryan Opera Center

## The 2023/24 Ryan Opera Center Ensemble

### **Sopranos**

Kathryn Henry  
Lindsey Reynolds

### **Mezzo-sopranos**

Lucy Baker  
Sophia Maekawa

### **Tenors**

Ryan Capozzo  
Alejandro Luévanos  
Travon D. Walker

### **Baritones**

Laureano Quant  
Ian Rucker

### **Bass-baritone**

Christopher Humbert, Jr.

### **Basses**

Ron Dukes  
Wm. Clay Thompson

### **Conductor/Pianist**

Donald Lee III

### **Pianist**

Michael Banwarth

### **Stage Director**

Luther H. Lewis III

### **Stage Manager**

Tess Naval

# Ryan Opera Center alumni around the world

## WAYNE TIGGES (2002-2005)

**Appearances this season:** Mayor/*Jenůfa*, Lyric Opera of Chicago; Scarpia/*Tosca*, Amarillo Opera.

"The years I spent in the Ryan Opera Center (known then as the Lyric Opera Center for American Artists) were among the most important of my professional life. I arrived right out of college and worked with some of the best coaches in the world. I had master classes with my personal heroes and got to perform with titans of the field like Renée Fleming, Samuel Ramey, Bryn Terfel, and Dmitri Hvorostovsky. The absolute highlight of my tenure was completely unexpected: I was understudying the title role in *Le nozze di Figaro*. At the opening night, I was pulled out of the audience and asked to sing the final two acts in place of an ailing colleague. It was scary, exciting, and thrilling all at once! A couple of days later, I was asked to take over for the remaining ten performances. I am eternally grateful to Lyric and the Ryan Opera Center for having the confidence in me to provide that experience—it has helped sustain my career path over the past 23 years!"



Wayne Tigges as Figaro with Isabel Bayrakdarian as Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro* at Lyric Opera (2003/04).

## THIS SEASON



**Bonita Hyman**  
(1986-1987)  
*Elektra*  
Staatsoper Unter  
den Linden (Berlin)



**David Cangelosi**  
(1996-1997)  
*The Nose*  
Chicago Opera  
Theater



**Lindsey Metzger**  
(2015-2018)  
*La Périhole*  
Florentine Opera  
(Milwaukee)

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*Director of Vocal Studies*

Renée Fleming  
*Advisor at Large*

Susanna McNatt  
*Manager*

Annika Donnen  
*Associate Librarian*

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*Robert and Ellen Marks Ryan*  
*Opera Center Vocal Studies*  
*Program Endowment*

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*Conductor*

Katherine M. Carter  
*Director*

Rachel Garoon  
*Stage Manager*



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Lise Davidsen  
Kathryn Henry  
Alexandra Loutsion  
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Whitney Morrison  
Lisette Oropesa  
Lindsey Reynolds  
Alexandria Shiner  
Nina Stemme  
Elisa Sunshine  
Kara Shay Thomson  
Tamara Wilson

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Jamie Barton  
Katherine Beck  
Vasilisa Berzhanskaya  
Catherine Cook  
Marianne Cornetti  
Katherine DeYoung  
Kathleen Felty  
Daryl Freedman  
Margaret Lattimore  
Sophia Maekawa  
Ronnita Miller  
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Meredith Arwady

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Spencer Britten  
Lawrence Brownlee  
Bille Bruley  
Ryan Capozzo  
Pavel Černoch

Martin Luther Clark  
Paul Groves  
Alejandro Luévanos  
Joshua Sanders  
Richard Trey Smagur  
Robert Stahley  
Jack Swanson  
Russell Thomas  
Travon D. Walker  
Robert Watson

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Kidon Choi  
Alessandro Corbelli  
Leroy Davis  
Thomas Hall  
Joshua Hopkins  
Michael Kelly  
Laureano Quant  
Ian Rucker  
Hugh Russell  
Reginald Smith, Jr.

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Adeline "A" Else  
Jude Evans  
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Christopher Kelley  
Drew Lewis  
Isaac Alan Lindy  
Morgan Reed McDaniel  
Olivier Medus  
Mickey Nixon  
Anne O'Donnell  
Ashley Rivette  
Nick Schrier  
Brian Selcik  
Mathew Skorupski  
Malachi Squires  
Brandon Talbott  
Martín Ortiz Tapia  
Whitney Wandland

## CONDUCTORS

Andy Einhorn  
Jakub Hrůša  
Yi-Chen Lin  
Enrique Mazzola  
Francesco Milioto  
Speranza Scappucci

## DIRECTORS

Christopher Alden  
Gregory A. Fortner  
Claus Guth  
Laurent Pelly  
Jean-Pierre Ponnelle  
Christian Råth  
James Robinson  
Axel Weidauer  
Francesca Zambello

## ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Katrina Bachus

## CHORUS DIRECTOR

Michael Black

## CHOREOGRAPHERS

Camille A. Brown  
Karine Girard  
Jessica Lang  
Teresa Rotemberg  
Laura Scozzi

## ASSOCIATE & ASSISTANT CHOREOGRAPHERS

Christopher Jackson  
Noelle Kayser  
Claudia McDonald

## BALLET MISTRESSES

Noelle Kayser  
August Tye

## FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHERS

Chuck Coyl  
Samantha Kaufman  
Joshua Moaney



The American Guild of Musical Artists, AFL-CIO (AGMA), is the union that represents the singers, dancers, actors, and staging personnel at Lyric Opera of Chicago.

*Beyond the stage, and beyond the boundaries that often define opera companies, Lyric is igniting creativity across Chicago. Through innovative learning opportunities, creative exploration, and artistic creation and collaboration, Lyric, with your support, encourages students, educators, families, audiences, and Chicagoans from neighborhoods across the city to share their voices and embrace the power and relevance of opera as a catalyst for growth and change.*



Lyric Opera of Chicago

Music Director Enrique Mazzola launched this year's Merit School of Music partnership with a pizza party—under Beethoven's watchful eye.

*Lyric*

# Beyond the stage

# Class in Session

Enrique Mazzola leads the way on a renewed relationship with the Merit School of Music.

**Teaching, says Enrique Mazzola, has** “absolutely not been part of my career. I have always felt that there is a responsibility to transmit one’s experience of music. To pass it on. To me, music was not a subject to be *taught* but an enchanting realm to be explored. Teaching music seemed like something almost impossible.”

But in the past few years, Lyric’s Music Director has, well, changed his tune. During his tenure as Artistic & Music Director of the Orchestre national d’Île-de-France from 2012 to 2019, he saw firsthand how engaging with young people contributed to building audience. And then last year, in his second full season at Lyric, Mazzola made

his first visits to the Merit School of Music. A longtime partner organization with Lyric, Merit’s self-described mission is to “transform the lives of Chicago-area youth through removing barriers to high-quality music education.” Located in Chicago’s West Loop neighborhood, the school has been executing on that vision since its founding in 1979, especially for students from diverse backgrounds. One-on-one lessons are offered in all instruments, and many students participate in larger ensembles. The school’s commitment to nurturing young musicians aligns perfectly with the broader mission of Lyric Opera of Chicago as a cultural citizen and leader.



Enrique Mazzola on the Merit School podium at rehearsal last year.





Jaclyn Simpson Photography

In recent years, Enrique Mazzola's interest in working with young artists has continued to increase.

**"We are offering the students** at Merit an opportunity to engage with Lyric professionals in various areas of expertise to introduce students to opera and support their learning in music education," says Jill LeCesne Potter, Senior Director of Learning Programs at Lyric. "These opportunities can reflect anything from coaching sessions in technique, seminars, master classes, and open rehearsals to performances."

The program takes place as part of the school's Artist Residencies program, which has drawn luminaries such as Marta Aznavoorian, Marquis Hill, Nathalie Joachim, Yo-Yo Ma, Anthony McGill, and others. A highlight from last year's partnership was a visit from Martin Luther Clark, an ensemble member with the Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center, who spoke with students about the many different pathways that can open up through musical education. Several times in the fall, Mazzola worked with the orchestral ensemble and soloists, giving students the chance to work under one of the world's leading conductors.

This year, Maestro's visits will include two rehearsals with Merit's philharmonic—one with strings, the other with the full orchestra. He will also serve as a guest at Merit's Saturday seminar-style sessions called *Live from Gottlieb* where he will preview *Aida*. The first meeting, just this past October, was focused less on pedagogy and more on getting acquainted and looking out over the year

ahead. Lyric Unlimited organizers also deployed one of the most potent and attention-getting methods available to educators: they brought pizza. This spring, the series of residencies will include not only rehearsals of the overture to *The Magic Flute*, but also less formal interactions, where Mazzola will be in conversation with the students about careers in music and other relevant subjects. He hopes "to be a guide, mentor, and source of inspiration."

**The learning, Mazzola notes,** travels in both directions.

"I have read of many famous teachers who say that a teaching moment is an act of self-reflection. What are we doing? Why are we doing what we are doing?" The fact that the young players don't necessarily know what Mazzola is seeking with a particular hand gesture from the podium has been refreshing for him. Even an accomplished conductor can sometimes revisit the basics—especially in such an environment.

"Our partnership with Merit is incredibly rewarding, and our colleagues there are exceptional collaborators," says Potter. "We come to the planning table with a shared belief that music has the power to transform our lives—to inspire, to heal, to exchange our stories and lived experiences, and to imagine what is possible. All of this manifests in the curiosity of their students and the range of talent that awakens when the students sing and play!" **L**



# People of Lyric

A behind-the-scenes conversation



Kyle Flubacker

## Paul D. Sprecher Philanthropy Officer

**Hometown:** Canton, Illinois. A small farming community near Peoria.

**First opera you saw live:** It was summer of 1997 at the Opera Bastille in Paris and it was *Rigoletto*. We had flown in from the United States, and we figured we were supposed to stay up and keep going and then sleep and then you're up the next day. Well, my grandmother and I, we took a nap. I only remembered bits and pieces of that opera until I saw it in Lyric's 2017/18 Season.

**Favorite opera:** I absolutely loved the Lyric production of *Dead Man Walking*. It was such a moving and very intense opera, and I thought it was beautifully done.

**Favorite Chicago spot:** Growing up I wanted to be a marine biologist, so I have a membership to the Shedd Aquarium so I can satisfy that side of me. I will just go there and immerse myself with the fishes and the dolphins and the otters. It's so peaceful and nurturing to me.

## What is your role here at Lyric?

I am a Philanthropy Officer on the Leadership Giving team in Development. I work with our donors to provide them opportunities to engage with Lyric on a deeper level through their support. My job is to connect them to what's most important for them in their philanthropy. Where do they want to make the most impact in their giving? It's very rewarding to be a part of their lives in that way.

## What was your path to working here?

At the end of college, I was really focused on theater and took a development and marketing apprenticeship in upstate New York at a regional theater. I loved it, but I missed my family, so I moved back to Chicago, and I started working at Chicago Opera Theater part-time. I interviewed at Lyric for a position that didn't end up being the right fit, but during the interview process I was able to connect with Deborah Hare, who in 2017 offered me a position on her events team. Deb passed away just over a year ago, after 26 years at Lyric. Starting out, she worked for Ardis Krainik. Deb just embodied "The Lyric Way"—always providing an elevated, compassionate, and positive experience for our donors and patrons. I'm very grateful for the time I got to spend working with her. She wasn't just my supervisor—she was also my mentor and best friend. I miss her dearly. She gave me an incredible opportunity and I strive to make sure that her legacy lives on.

## What is exciting about your role at Lyric?

Being able to hear stories from our donors about when they saw their first opera at Lyric—or the greats that they saw. Joan Sutherland, Luciano Pavarotti, and Renée Fleming to name a few. I still "pinch myself" when I walk into our beautiful opera house because I almost can't believe that I'm part of this great cultural institution. Being a part of that history and learning about it through the members of our Lyric family is very rewarding.

## What about your job would surprise people?

People who come to the opera are focused on the production, but the seats in the house, the building itself, the cooling system—these are all opportunities of support and essential to Lyric's success. I think it would surprise people that our fundraising work is not simply to put opera on the stage. There are many facets; we are fundraising for capital projects to improve the patron experience, or we're making sure that we have supply fans that push through fresh air, or we're making accessibility improvements. My job includes stewarding gifts in the way that donors are asking them to be stewarded.

## What do you like about working in the arts?

Oh my gosh, I love working in the arts. The arts can transport you to another time and another place for a couple of hours. It's where artists/actors have an opportunity to dive in and portray someone who is not who they are in real life—to have that imaginative experience. And the arts are very conversational for those viewing as well as for those participating. Discussing what you see on stage allows people to strike up a dialogue.

## Beyond opera, what are your other passions?

I absolutely love spending time with my family. I have seven nieces and nephews, and I get to see them often and get to share with them the experiences and things that I love. I am passionate about the performing arts and music, and I love going to see shows in other theaters around Chicago. [L](#)