

Lyric

WAGNER

The Flying Dutchman



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In this issue



The busy chorus in a scene from the Canadian Opera Company's 2022 production of *The Flying Dutchman*. | pp. 20-35

6 WELCOME TO YOUR LYRIC

- 8 A letter from the Chair and the General Director
- 10 Board of Directors
- 12 Clearly Better: A generous gift transforms the experience of coming and going at Lyric.
- 16 Season of Firsts: A conversation with Enrique Mazzola

20 TONIGHT'S PERFORMANCE

- 23 Title page and cast
- 24 Synopsis
- 26 Director's note
- 28 Artist profiles
- 34 Orchestra and Chorus

36 THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

- 38 Bravissimi
- 40 Production sponsors
- 42 Supporting our future—endowments at Lyric
- 44 Ardis Krainik Society
- 48 Corporate partnerships
- 50 Annual individual and foundation support
- 60 Commemorative gifts
- 61 Artistic roster
- 62 Lyric staff

64 RYAN OPERA CENTER

- 66 Introducing the Ryan Opera Center 2023/24 Ensemble
- 66 Program staff

68 BEYOND THE STAGE

- 70 *Opera in the Neighborhoods* returns with a full-fledged touring production.
- 72 People of Lyric: Meet the company's Vice President of Lyric Unlimited and Artistic Operations

On the cover: Original artwork created by Jake Fruend

Lyric



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At Lyric, you'll be amazed, replenished, and inspired with must-see, must-hear live experiences. Through the timeless power of voice, acting that brings characters to life in triumph and tragedy, the splendor of a great orchestra and chorus—coupled with theater, dance, design, and truly magical stagecraft—Lyric is devoted to immersing audiences in worlds both familiar and unexpected, creating shared experiences that resonate long after the curtain comes down.



Anthony Freud
*General Director,
President & CEO*
Enrique Mazzola
Music Director

Lyric

Welcome to your Lyric

From the Chair and the General Director

Dear Lyric Community,

The start of a new opera season is always an exciting time—and we trust you will agree that this year feels particularly exhilarating.

That energy comes from many sources, including the extraordinary season ahead for Maestro Enrique Mazzola who, with this production, begins his third full season on our podium as Lyric’s acclaimed Music Director. *The Flying Dutchman* will be his first Wagner opera for Lyric audiences, the initial offering in what we have taken to calling a “Season of Firsts” for the maestro (for much more insight on that, please enjoy the conversation with Maestro Mazzola starting on page 16). Though he has enormous experience elsewhere commissioning and conducting contemporary work, later this season he will conduct his first 21st century piece at Lyric, with Terence Blanchard’s *Champion*. Later, Enrique will conduct the Lyric Opera Orchestra and Chorus in two performances of Mozart’s grand *Requiem*, as well as the rarely heard incidental music for *Thamos, King of Egypt*—the first Mozart works he will lead in our opera house. He’ll conclude our season with his first-ever complete production of *Aida*—an astonishing fact, given his world-renowned stature as an expert Verdian.

This production of *The Flying Dutchman* is a fitting start to all these special occasions. Directed by Christopher Alden, the opera stars Tomasz Konieczny, fresh from singing Wotan at this year’s Bayreuth Festival, who made a sensational Lyric debut as Wozzeck in 2015/16. Our Senta is Tamara Wilson, a Lyric favorite who opened last season as Elvira in *Ernani* and in 2018/19 sang Leonora in *Il trovatore*. Needless to say, *The Flying Dutchman*—Wagner’s first acknowledged masterwork—requires epic talents like these, and we are delighted to have these international stars joining us.

None of these splendid productions would be possible without your continued support. Whether it’s your first time or your 100th, we welcome you once again into the Lyric Opera House with open arms and open hearts. Thank you for your ongoing, essential participation in bringing grand opera to Chicago’s grandest stage.

Welcome, and enjoy the season,



Sylvia Neil

SYLVIA NEIL
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Lyric

Clearly Better

An extraordinarily generous gift to the house makes us feel all warm inside

By David Zivan

The new glass wall will keep both the foyer and lobby at a comfortable temperature.

It seems useful, at the start, to note that this project seems to have many different names: The Glass Curtain. The Crowe Gift. The Air Lock. There is a candy store involved—or what once was a candy store, anyway—and something called sidelights, and a magnetic-bearing chiller. But a succinct assessment from Lawrence DelPilar perhaps sums it up best.

“It may sound a little boring, because it’s about climate control,” notes Lyric’s Senior Director of Development for Principal Gifts. “But it isn’t boring at all, because when you’re down in the lobby in the dead of winter, it’s a wind tunnel. And it’s not going to be like that anymore.”

Thanks to an exceptional donation from longtime patrons John “Jack” V. Crowe and Margaret Ann “Peggy” Crowe, the climate issues which have impacted the entryway of Lyric for nearly a century will be a thing of the past.

“All historic buildings
have to adapt
and change
with the times.”

—Len Koroski

The transformation of the lobby, one of the more visible projects at the opera house in recent years, is nearly complete. Three glass walls—two sealing the doorways

on the north side of the room, and one enormous compound panel, separating the Nancy W. Knowles Lobby from the Daniel F. and Ada L. Rice Grand Foyer—have been installed over the summer. Along with a new ventilation system, the changes will serve to control and pressurize the climate inside the well-traveled entryway. Longtime patrons of Lyric will recall ticket-takers bundled in their winter coats, inside the building; they should now be able to hang them up when they report for duty. Perhaps most remarkably, the taming of the elements will be achieved without

interrupting the experience of passing into the glittering height of the foyer. Above all, entering the opera house will feel good.

"It's going to have a significant effect on our patrons," says John Yelen, Senior Director of Facilities for Lyric. "Coming into the building, this will make people feel comfortable immediately."

"The problem," notes Drew Landmesser, Lyric's Chief Operating Officer and Deputy General Director, "was the outside. That aspect of Chicago that likes to fool with us. In winter in Chicago, the wind outside is just too strong. You can't fight it back."

Which is not to say that, over the years, the building's caretakers didn't try. In the 1990s, new ventilation was added to the outer breezeway entrance along Wacker Drive. It didn't help much. A decade ago, the company tried portable heaters, which made the entryway sound like an airport. More than once, the lobby and the auditorium were preheated, as if preparing to receive a risen loaf of bread.

But during the period known throughout the company as "rush hour"—the 30 minutes or so before curtain—the outer doors were mostly open and, inside, everything would cool off, sometimes for the rest of the evening. The large arched entry in the grand foyer, and the two doors leading to the house stairs on the

east side of the building, leaked heat—or rather, allowed the cold in. The glass wall project, Landmesser notes, is "a more radical approach of looking at these large openings."

The most immediately apparent part of the project is the custom set of glass panels between the foyer and the lobby. Made of ½-inch thick glass fabricated by Ohio's Oldcastle Perrysburg company, the 14-foot high by 20-feet wide installation required exceptional skill to fit into the curved archway. The two smaller doorways in the lobby were fabricated in Michigan by the Glass & Metal Craft company—and were the larger challenge.

"The doors on the north are actually more complicated than the doors on the west. Those may look like flat, rectangular openings, but they're not," says Len Koroski, Principal at the Goetsch Partners firm, and the architect of record on the project. "The lobby is a very tricky lobby in terms of its slopes and cross slopes, and its structural conditions. We're not putting in square doors; we're putting in rhombus doors."

"The part that people don't see is the important part," adds Landmesser. "Isn't that how it always is?"

All the sconces and chandeliers in the space were carefully removed, each piece of glass getting individually bubble-wrapped, and the fixtures were entirely rewired. (Last January, virtually unseen, Lyric's technical team updated all the sconces in the main foyer. While they were at it, they redid the wireless routers necessary for the ticket scanners. The project list is virtually endless.) In a small room along Madison Street, once home to a kiosk that sold candy to commuters coming and going from the train station across the river, an independent air handler system has been installed. "A lot of duct work has been rerouted underneath the lobby," notes Yelen. "In order to maintain the balance

of the room, they changed some returns to supplies, and some supplies to returns."

"All historic buildings have to adapt and change with the times," notes Koroski. "It's our job to usher in that change in a fashion that's respectful, and without visual impact."

As a gift that will benefit many generations to come, the glass

curtain seems a marvelously appropriate way to honor the Crowe family's longtime relationship with the company. Jack and Peggy Crowe first formally joined the Lyric family in 1992, when they became subscribers. Jack, who passed away in 2017, served on Lyric's Board of Directors from 1992 to 2007. His love for the art form started early, when his mother would play him recordings of Enrico Caruso; the fifth-floor foyer of the opera house is named for her. Over the years, the couple—particular admirers of Puccini—sponsored several productions and other large-scale projects. "Jack brought me to the opera," Peggy remarked not long ago. "It was our thing."

One of the couple's daughters, Mimi Crowe Mitchell, and her husband, Todd, caught the opera bug as well. They first subscribed to Lyric in the 2007/08 Season, when she joined the Women's Board. Among other leadership roles with that group, she served as President from 2014 to 2017, then joined the full Board of Directors.



Mimi Crowe Mitchell (at left) and her husband, Todd (at right), flank her parents, Jack and Peggy Crowe.

Don Rest



At top: The lobby renovation, during construction; the colorful installation there (at bottom) during *West Side Story* also provided clever camouflage.



As part of the wedding celebrations for one of her granddaughters (Mimi's daughter, Sarah), Peggy hosted a party at her home in Lake Forest, where the bride and groom were serenaded with *La Boheme* excerpts sung by artists from The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center under a candlelit canopy of trees. It goes without saying that Lyric is woven into the family's life.

The building that houses the Lyric Opera of Chicago was completed in 1929, on a design by Graham, Anderson, Probst and White, the leading architects of the city's post-Fire construction boom; from 1912 to 1936, the company was responsible for landmarks such as the Wrigley Building, Merchandise Mart, Field Museum, Shedd Aquarium, and the former central Chicago post office.

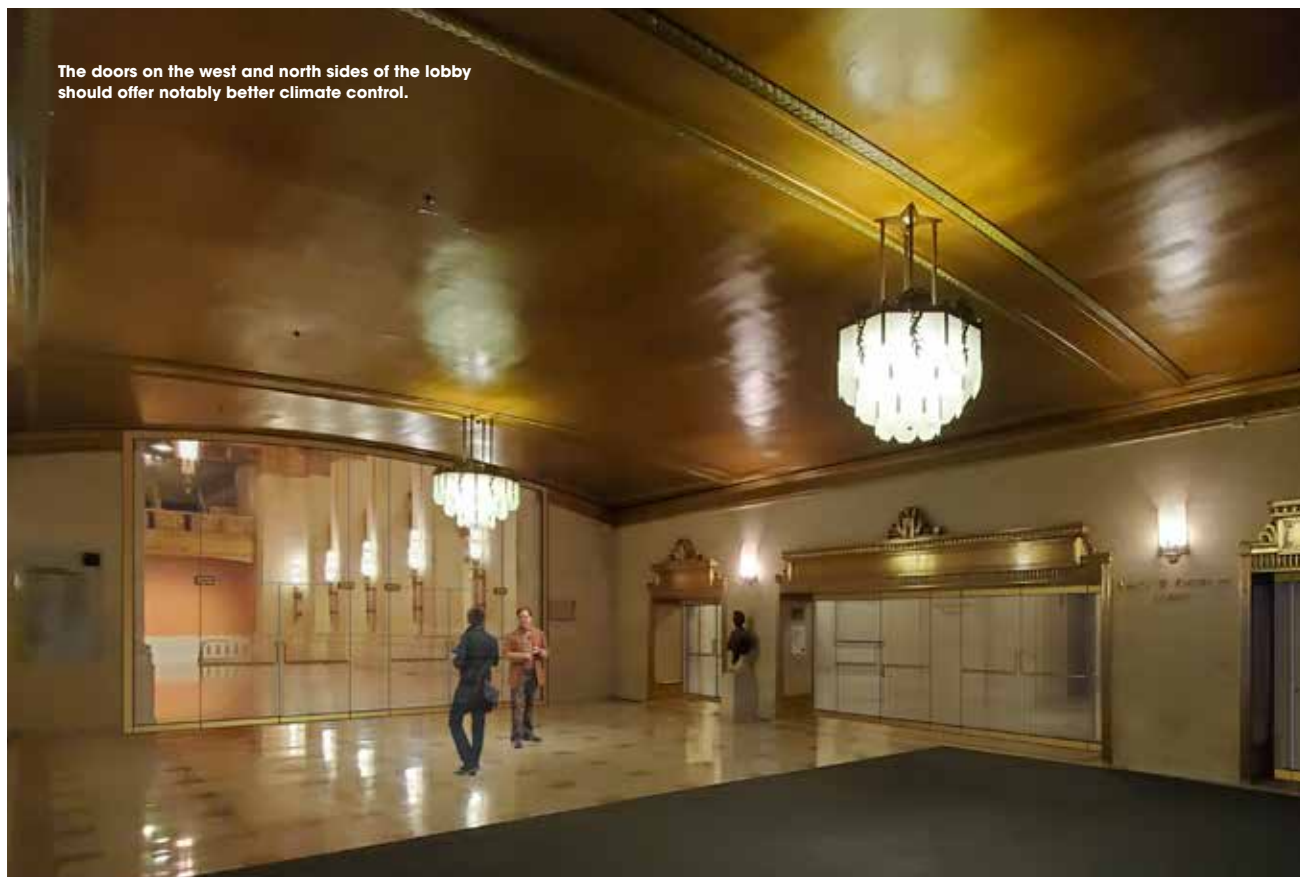
"Lyric as a building is wonderful especially in the consistency of ornament and design intent you see

throughout the building," says Koroski. "You often see the suggestion of musical instruments. You see the theatrical masks. You see the smallest detail on a doorknob, the same leaf pattern that exists in the cast iron surrounding the entrance, and at the cornice at the top of the building."

The glass wall project is a piece—a very large piece, it may be said—of an enormous ongoing initiative to tend to the health of the house itself and to the well-being of its patrons. The complete seating overhaul completed before the 2021/22 Season was part of this journey, and there is more to come. Restrooms throughout the building are going to improve, as will the box seating. There will be greater accessibility throughout the house, and improved lighting.

For the moment, though, we may all take a moment to bask in the comfort of this beautiful, useful upgrade—a clear improvement. [L](#)

The doors on the west and north sides of the lobby should offer notably better climate control.





Season of Firsts

**A conversation with Music Director Enrique Mazzola,
whose 2023/24 Season is full of milestone moments.**

By John von Rhein

ENRIQUE MAZZOLA WAS IN AN UPBEAT MOOD

when we spoke this past summer via a Zoom call between Chicago and Bregenz, Austria, where the Spanish-born, Italian-trained maestro serves as conductor in residence of the Bregenz Festival. Fresh off back-to-back performances of Verdi's *Ernani* and Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* at the lakeside opera festival, Mazzola said he was eagerly anticipating his return to Chicago, where he will celebrate his third season as music director with a host of career firsts.

The 2023/24 Lyric season opens with the first Wagner opera you will have conducted here—*The Flying Dutchman*—as well as the first 21st century opera of your Chicago repertoire, Terence Blanchard's *Champion*. The *Requiem* will be your first Mozart here. And then you will close the season with your first complete *Aida* in any opera house.

It's not that I had planned to do a season of firsts. When Anthony Freud and I create an opera season, we try for variety in terms of languages, what's known or unfamiliar, and to include contemporary opera. We try to achieve a continuity with the season that came before and the seasons that follow. *Dutchman* will be my first German opera at Lyric. *Champion* will be my first contemporary opera, as COVID prevented us from presenting Missy Mazzoli's *Proving Up* [in 2020/21]. Although I have conducted many Verdi operas, I have only done concert excerpts from *Aida*, never a full production. I am pleased to say it will be the 100th opera in my repertoire!

Speaking of *The Flying Dutchman*, what considerations impacted the choice of this early Wagner masterpiece for the current season?

Dutchman was written in 1843; *Ernani*, which opened our season last year, premiered one year later. The proximity of those premieres excited my imagination. Here we have the youthful Verdi, practically the same age as Wagner. Just as you hear all the energetic, Italianate power of the young Verdi in *Ernani*, with *Dutchman* you find the foundation of Wagner's mature musical language. Given that my conducting path has been very structured in terms of periods and chronology, *Dutchman* is a logical starting point for my journey into German Romantic opera. My journey will continue next season with Carl Maria von Weber's *Der Freischütz*, in Bregenz. Who knows? In the not-too-distant future I hope to conduct Beethoven's *Fidelio* and Wagner's *Lohengrin*—and I want to be ready for that.

What factors make the orchestral sound-world of *Dutchman* different from the orchestral palette of his later operas?

The orchestration of *Dutchman* is very rich, compared to, say, Verdi's orchestral accompaniments for *Ernani*. In fact, it's a score where Wagner gets "super-forte." Orchestral musicians of the mid-19th century did not yet have very powerful instruments at their disposal, and, because Wagner was very precise about the kind of sound he wanted, you see many fortes, fortissimos, and fortississimos in the scores. His is not only a rich orchestration but also a powerful orchestration.

Lyric audiences were introduced to the operatic Terence Blanchard in 2022 with his second opera, *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*. In 2024, they will hear the Chicago premiere of his first, *Champion*. What appeals to you about these works?

Blanchard subtitles his piece "an opera in jazz," rather than a "jazz opera." His way of writing opera, drawing on his deep knowledge of jazz to create a unique musical language that swings between classical and contemporary, in a truly cinematic flow, makes his language at once very interesting and very accessible.

It seems that there's great potential for Lyric to expand its audience with *Champion*.

That is so important for me. From the very beginning of my appointment as music director, I said that while it is the duty of a major international company to explore the classics of the repertoire, it is no less important to put on stage what we see all about us right now—contemporary opera that tells contemporary stories. New operas can not only be very beautiful and deeply moving, but also can hold up a mirror to 21st century society, in a very powerful way. I firmly believe opera is the most complete, most complex, most challenging art form we have today. If we don't use that art form to reflect on what's going on in the world, what better means is there?

What is your approach to the perennial audience favorite that is Verdi's tuneful spectacle, *Aida*?

Since this will be my first complete *Aida* anywhere, I won't be approaching our production as a "repertoire" opera. I'm delving deeply into the score with the "purest eyes," to absorb all the musical and dramatic information Verdi gives us. I hope to conduct this work with the *sacro fuoco*—the sacred fire—of a first-timer! As with *Don Carlos*, which I conducted here last season, Verdi conceived the opera on a grand scale.



Enrique Mazzola, onstage with General Director Anthony Freud and host Andrea Darlas, captures a self portrait at Lyric's 2023/24 season announcement event.

My experience with that opera will help me to enter the very special world of this masterpiece, to balance its elements of intimacy and grandiosity as Verdi intended.

How has your artistic and personal relationship with the members of the Lyric Opera Orchestra evolved since the start of your tenure in 2021?

All artistic relationships between musicians and their music director begin with human sentiments, which are basic for making music; one of the most basic of those sentiments is mutual trust. We work together, and when we set the first note of a performance, we set everything into motion—passionately so, putting together every aspect of the orchestral foundation. Our relationship broadens and deepens with every performance. We are getting to know each other better and better, the musicians and I. Together I think we are achieving a very clear, transparent sound—a sound that allows the

orchestra maximum expressivity and, at the same time, creates the maximum range of colors at all dynamics without risking the cohesion of the ensemble.

Last season, I attended some performances conducted by others, and I was very proud to hear the orchestra working in the direction of greater transparency, every sound audible to the audience. I dislike it when clarity and articulation are lost. To make certain that every sound and color registers in their proper places, in rehearsal I will ask the orchestra to play *pianissimo* instead of just *piano*, *staccatissimo* instead of just *staccato*. The entire orchestra is working in that direction, and that makes me very happy. I work with many orchestras around the world, so I can speak with some authority when I say the Lyric Opera Orchestra is one of the best in the world. That is not the vanity of a music director speaking! I'm deeply proud of our orchestra—and of our Lyric Opera Chorus.

During the *Aida* run in the spring, audiences will hear two performances of the Mozart *Requiem*, a choral masterwork Lyric has never done before, paired with Mozart's rarely heard incidental music to the play *Thamos, King of Egypt*. How were these works chosen?

Besides being the very first Mozart I will have conducted at Lyric, I thought it would be a good idea to give our splendid chorus a very beautiful showcase. The *Requiem* is a fantastic choral piece, and I'm looking forward to having our orchestra and chorus onstage to perform it. Mozart's unfinished setting is his final testament, a thoughtful reflection on the deepest meaning of the Latin mass for the dead. We will employ a compact-sized orchestra that will allow us to enter a different sound-world from what our audiences are used to hearing in opera.


Three conductors are appearing at Lyric Opera for the first time in 2023/24—Speranza Scappucci leading *The Daughter of the Regiment*, Jakub Hrůša pacing *Jenůfa*, and Yi-Chen Lin conducting Rossini's *Cinderella*. Three podium debuts in a single season is rare, if not unprecedented.

It is a happy coincidence—I can assure you we did not plan it that way! Every season presents opportunities for us to invite important young conductors who have enjoyed success outside Chicago to lead performances

with our opera company. I'm actually super-proud of these three. Jakub Hrůša and Speranza Scappucci will assume their positions as music director and principal guest conductor, respectively, at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, beginning with the 2025/26 season. Yi-Chen Lin, another prominent young conductor, shared performances of *Ernani* and *Butterfly* with me in Bregenz.

Clearly you conceive your position at Lyric as that of a full-service music director in a very real sense—an active link between the opera company and the community.

I consider the role of the music director not only to be the principal conductor, but also as someone who can work with everyone in the opera company. To be an ambassador for the vision of the company and its mission within the civic and cultural life of the city. Last year, Chicago's Merit School of Music invited me to work with its student musicians on a fantastic project. I saw the future of music in their diversity, and in the talent and enthusiasm that shone in their eyes. The experience filled me with hope.

John von Rhein retired as classical music critic of the Chicago Tribune in 2018, after more than 40 years in that position. He continues to write about classical music for various print and online publications. 



Maestro Mazzola backstage before conducting Verdi's *Luisa Miller* in Lyric's 2019/20 Season.

The first opera that revealed Wagner's genius, *The Flying Dutchman* is the story of a young woman's obsession. Senta dreams of the Dutchman, who is cursed to wander the earth. He comes ashore every seven years, searching for a woman who will be faithful to him until death. When she meets him, Senta's fate is sealed. *The Flying Dutchman* contains some of Wagner's most magnificent and emotional music, including thrilling, spectacular choruses.



Marjorie Owens as Senta and Christopher Ventris as Erik in the Canadian Opera Company's 2022 production of *The Flying Dutchman*.

Michael Cooper/Canadian Opera Company

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The Flying Dutchman



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Music & Libretto by **Richard Wagner** | Opera in three acts in German

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The Dutchman
Mary
Senta
Erik

Mika Kares
Ryan Capozzo⁺
Tomasz Konieczny
Melody Wilson⁺
Tamara Wilson
Robert Watson⁺

Conductor
Director
Set & Costume Designer
Lighting Designer
Chorus Director
Wigmaster and
Makeup Designer
Assistant Director
Stage Manager
Stage Band Conductor
Musical Preparation

Enrique Mazzola
Christopher Alden
Allen Moyer
Anne Militello⁺
Michael Black
Sarah Hatten

Jordan Lee Braun
Rachel A. Tobias
Patrick Furrer
Patrick Furrer
Susan Miller Hult
Noah Lindquist
Jerad Mosbey
Eric Weimer
Dean Whiteside[^]
Susan Miller Hult
Samantha Kaufman

First performed by Königliches Hoftheater Dresden on January 2, 1843.
First performed by Lyric Opera of Chicago on November 13, 1959.

⁺ Lyric debut

[•] Current Member, The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center

[^] Solti Foundation U.S. Opera Residency

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Gunta Dreifelds



Johan Reuter as the Dutchman in the Canadian Opera Company's 2022 production of *The Flying Dutchman*.

Michael Cooper/Canadian Opera Company

Synopsis

ACT I

On Daland's ship

Daland, a sea-captain, drops anchor near his home harbor, and orders the Steersman to keep watch. The tired man falls asleep and fails to see the arrival of the Dutchman's ship, which anchors beside Daland's vessel. When Daland discovers the strange ship, he calls to its captain, who identifies himself simply as "a Dutchman" and offers a rich reward for one night's lodging. He then offers his fabulous treasure as a dowry for the hand of Daland's daughter, and Daland eagerly agrees.

ACT II


Daland's home

Daland's daughter, Senta, stares at a portrait of the Flying Dutchman while the women around her sing as they work. Senta then sings a song about the Dutchman, a sea captain condemned to sail for eternity. He is permitted to set foot on land only once every seven years, to search for salvation in a woman's love. Mary, Senta's companion, scolds Senta for her obsession with this legend, and tells her that when her father returns, she will ask him to remove from the house the picture of the Dutchman. Erik, Senta's suitor, enters to say that he has seen her father's ship sailing towards harbor. He presses her to ask her father to give him her hand in marriage. Senta, however, continues to speak of her fascination with the Flying Dutchman, and Erik tells her of a dream in which he saw her embrace a strange seaman.

In despair, Erik leaves. Daland then enters with his guest, and Senta is mesmerized by the Dutchman, whom she recognizes from the portrait. Daland explains that the stranger wishes to marry her and leaves the couple together. Senta agrees to marry the Dutchman.

ACT III

By the Dutchman's ship

During the homecoming celebration, Daland's crew and their women are terrified by an encounter with the Dutchman's ghostly crew. Erik angrily confronts Senta about her decision to marry the Dutchman. As Erik reminds Senta of her promise to love him, the Dutchman enters and overhears the exchange. Convinced that Senta is lost to him, the Dutchman is overwhelmed with despair. He accuses her of infidelity and sets sail with his men. Proclaiming her eternal faithfulness to the Dutchman, Senta dies. 

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Lyric Opera of Chicago gratefully
acknowledges the support of the
Irma Parker German Opera
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The Flying Dutchman is a
production of the Canadian Opera
Company, Toronto, Canada.

Lyric Opera of Chicago thanks its
Official Airline, American Airlines.

APPROXIMATE TIMINGS

This production will be performed
without intermission.

Running time 2 hours 20 minutes

Lyric

Director's note

by Christopher Alden



It is always exciting for me to return to the pivotal piece of music theater that is Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman*. For—like Verdi with *Luisa Miller* and Mozart with *Idomeneo*—*Der fliegende Holländer* is the opera in which Wagner first found his true voice and began to pilot his aesthetic craft beyond the operatic conventions of his day into hitherto uncharted waters.

Reality, fantasy, rationality, and the unconscious all swim side by side in the stormy sea of Wagner's music, dragging the audience into the depths of the human psyche. When the piece is performed without an intermission, as originally intended, Wagner ratchets up the tension level tighter and tighter, until (spoiler alert!) Senta's death feels like the only possible escape from the obsessive morass of

this dark tale. The Dutchman in our production is a stand-in for The Wandering Jew of myth, restlessly traveling through time and space, searching for a safe harbor.

And our Senta is a rebel against her closed community, identifying with the plight of the outcast and fixated on a piece of *Entartete Kunst*—degenerate art. The introduction of Holocaust imagery in this production was born from Allen Moyer's and my desire to confront head-on the unholy connection between Wagner's art and the spectres of Fascism and Antisemitism. Sadly, with the current global spread of nationalism and authoritarianism, it feels like these impulses continue to re-appear in our world with nearly the same relentless regularity as the docking of the Dutchman's ship every seven years. **17**



Johan Reuter as the Dutchman and Franz-Josef Selig as Daland in the Canadian Opera Company's 2022 production of *The Flying Dutchman*.

Michael Cooper/Canadian Opera Company

Lyric

Artist profiles



TOMASZ KONIECZNY THE DUTCHMAN

Previously at Lyric: Title role/*Wozzeck* (2015/16).

The Polish bass-baritone first studied acting at the Film, Television and Theater Academy in his hometown of Łódź. He made his debut in a film directed by Oscar-winning director Andrzej Wajda and then worked as an actor/director in numerous television, film, and theater productions in Poland. Around the same time, he began his vocal studies at the Fryderyk Chopin Academy in Warsaw, which he continued at the Hochschule für Musik in Dresden. Today, Konieczny is a regular guest at the most important international opera houses such as the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, the Vienna and Bavarian State Operas, the Opéra Bastille, the Zurich Opera House, the Teatro Real Madrid, the Semperoper Dresden, and many others, as well as at the Bayreuth and Salzburg Festivals. His repertoire includes roles such as Wotan/Wanderer in *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, Amfortas in *Parsifal*, Kurwenal in *Tristan und Isolde*, the title roles in *Der fliegende Holländer*, Berg's *Wozzeck*, and in *Cardillac* by Hindemith, Scarpia in *Tosca*, Jack Rance in *La fanciulla del West*, the Four Villains in *The Tales of Hoffmann*, Mandryka in *Arabella*, Barak in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, Jochanaan in *Salome*, and Pizarro in Beethoven's *Fidelio*. Konieczny has made numerous critically acclaimed CD and DVD recordings, including three separate recordings of the *Ring* cycle conducted by Marek Janowski, Christian Thielemann, and Sir Simon Rattle. A sought-after concert and lieder singer, Konieczny has worked with renowned conductors such as Adam Fischer, Sir Andrew Davis, Gianandrea Noseda, and Franz Welser-Möst. He has presented recital programs with great success in Dresden, Warsaw, Munich, Vienna, New York, and Tokyo.



TAMARA WILSON SENTA

Previously at Lyric: *Elvira/Ernani* (2022/23) and *Leonora/Il trovatore* (2018/19).

Winner of the prestigious Richard Tucker Award, the Arizona-born dramatic soprano, who grew up in the Chicago area, has rapidly gained international recognition, particularly as the heroines of Verdi and Strauss. In the 2022/23 season, she appeared in a new production of *Lohengrin* at the Metropolitan Opera, a new *Turandot* at Dutch National Opera, and in *Tosca* at Houston Grand Opera. In the 2021/22 season, she appeared in *Fidelio* at Teatro la Fenice, *Tristan und Isolde* at the Santa Fe Opera, and in Lyric's *Verdi Voices*. She has previously

triumphed in *Il trovatore* in Barcelona, Houston, Toulouse, and Mallorca. Among the 10 other Verdi operas in her stage repertoire are *I due Foscari* (Toulouse, Santiago, Amsterdam), *La forza del destino* (London, Olivier Award nomination), *Don Carlos* (Houston, Munich, Zurich, Frankfurt), and *Un ballo in maschera* (Berlin, Washington). In the 2018/19 season, she returned to the Metropolitan Opera (*Aida*) and the Zurich Opera House (Chrysothemis/*Elektra*), and made her mainstage debut at La Scala (the Prima Donna and Ariadne/*Ariadne auf Naxos*, after appearing with the company in the Verdi *Requiem*). Her versatility extends to *Don Giovanni* (Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra), *Norma* (Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu), *Die Walküre* (BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra), and *Die Fledermaus* (in Japan under Ozawa). In demand for concert works, Wilson has made acclaimed appearances with the major orchestras of New York, Washington, Cleveland, Chicago, London, and Amsterdam, among many others. She appears on CD in the Frankfurt production of *Die Frau ohne Schatten*.



ROBERT WATSON ERIK

Lyric debut

This season, the American tenor will make his role debut as Siegmund/*Die Walküre* at Staatsoper Unter den Linden and debut at Santa Fe Opera as the Prince/*Rusalka*. He will sing the title role/*Les contes d'Hoffmann* and Matteo/*Arabella* and make his role debut as Florestan/*Fidelio* at Deutsche Oper Berlin, sing B.F. Pinkerton/*Madama Butterfly* at Palm Beach Opera, and Ismaele/*Nabucco* with Deutsche Oper Berlin. The 2021/22 season began with his Metropolitan Opera debut as Moser/*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* and continued with his return to Deutsche Oper Berlin as Don Carlo, to Opéra National de Montpellier as Bacchus/*Ariadne auf Naxos*, and to Lyric Opera of Kansas City as Cavaradossi. Additionally, Watson made his house and role debut at Opernhaus Zürich opera as Turiddu/*Cavalleria rusticana*. He has appeared in concert as the tenor soloist in Beethoven's 9th Symphony with the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Kansas City Symphony and in Verdi's *Requiem* with the Florence Masterwork's Choral Society. He has performed in recital at The Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C. He is a member of the ensemble of Deutsche Oper Berlin where he has performed numerous roles including Ismaele/*Nabucco*, Grigori/*Boris Godunov*, Bois-Rose/*Les Huguenots*, Cavaradossi/*Tosca*, Erik/*Der fliegende Holländer*, and the messenger in *Aida*.



MIKA KARES DALAND

Previously at Lyric: Commendatore/*Don Giovanni* (2019/20).

The Finnish bass studied at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki and was a member of the Baden State Opera ensemble from 2005 to 2010. This summer he made his debut at the Bayreuth Festival as Hagen in *Götterdämmerung*. Other opera roles include Hunding/*Die Walküre*, Fafner and Fasolt/*Das Rheingold* and *Siegfried*, Hermann/*Tannhäuser*, King Marke/*Tristan und Isolde*, Heinrich der Vogler/*Lohengrin*, Jacopo Fiesco/*Simon Boccanegra*, Zaccaria/*Nabucco*, King René/*Iolanta*, Ivan/*Khovanshchina*, and the title role in *Bluebeard's Castle*, for which he earned a Grammy nomination for a 2021 recording on BIS. Additional recordings include *Boris Godunov* with the Gothenburg Symphony and Kent Nagano (BIS, 2019). Upcoming roles include Timur/*Turandot* and Jacopo Fiesco/*Simon Boccanegra* at Paris's Opéra Bastille as well as new productions of Dvořák's *Rusalka* (Vodník) and Mussorgsky's *Khovanshchina* (Ivan) at Berlin's State Opera. Kares is a sought-after concert singer, his broad repertoire including Mozart's *Requiem*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 and *Missa Solemnis*, Verdi's *Requiem*, Mahler's Symphony No. 8, and Symphonies No. 13 and 14 by Shostakovich.



RYAN CAPOZZO STEERSMAN

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

The tenor, a second-year member of the Ryan Opera Center, received a Master of Musical Arts degree from the Yale School of Music, where he was awarded the Phyllis Curtin Career Entry Prize and was heard with Yale Opera as Arcadio/*Florencia en el Amazonas* and Tamino/*The Magic Flute* (partial role, Spring Opera Showcase). Previously, Capozzo earned Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees from the Purchase College Conservatory of Music. At Purchase Opera, he was featured as Rinuccio/*Gianni Schicchi* (guest artist), Reverend Samuel Parris/Robert Ward's *The Crucible*, Don Ottavio/*Don Giovanni*, Nero/*L'incoronazione di Poppea*, and Lysander/*A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Capozzo's portrayal of Mozart's Tamino has been heard at the Berlin Opera Academy. The Huntington, New York native is a two-time Second Place Regional winner of the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition and was invited to participate in the 2023 Georg Solti Accademia. *Ryan Capozzo is sponsored by the H. Earl and Miriam U. Hoover Endowment Fund.*



MELODY WILSON MARY

Lyric debut

This season, Wilson makes her debut at Carnegie Hall with Mozart's *Requiem* and with Atlanta Opera as Hermia/*A Midsummer Night's Dream*. She also performs Rossweisse/*Die Walküre* with the Dallas Symphony and the oratorio *Sanctuary Road* at the Bach Festival in Orlando. Last season, the mezzo-soprano joined the ensemble of the Metropolitan Opera to cover the role of Cousin Blanche in Terence Blanchard's *Champion*, and returned to Seattle Opera for Fricka/*Das Rheingold*. She also performed a staged version of *Sanctuary Road* at the Penn Square Music Festival and Fenena/*Nabucco* with Washington Concert Opera. Other concert appearances included the world premiere of *Bodies On the Line* by Martin Rokeach with the Oakland Symphony and Beethoven's 9th Symphony with the Brooklyn Chamber Orchestra. In 2022, she appeared with San Francisco Symphony in Brahms's *Alto Rhapsody*, with the Dallas Symphony as Olga/*Eugene Onegin*, with the Oakland Symphony in a recital, with the Baltimore Concert Opera as Principessa di Bouillon/*Adriana Lecouvreur*, with the Princeton Festival as Mrs. Herring/*Albert Herring*, and with Union Avenue Opera as Meg Page/*Falstaff*. In 2020 and 2021, she made company debuts with Seattle Opera, Indianapolis Opera, and Cincinnati Opera, and returned to Opera Theatre of Saint Louis's *New Works, Bold Voices* program.



ENRIQUE MAZZOLA CONDUCTOR

Lyric's Music Director—only the third in the company's history—is renowned as an expert interpreter and champion of *bel canto* opera and Verdi repertoire, and as a specialist in French repertoire. Lyric audiences first experienced the Italian conductor's artistry in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* in 2016/17, and subsequently in Bellini's *I puritani* in 2017/18. During 2019/20, he led Verdi's *Luisa Miller* to launch the company's *Early Verdi Series*. Mazzola's first opera as Lyric's music director, Sir David McVicar's new production of Verdi's *Macbeth*, opened the 2021/22 season, followed by Donizetti's *The Elixir of Love* as well as *Verdi Voices* and *Rising Stars in Concert*. Mazzola is Principal Guest Conductor at the Deutsche Oper Berlin and, since 2022, the first ever Conductor-in-Residence at the Bregenz Festival. He served as Artistic and Music Director of the Orchestre National d'Île de France from 2012 to 2019. Symphonic guest work has included the London Philharmonic, Philharmonia Orchestra, Vienna Symphony, Orchestre National de France, and Oslo Philharmonic. He has conducted at the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, Paris's Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, and the major houses of Florence, Berlin, Zurich, Moscow, and Tokyo, in addition to a historic Meyerbeer cycle for Deutsche Oper Berlin. Past major European festivals have included Glyndebourne (including DVD releases of *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Poliuto*, and *Don Pasquale*), new productions

in 2019 for Bregenz (*Rigoletto* and *Madama Butterfly*) and Salzburg (*Orphée aux Enfers*), Pesaro (Rossini Opera Festival), Venice, and Aix-en-Provence. Mazzola was born in Barcelona, Spain, into a musical family, and grew up in Milan, where he studied violin and piano, earning diplomas in composition and orchestral conducting at the Conservatorio Giuseppe Verdi in Milan. *Enrique Mazzola is supported by the John D. and Alexandra C. Nichols Endowed Chair.*



CHRISTOPHER ALDEN DIRECTOR

Previously at Lyric: *Rigoletto* (2000/01).

Born in New York City, Alden has directed work across the globe. His production of Handel's *Partenope* at English National Opera won the Olivier Award in 2009 and was subsequently presented by Opera Australia, San Francisco Opera, and Teatro Real in Madrid. Other ENO productions include *Turandot*, *The Makropulos Case*, *Norma*, and Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which won the Golden Mask Award when presented at the Stanislavski Theatre in Moscow. For San Francisco Opera, Alden directed *Les contes d'Hoffman*, *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, *I vespri siciliani*, Henze's *Das verurteilte Meer*, *The Mother of Us All*, and *Harvey Milk*. At the Festival d'Aix en Provence, his staging of *Il turco in Italia* was presented as a co-production with Torino, Dijon, and Warsaw, and his Glimmerglass Opera production of Monteverdi's *Orfeo* travelled to Oslo and Opera North in the UK. Other highlights include productions of Leonard Bernstein's *Peter Pan* for Bard SummerScape Festival, Martinů's *The Greek Passion* for Opera North, Péter Eötvös's *Three Sisters* for the Ural Opera, Laura Schwendinger's *Artemisia* for Trinity Church Wall Street, *Peter Grimes* and *Tristan und Isolde* for Karlsruhe, and Franchetti's *Asrael* for Bonn. For the Canadian Opera Company, Alden created productions of *Der fliegende Holländer*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Rigoletto*, and *La clemenza di Tito*, and his stagings for New York City Opera included *Le Comte Ory*, *L'italiana in Algeri*, *The Rape of Lucretia*, Sousa's *The Glass Blowers*, *Don Giovanni*, *La Périhole*, and Bernstein's *A Quiet Place*. He directed the three Mozart/Da Ponte operas for Gustavo Dudamel and the Los Angeles Philharmonic and for Daniel Barenboim and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, in collaboration with his twin brother, David Alden.



ALLEN MOYER COSTUME & SET DESIGNER

Previously at Lyric: Set Designer/*Fire Shut Up in My Bones* (2021/22).

Among the distinguished designer's credits are *Orfeo ed Euridice*, *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, and *Champion* for the Metropolitan Opera, along with productions for New York City Opera, San Francisco Opera, English National Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Santa Fe Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Dallas Opera, LA Opera, Seattle Opera, Scottish Opera, Washington National Opera, Welsh National Opera, and the Glimmerglass and Wexford Festivals. His numerous Broadway credits include *Grey Gardens* (Tony/Drama Desk nominations, Henry Hewes Award), *Paradise Square* (Tony nomination), *The Lyons*, *Lysistrata Jones*, *Thurgood*, *The Constant Wife*, and *Twelve Angry Men*. Other theater credits include productions Off-Broadway for The Public Theater, Playwrights Horizons, Second Stage, The Roundabout Theatre, Lincoln Center Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club, and numerous other regional theaters nationwide (including the Goodman and Steppenwolf). Moyer designed *Carousel* and *Showboat* with the New York Philharmonic, as well as the Delibes ballet *Sylvia* (The San Francisco Ballet) and *Romeo and Juliet: On Motifs of Shakespeare* (Mark Morris Dance Group), both choreographed by Morris.



ANNE MILITELLO LIGHTING DESIGNER

Lyric debut

Militello's design for *The Flying Dutchman*, originally for the Canadian Opera Company, has been presented at The Dallas Opera, Seattle Opera, Opera Montreal, Portland Opera, and the Pittsburgh Opera. Other opera credits include *Dulce Rosa* at Los Angeles Opera, and collaborations with Christopher Alden including *Bluebeard* at Long Beach Opera, *Djamileh* and *La Navarraise* at Connecticut Opera, and *Stranger Here Myself* at The Public Theater. Militello provided lighting designs for original theater productions with writer/director Sam Shepard, Maria Irene Fornes, and filmmaker David Lynch, among others, and also designed the Broadway production of *Cuba and His Teddy Bear* with Robert DeNiro. She is the recipient of an Obie Award for Sustained Excellence in the Off-Broadway Theater. Concert designs include international tours for Neil Young, Leonard Cohen, Tom Waits, kd lang, Robert Plant and Alison Krauss, Pearl Jam, Josh Groban, and Lou Reed, among others. A former Walt Disney Imagineer, she received the Themed Lighting Designer of the Year award from Entertainment Design International. Additional accomplishments include permanent light-art installations on The New 42nd Street Studio Building, winner of The Paul Waterbury Award of Distinction from the International Illuminating Engineering Society, and "Light Cycles" at the World Financial Center. She heads the Master's Lighting Program at CalArts and founded Vortex Lighting in Los Angeles. *Lighting designers are supported by the Mary-Louise and James S. Aagaard endowment in honor of Duane Schuler.*

2023 | 24 Season

Lyric

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CHICAGO

The Flying Dutchman

The Daughter of
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Champion

Aida

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Season Opening Gala

Mozart Requiem

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MICHAEL BLACK
CHORUS DIRECTOR AND
HEAD OF MUSIC

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. Stotler Chorus Director Endowed Chair.*



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.* 

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Photo: Kyle Flubacker

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Orchestra & Chorus

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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[^]

ORCHESTRA

Violin I

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

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
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

Eleanor Bartsch, *violin*
Cristina Buçiu, *violin*
Jennifer Cappelli, *violin*
Injoo Choi, *violin*
Renée-Paule Gauthier, *violin*
Karyn Macfarlane, *violin*
Rika Seko, *violin*
Karl Davies, *viola*
Rebecca Swan, *viola*
Bruno Vaz da Silva, *viola*
Isidora Nojkovic, *cello*
Nomin Zolzaya, *cello*
Jeremy Attanaseo, *bass*
Kit Polen, *bass*
Rachel Blumenthal, *flute*

STAGE BAND

Ashley Hunter, *piccolo*
Scott Metlicka, *piccolo*
John Thorne, *piccolo*
Angela Bilger, *horn*
Dan O'Connell, *horn*
Renée Vogen, *horn*
Ryan Williamson, *horn*
Joel Cohen, *percussion*

* On leave, 2023/24 Season

** Season Substitute

[^] 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. Wrighte

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

Bass

David DuBois
Robert Morrissey
Rafael W. Porto
Craig Springer
Vince Wallace
Nicholas Ward
Ronald Watkins
Nikolas Wenzel
Max Wier

**CORE SUPPLEMENTARY
CHORUS****Soprano**

Carla Janzen
Joelle Lamarre
Emily Mwila
Tara Wheeker

Mezzo-Soprano

Christina G. Adams
Cara Collins

Tenor

Joe Shadday

Bass

Christopher Filipowicz
David Govertsen
Nicolai Janitzky
Dan Richardson
Jonathan Wilson

**SUPPLEMENTARY
CHORUS****Soprano**

Nicole Besa
Regina Ceragioli
Anna Donnelly
Cassandra Douglas
Makeda D. Hampton
Elise Hurwitz
Kimberly Jones
Katelyn Lee
Rosalind Lee
Amanda Neal
Emlynn Shoemaker
Diana Stoic
Kelsea Webb

Mezzo-Soprano

Jihanna Davis
Leah Dexter
Christina Eberling
Elizabeth Frey
Rachel Ann Girty
Marguerite Jones
Morgan Middleton
Emily Price
Ola Rafalo
Emlynn Shoemaker
Marissa Simmons

Tenor

Joshua Benevento
Damon Cole
Kevin Courtemanche
Matthew Daniel
Bradyn Debsingh
Ace Gangoso
Alex Guerrero
Klaus Georg
Darell Haynes
Jianghai Ho
Ernest C. Jackson Jr

Taiwan Norris
Nathan Oakes
Steven Michael Patrick
Brett Potts
Christopher Sierra
Brian Skoog
Ryan Townsend Strand

Bass

Michael Cavalieri
Chris DiMarco
Dimitri German
Kirk Greiner
David Guzmán
Earl Hazell
Stephen Hobe
Brian Hupp
Joseph Lodato
De’Ron McDaniel
Douglas Peters
William Powell III
Ian R. Prichard
Atticus Rego
Dan Richardson
Aaron Wardell

SUPERNUMERARIES

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Dennis Delavara
Bill DuBois
Kyle Eckert
Marianna Gallegos
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Mike Goode
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Christopher Vaughn

⁺ Lyric debut

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Todd Rosenberg

Lyric

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Brian Grenda,
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Drew Trusk,
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Dan Kuh
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Daniel Hull
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Prop Carpenter
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Gordon Granger
Robert Hartge
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Kevin McPartlin
Michael O'Donnell Jr.
Vince Scola
Taylor Torringa
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Charge Artist
Michael Besancon
Michael Murtaugh
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Jordan Lee Braun
Alison Pogorelc
Assistant Stage Directors

Alaina Bartkowiak
Sandra Moore
Stage Managers

Katrina Bachus
Adrienne Bader
Alaina Bartkowiak
Alycia Martin
Sandra Moore
Daniel Sokalski
Peggy Stenger
Amy C. Thompson
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 Luévanos
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

Introducing the 2023/24 Ryan Opera Center Ensemble!

On the evening of August 20th, members of the 2023/24 Ensemble of The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center made a glorious public debut at the Jay Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park with *Sunday in the Park with Lyric*, a highlight of Chicago's summer arts calendar. Featuring selections from all the operas coming up in the new season and performed with the Lyric Opera Orchestra under the baton of Music Director Enrique Mazzola, the concert was just one landmark moment on the journey of these talented emerging professionals as they embark on their international careers.

From *Final Auditions* in front of a live audience at the opera house last September, the Ryan Opera Center invited four new singers (selected from more than 500 applicants) to join the returning eight. The 23/24 roster was completed with a new pianist as well as a returning conductor/pianist, a stage director, and a stage manager. The Ensemble members began



The 2023/24 Ensemble, with Enrique Mazzola, greets the crowd after the triumphant performance in Millennium Park on August 20.

their tenure in May 2023, receiving advanced instruction in every aspect of operatic performance, and they will participate extensively in Lyric's mainstage season.

Lyric audiences can look forward to getting to know the Ryan Opera Center's very talented artists throughout the 2023/24 Season!

PROGRAM STAFF

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Board Endowed Chair*

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*Music Director
The Jannotta Family
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Renée Fleming
Advisor at Large

Susanna McNatt
Manager

Annika Donnen
Associate Librarian

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

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Sir Andrew Davis
Renée Fleming
Enrique Mazzola
Gerald Martin Moore
Anne Sofie von Otter
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Brent Funderburk
Laurann Gilley
Noah Lindquist
Celeste Rue
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Klára Moldová
Alessandra Visconti
Foreign Language Instruction

Nicola Bowie
Leila Gorstein
Sayjal Joshi
Katie Klein
Peter McClintock
Nick Sandys
*Acting and Movement
Instruction*

Orit Carpenter
Beth Clayton
Performance Psychology

Katrina Bachus
Rachel A. Tobias
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Artistic/Production Personnel

Louis Lohraseb
Conductor

Katherine M. Carter
Director

Rachel Garoon
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Lyric

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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.



A fearsome dragon is among the challenges the hero must face in *Jason and the Argonauts*, a production of Lyric's *Opera in the Neighborhoods* program.

Lyric

Beyond the stage

Tour de Force

After pandemic disruptions, the innovative and popular ***Opera in the Neighborhoods*** program returns to full strength with a full-fledged tour.

By Alana Guggenheim

"The show," says Jill LeCesne Potter, Lyric's Senior Director of Learning Programs, "was a triumph beyond measure." That rave review of *The Scorpion's Sting* is not just her personal assessment. Reactions "from students and teachers alike," she notes, "featured words like 'magnificent,' 'engaging and exciting,' and 'wonderful.'"

The touring production of *The Scorpion's Sting* was last season's offering from the *Opera in the Neighborhoods* program, which brings live performances of youth-focused operas to venues throughout the Chicago area. The spring run was the program's first attempt to bring *Opera in the Neighborhoods* literally back to the neighborhoods, after a

creative variety of safe, more modestly scaled pandemic-era workarounds. Launched in 1994 with a one-hour version of *Die Fledermaus*, and performing other popular abridged operas throughout the years, *Opera in the Neighborhoods* now presents original works, commissioned from world-class composers, which explore themes relevant to young audiences. The program is produced through Lyric Unlimited, the company's learning and engagement division.

They may be chamber works, but this is no small-scale effort. Just like the productions on Lyric's grand stage, *Opera in the Neighborhoods* productions feature compelling stage design, along with a company of



Scenic designs for the touring productions are fully original, professional works.

Todd Rosenberg




Works like *Jason and the Argonauts* feature relatable and relevant themes in vivid productions.

accomplished singing artists, musicians, and creative teams. Rehearsals and other preparations take place in Lyric's regular facilities. And, for student audiences, the learning begins before the show arrives—and can continue once the curtain goes down. Lyric Unlimited provides many resources for teachers to not only bring the arts into their classrooms but also to assist with building the production themes into their curriculum.

This season's chamber opera is *Jason and the Argonauts*, a work commissioned by Lyric Unlimited in 2016 by Gregory Spears, the widely acclaimed American composer, and with a libretto by Kathryn Walat. Inspired by the ancient Greek myth, the production follows the adventures of a young man and his friends as they embark on a courageous quest to find the Golden Fleece, along the way facing formidable challenges like battling a fearsome dragon. The opera incorporates themes of nature and sustainability, providing a contemporary perspective on the timeless tale.

Five performances of *Jason and the Argonauts* will be held at various locations throughout Chicago and surrounding suburbs for 3rd through 6th grade groups, culminating with two more performances open to the public at Chicago's Vittum Theatre on Saturday, October 21. In all, the show is expected to reach 3,000 students.

In many ways, *Jason* is just the latest example of the evolution of the program, advancements made partly in response to feedback from the educators and communities who comprise the audience. Shorter versions of classic works sometimes didn't connect as directly with contemporary concerns, and over time the program moved to commissioning original works.

The impact of these productions goes beyond what is seen onstage—and brings fulfillment to performers and audience alike. "The most gratifying part of *Opera in the Neighborhoods* is being able to offer experiences to kids regardless of their location, abilities, and financial situation—all for free," adds Elise LaBarge, Lyric's Learning Programs Manager. "It's fulfilling to see enthusiastic student reactions and provide a point of entry for them to explore and appreciate the world of opera." 

To learn more about Opera in the Neighborhoods and other Lyric Learning & Engagement Programming, visit lyricopera.org/learn-engage/.

Opera in the Neighborhoods is supported by **Lead Sponsor CIBC** with major support from the **Nancy W. Knowles Student and Family Performances Fund**.

People of Lyric

A behind-the-scenes conversation



Afton Battle
Vice President, Lyric Unlimited
and Artistic Operations

First opera that you saw live?

La traviata at Fort Worth Opera

Favorite opera?

My favorite opera to see performed is undoubtedly *Turandot*. My favorite opera that I've ever sung a role in is *Dialogue of the Carmelites*.

Favorite character?

Aida is my favorite character. Her nobility, humbleness, vulnerability—she is deeply complex. My favorite character that I've ever performed would be Lady Billows in *Albert Herring* because she's just so extra.

Favorite performer?

Beyoncé, of course!

What led you to Lyric?

Both of my degrees are in vocal performance; I've had a small career of my own. When I decided to stop singing, I knew I wanted to go into artistic administration in some way. In 2020, I was appointed General and Artistic Director at Fort Worth Opera, and that opened up a door to this industry; I was then asked to serve on the board of OPERA America, and that (along with being a General Director during the pandemic) connected me with Anthony Freud, general director, president & CEO at Lyric, an institution that I have always aspired to be a part of. When I decided to leave Fort Worth Opera, I was going to start my own consulting firm, but then I saw this opportunity at Lyric, and the rest is history.

How does your performance background inform your role here at Lyric?

I sympathize and empathize with our musicians when it comes to rehearsals, challenges, and how people are feeling. That brings a special perspective to the work that I do as an administrator because it breaks down the archaic, "transactional" part of the business.

What is the most challenging aspect of your job?

The Artistic department's budget is one of the (if not the) largest department budgets at the institution. In collaboration with Chief Artistic Administration Officer Matthew Ozawa, we manage hundreds of constituents who are union members. Because of the magnitude of our department, we in Artistic have to be good financial stewards of the institution. Ensuring world-class art is being produced on stage, while managing a multi-million dollar expense budget. That's a massive undertaking.

What is the most exciting part of your job?

Definitely the rehearsal and production and performance part of it. I love being able to run downstairs and pop into a rehearsal, turn on my office TV and see what's happening in the theater, or go sit in a box and watch the action on stage. Being a part of the art, and in such close proximity to the artists, is a dream for me.

What invigorates you about working in the arts world?

The thing that keeps me going when my alarm goes off is knowing that our industry, and this art form that we are all so passionate about, is evolving and changing for the better. It is becoming an inclusive art form, representative of lived experiences from everyone; we are changing the way that people perceive opera, and we are bringing in new voices. That has been a significant shift in our industry since I've been a part of it. Today there is a catalog of new works that are being commissioned and written by artists who represent the voices and lived experiences of members from marginalized or underrepresented communities. I don't believe the rhetoric that opera is dying. It's dying if you want it to be, or if you let it. But when we give it the room and the space it needs to breathe, it's recreating itself, and it is just getting started. **L**