

The background image shows the interior of the Winspear Opera House. A large, curved ceiling is visible, with a dramatic light fixture consisting of many vertical, glowing rods hanging from it. The stage is at the far end, with a red curtain and a large, illuminated map of Texas. The audience is seated in the foreground, facing the stage. The overall atmosphere is grand and elegant.

thedallasopera™

NATIONAL VOCAL COMPETITION

Sponsored by:
The Dallas Opera Guild

Featuring The Dallas Opera Orchestra
Conducted by Emmanuel Villaume

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 29TH 7:30PM | WINSPEAR OPERA HOUSE

With the 31st Anniversary of The Dallas Opera Vocal Competition,

The Dallas Opera is officially in its fourth decade of service to the next generation of American opera artists. It's an auspicious moment to pause and take stock of how very far we have come—together—and to recall the extraordinary men and women who have not only been encouraged to pursue their dreams, but, who have, in fact, achieved them. You will find their names on marquees, as well as in program books, in Dallas and around the world.

Today, The Dallas Opera National Vocal Competition sponsored by The Dallas Opera Guild attracts singers from all 50 states and U.S. Territories, looking for the chance to perform for some of the most influential decision-makers in our industry. Aside from the opportunity for prize money, it is a chance for up and coming singers to perform in front of an incredible panel who cast in opera houses around the country and world.

A MESSAGE FROM GENERAL DIRECTOR & CEO IAN DERRER

There will always be those who question the value of competitions; however, a well-managed competition teaches the best among us how to excel. That is one of the unspoken goals of this outstanding annual event.

Now, settle into your seat and get ready to enjoy the unexpected surprises, the thrilling high notes, earth-shaking low notes, and everything in between as eight charismatic young singers vie for top honors and “Texas-sized bragging rights.”

I would like to personally thank Vocal Competition Co-Chairs Jana and Mac Irwin, and Guild Co-Presidents Susan and Mark Geyer for their unwavering dedication and hard work. And I must mention the incredible contributions of the two women whose memories we honor tonight—Cecile Bonte and Connie Klemow—incredible supporters and leaders whose legacies will remain a part of The Dallas Opera’s history for decades to come.

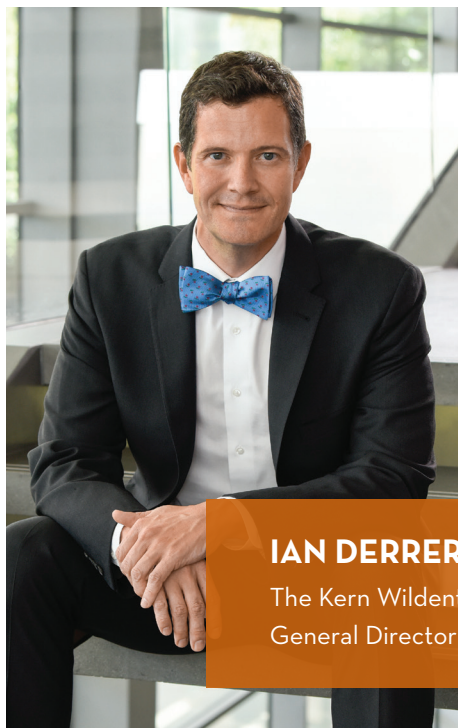
I would also like to express my gratitude to David Lomelí for agreeing to lead the judges panel consisting of professionals from the top ranks of the classical music field: Afton Battle (Fort Worth Opera), Christina Scheppelmann (Seattle Opera), Jean Kellogg (Merola Opera Program at San Francisco Opera), Brian Zeger (The Juilliard School), and our very own music director, Maestro Emmanuel Villaume. It’s a singular joy to host such experienced professionals and to listen to their impressions of these rising young stars.

Finally, let me express my deep appreciation to all those—including you here in the audience tonight—who have made this 31st Anniversary of The Dallas Opera Vocal Competition a celebration to remember!

Sincerely,



Ian Derrer
The Kern Wildenthal General Director and CEO



IAN DERRER

The Kern Wildenthal
General Director and CEO

Photo by Karen Almond

WELCOME FROM GUILD CO-PRESIDENTS SUSAN AND MARK GEYER

Greetings to all who value and appreciate the artistic gift of vocal performance! With a rich history dating back to 1957, The Dallas Opera has evolved into a company capable of launching dynamic repertoire wherever its notes are released in our community. Creativity, resilience, perseverance, and love of the art form characterize the company, as well as each of the individuals who have a voice in its leadership, management, and volunteer groups.

The Dallas Opera Guild is aligned with the goals of TDO and in the spirit of enthusiastic support has been involved with the Vocal Competition since its inception. The competition alternates yearly between a Texas-focused base and a national base of vocal talent. This year we celebrate a national competition, which drew from an application pool of 366 and became a select number of eight finalists of notable artistic ability and promise.

The arts flourish with the support of those who realize that they cannot survive without the beauty and resonance of the arts and, in particular, the extraordinary gift of music. Please give generously to promote and encourage the next generation of singers and the enduringly captivating art form of opera. Like a bold Italian red wine, or a rare French champagne savored and delighted in with one's friends and loved ones, so is the art of opera... Enjoy to your heart's content.

Susan and Mark Geyer

Co-Presidents, 2021 Dallas Opera Guild National Vocal Competition

WELCOME FROM 2021 VOCAL COMPETITION CO-CHAIRS JANA AND MAC IRWIN

Welcome to the 2021 Dallas Opera National Vocal Competition. We are delighted to return in person to the Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House for this year's national event. On behalf of The Dallas Opera Guild and our dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers for this competition, we are very pleased to welcome you here for an evening of wonderful music from these young artists accompanied by The Dallas Opera Orchestra.

You will have the opportunity to judge the singers for the coveted Jonathan Pell People's Choice Award. As you listen to the singers, mark your program with your preferences. While the judges are deliberating during a brief pause, you will have the opportunity to cast your vote for your favorite singer.

We are truly grateful to all who have contributed efforts and resources toward the success of this competition. In particular, we are thankful for the opportunity to honor two incredible ladies who supported The Dallas Opera and the Vocal Competition for many years - Cecile Bonte and Connie Klemow. Also, our special thanks to Lindsey Simmons and the entire TDO staff for their dedication to make this evening a reality.

Again, welcome and thank you for your support of these young singers who are developing careers in opera. Enjoy the evening!

Jana and Mac Irwin

Co-Chairs, 2021 Dallas Opera Guild National Vocal Competition

IN MEMORY CECILE BONTE

Cecile Bonte was a passionate supporter of The Dallas Opera and donated countless hours volunteering for many of its programs. She was a past president (1994-1995) of The Dallas Opera Guild, worked as a puppeteer with the popular traveling puppet theater, chaired Vintage Dallas, co-chaired the Guild's Adopt-an-Artist program, chaired the Sweetheart Gala, and year-after-year helped organize the national vocal competitions. In 2019, the Opera designated her as an honorary lifetime director "for her longstanding support and service," a role she cherished until her death in April 2020.



A native of Milwaukee, Cecile moved to Texas in the late 1950s and often joked that she was "just now thawing out." In addition to the Opera, she was an avid supporter of the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School, for which her husband, Frederick, worked for nearly 60 years. She also spent many years in service to the Dallas Arboretum, for which she was capital campaign chair of the Rory Myers Children's Adventure Garden. She was later named Board Member Emeritus for the Arboretum in recognition of her vast contributions, and a permanent exhibit in the garden was named in her honor.

The mother of six children, Cecile also had a successful professional life, beginning after earning her degree in nursing from Texas Women's University in 1979. She later became Director of Nursing at the Robert H. Dedman Medical Center, Executive Director of the Mental Health Association of Greater Dallas, and Sr. Vice President of a national home health care company. Often humming or singing while cooking or driving, she was a devoted alto in the St. Monica Catholic Church Choir, of which she was a member for nearly 50 years, and cherished participating not only in Sunday mass, but also the choir's many extra programs at Christmas, the Fourth of July, and other times of year.

IN MEMORY CONNIE KLEMOV



Connie Klemow, along with her husband Jerry, was a longtime, enthusiastic supporter of The Dallas Opera for several decades, starting in 1967, she remained deeply involved with the company until she passed away in 2020. What we now know as The Dallas Opera Vocal Competition evolved from an idea Connie and Jerry had during their time serving as Co-Presidents of The Dallas Opera Guild. They proposed a scholarship fund to award to qualified singers pursuing a career in opera. Connie chaired the committee that launched that program, and ultimately the scholarship proposal evolved into "The Career Development Grant for Singers" and awarded funds to three talented young artists in 1988, two of whom—Kecia Ashford and Richard Hobson—went on to perform in productions by The Dallas Opera.

A staunch supporter of all of The Dallas Opera's programs, Connie was significantly involved with several of The Dallas Opera's auxiliary organizations, and was appointed as a Guild Lifetime Honorary Member in honor of her significant service. She served as a member of The Dallas Opera Board of Trustees for 16 years, and was a Dallas Opera subscriber for decades, attending with her husband Jerry, and, in time also with her children and grandson, to enjoy grand opera on the Winspear stage. Connie also dedicated her time and talents to The Women's Board of The Dallas Opera, serving as President from 2003 to 2004 and remained a member of the organization's Advisory Board until 2020.

The 2002 Dallas Opera Guild Vocal Competition was produced in honor of Connie's extraordinary service, and in honor of her husband Jerry's memory. The Dallas Opera is humbled by the opportunity to honor Connie's tremendous influence and to continue her legacy by continuing to host a vocal competition that advances the careers of talented young singers from Texas and beyond.

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The Dallas Opera Guild22

COMPETITION JUDGES



DAVID LOMELÍ Chair of the Judges Panel

David Lomelí is the Chief Artistic Officer for Santa Fe Opera, as well as Casting Director at the Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich, Germany. He also serves The Dallas Opera as Artistic Consultant, having held multiple positions with the company since joining its staff in 2014, including Director of Artistic Administration and Director of the Hart Institute for Women Conductors. He is the first Latino to occupy a top casting position at a major opera company in the U.S. Lomelí (tenor) has sung with many of the world's leading opera companies and orchestras, including the Berlin Philharmonic, Munich Radio Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Glyndebourne Festival, Los Angeles Opera, Deutsche Opera Berlin, Santa Fe Opera, and San Francisco Opera. He earned an Engineering Degree in Computer Science and a post graduate joint degree in International Marketing by the Politecnica de Catalunya, Spain and the Università di Milano, Italy. He is a recipient of the National Youth Prize in Arts by the Mexican Government and the First Prize in Plácido Domingo's Operalia.



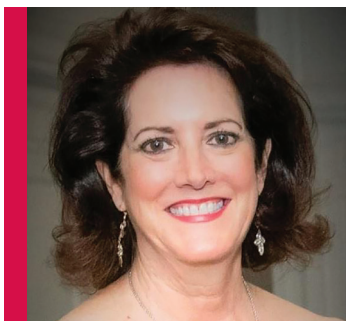
EMMANUEL VILLAUME The Dallas Opera Music Director

The French conductor has been TDO's Mrs. Eugene McDermott Music Director since 2013. Formerly Music Director of Spoleto Festival USA and Chief Conductor of the National Slovenian Philharmonic, he has held both of those positions with the PKF-Prague Philharmonia since 2015. Villaume has triumphed throughout America, leading productions at the Metropolitan Opera and the major companies of Chicago, San Francisco, Washington, Los Angeles, St. Louis, and Santa Fe. He has also appeared at London's Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, all the major French and German houses, Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu, Venice's Teatro La Fenice, the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, and the Tokyo Bunka Kaikan. Villaume's guest-conducting of symphonic repertoire has been hailed with the leading orchestras of Montreal, Chicago, San Francisco, Houston, Los Angeles, and Boston, as well as those of London, Paris, Munich, Copenhagen, Oslo, Stockholm, and Tokyo, among many others. Recent recordings include CDs with Anna Netrebko, Benjamin Bernheim, Andrew von Oeyen, Angela Gheorghiu, and Bryan Hymel. This season, he leads The Dallas Opera productions of *Madame Butterfly* and the company premiere performances on Jonathan Dove's *Flight*, as well as the three 2021/22 season-opening performances of *Opera's Greatest Hits* and the final round of the National Vocal Competition.



AFTON BATTLE

Afton Battle comes to Fort Worth Opera following development and strategic consulting work with Red Clay Dance Company, the National Black Theatre, the African American Policy Forum, and Brooklyn arts and culture firm Red Olive Consulting. She was previously the Director of Development for the New York Theatre Workshop, Director of the Annual Campaign for The Joffrey Ballet, and the Corporate and Foundation Relations and Individual Giving Manager for the National Museum of Mexican Art in Chicago, Illinois. Prior to that, she served as the Program and Grants Manager for Bank Street College of Education in New York. A native of Amarillo, Ms. Battle graduated from the University of Houston with a degree in Voice Performance, before attending Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey and receiving a Master of Music in Voice Performance and Pedagogy. Ms. Battle gratefully acknowledges Angelique Power, President of the Field Foundation, and Mila Gibson, voice teacher, music educator, and founder of Amarillo Opera, for their mentorship, guidance, and career development advice that encouraged her to pursue a path in opera and arts administration.



JEAN KELLOGG

Jean Kellogg joined the Merola Opera Program in October of 2011 as its first Executive Director. She oversees all administrative operations of the program and works closely with the Merola Board of Directors and San Francisco Opera's artistic leadership to continue and build upon Merola's success. From January 2008-September 2011, Jean was the first Executive Director of the Hylton Performing Arts Center at George Mason University's Prince William Campus in Manassas, VA. Overseeing the center's construction and program development from the ground up, along with completing the capital campaign, Jean worked with the community partners. Prior to coming to Mason, Jean was the Director of Education at Lyric Opera of Chicago for nine years, where she significantly increased the scope and volume of outreach programs for students and adults, and commissioned three operas for children to sing, which were produced in more than 100 schools in the Chicago metropolitan area.



CHRISTINA SCHEPPELMANN

Born in Hamburg, Germany, Christina Scheppelmann is the fourth General Director to lead Seattle Opera. As the Artistic Director General at the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona, a position she held from 2015-2019, Scheppelmann was responsible for programming, casting, and overall artistic direction. Prior to that, she was the first Director General of the Royal Opera House Muscat (Oman), the first theater of its kind in the Gulf Region, where her mission was to present high-quality music, opera, and dance from around the world. Under her leadership, ROHM established an excellent reputation as a cultural destination in Oman and opened doors for international musical and cultural relations. As Director of Artistic Operations at Washington National Opera, Scheppelmann oversaw the artistic planning for 11 years. Her passion for the art form and interest to see it flourish into the future led her to conceive of and secure funding for WNO's American Opera Initiative, offering young composers and librettists a developmental forum in which to bridge the gap between conservatory training and full-length commissions. A long-time champion of young artists, she has led masterclasses, lectured at artist training programs, and judged vocal competitions around the world.



BRIAN ZEGER

Widely recognized as one of today's leading collaborative pianists, Brian Zeger has performed with many of the world's greatest singers including Marilyn Horne, Deborah Voigt, Anna Netrebko, Susan Graham, René Pape, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Frederica von Stade, Piotr Beczala, Bryn Terfel, Joyce DiDonato, Denyce Graves and Adrienne Pieczonka in an extensive concert career that has taken him to the premiere concert halls throughout the United States and abroad. Among his most recent recordings are *All Who Wander*, a recital disc with Jamie Barton, and *Preludios* - Spanish songs with Isabel Leonard. He serves as Artistic Director of the Marcus Institute for Vocal Arts at The Juilliard School and recently completed an eight year tenure as the Executive Director of the Metropolitan Opera Lindemann Young Artists Development Program.

THE DALLAS OPERA ORCHESTRA

2021/2022 SEASON

VIOLIN I

Ellen dePasquale, The Mary Anne Cree
Concertmaster, in memory of
Rosine Smith Sammons
Ami Campbell,
Associate Concertmaster
Grace Kang Wollett,
Assistant Concert Master
Florence Conrad
Amy Faires
David Miles Wolcott
Junsoo Park
Oleg Larshin
Paige Kossuth

VIOLIN II

Kristin Van Cleve, Principal
Sondra Brudnak, Assistant Principal
Suneetha D'Apice
Lisa Shields
Barbara Allen
Natalie Floyd
Minhee Bae
Inga Kroll

VIOLA

Liesl-Ann deVilliers, Principal
Katrina Smith, Co-Principal
Donna Hall
Paul Tullis
Colin Garner
Meghan Birmingham Vangeli

CELLO

Mitch Maxwell, The Catherine
Brackbill Principal Cello Chair
Shawna Hamilton,
Assistant Principal
Eric Forman
Vilma Peguero
Philip Taggart
Sara Hood

BASS

William Gowen, Principal
Mike Lelevich, Assistant Principal
Stephen Brown
Kirby Nunez

FLUTE

Helen Blackburn, Principal
Ebony Thomas

PICCOLO

Ebony Thomas

OBOE

Gina Ford, The Eleanor Ford Penrose
Principal Oboe Chair
Stewart Williams

ENGLISH HORN

Stewart Williams

CLARINET

Kenneth Krause, Principal
Danny Goldman
Forest Aten

BASS CLARINET

Forest Aten

BASSOON

John Searcy, Acting Principal
Shannon Highland

HORN

Katie Wolber, Principal Horn:
The Linda VanSickle
Principal Horn Chair
Heather Test
Gerald Wood
Brian Brown

TRUMPET

John Holt, Principal
Rick Bogard

TROMBONE

Ian Maser, The Cece and Ford Lacy
Principal Trombone Chair
Tony Baker
Eric Swanson

BASS TROMBONE

Eric Swanson

TUBA/CIMBASSO

Jeff Baker, Principal

TIMPANI

Deborah Mashburn,
The Joan S. Reisch
Principal Timpani Chair

PERCUSSION

Joseph Ferraro, Acting Principal
Drew Lang

HARP

Barbara Biggers, Acting Principal

PERSONNEL MANAGER

Brad Wagner

LIBRARIAN

Shannon Highland

GREGORY KUNDE / MASTER OF CEREMONIES

The world-renowned American tenor has starred at TDO as *Oreste/Ermione* (2002/2003) and *Des Grieux/Manon Lescaut* (2018/2019). Recent career highlights include his greatly acclaimed portrayal of Verdi's *Otello* (London, Paris, and Monte Carlo, after successes in 13 other cities), as well as *Calaf* (Barcelona, Madrid), *Jean/Le prophète* (Berlin), *Don Carlos* (Liège), *Samson* (Met), *Andrea Chénier* and *Radames* (both in Vienna, the latter in Madrid), *Don Alvaro* (Dresden), and *Peter Grimes* (Valencia, in concert in Rome).



Lighting Designer **Eric Watkins**, Stage Manager **Angela Turner**, Assistant Conductor **Paolo Bressan**
Musical Preparation **Christopher Devlin** and **Mary Box**, Supertitles **Jeri Shaffer**, Assistant Stage Manager Intern **Katherine Fortner**

COMPETITION FINALISTS



BLAKE DENSON

"Ja vas Lyublyu"
The Queen of Spades
Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

The baritone, originally from Paducah, Kentucky, was a Grand Finals winner in the 2020 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. A 2018 alumnus of Houston Grand Opera's Young Artist Vocal Academy, Denson is in his second season as a Houston Grand Opera Studio artist. During HGO's 2021/2022 season, he will portray Morales/*Carmen* (while covering Escamillo), Daddy and Time/*The Snowy Day* (alternate cast performances), the Jailer/*Dialogues of the Carmelites*, and Gregorio/*Romeo and Juliet*. During the 2020/2021 HGO Digital season he appeared in *Giving Voice*, as Peter/*Hansel and Gretel*, and in *Suite Española: Explorando Iberia*. In the summer of 2019, Denson was a member of the Wolf Trap Opera Studio program, where he returned for the 2020 summer season. Although unable to appear onstage in *Eugene Onegin* at Wolf Trap due to the coronavirus pandemic, Denson did perform scenes recorded on video from that work, as well as from *La bohème* and *The Crucible*. Denson is an alumnus of the University of Kentucky School of Music and Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. At the start of the 2019/2020 season, Denson returned to Rice University, where he completed his final year in the master's program at the Shepherd School of Music. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Music Performance from the University of Kentucky.



CHASITI LASHAY

"Io son l'umile ancella"
Adriana Lecouvreur
Francesco Cilea

The soprano, a Houston native, was a finalist in the 2020 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. This past summer, she participated in Chautauqua Opera's 2021 Opera Invasion, giving virtual performances and three master classes. She was also scheduled to be a resident artist at the Lyric Opera of Kansas City for the 2020/2021 season (cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic). Lashay was the second-place winner in the finals of the Tri-Cities TCO Next virtual competition. She has performed the roles of the Prima Donna/*Ariadne auf Naxos* and the title role in *Suor Angelica*, and has covered Countess Almaviva/*The Marriage of Figaro*. Partial roles she has performed include Mozart's Countess, as well as Mimì/*La bohème*, Desdemona/*Otello*, Cleopatra/*Antony and Cleopatra*, Mother Marie/*Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Blanche/*A Streetcar Named Desire*, and the title role in *Arabella*. Lashay is a recent graduate of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where she earned her postgraduate diploma in 2020 and her Master of Music in Voice degree the previous year. She completed her Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration at Tuskegee University in 2014.



EFRAIN CORRALEJO

"Salut! demeure chaste et pure"
Faust
Charles François Gounod

In 2020 the Mexican tenor earned a degree in Opera Performance from Mexico City's Escuela Superior de Musica del Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes. He is also a graduate of the Studio of Artistic Excellence, directed by internationally celebrated tenor Francisco Araiza, in the Conservatorio Nacional de Musica. Corralejo studied on full scholarship in the Opera Studio of the Opera de Bellas Artes, Mexico's national opera company. In 2019 he made his United States solo opera debut as Count Almaviva/*The Barber of Seville* at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. In the same year he appeared as tenor soloist in Verdi's *Requiem* in Colorado, and he has also appeared as soloist in Mozart's *Requiem*, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, and Handel's *Messiah*. Among the other major roles in his repertoire are Tamino/*The Magic Flute*, Tonio/*La fille du régiment*, Nemorino/*The Elixir of Love*, Alfredo/*La traviata*, Rodolfo/*La bohème*, and Kaspar in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. He was a winner in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions Mexico District (2018, honorable mention in Gulf Coast Region) and in the Pittsburgh District (2019, honorable mention in Great Lakes Region).

COMPETITION FINALISTS



EVAN LAZDOWSKI

"Quand la flamme de l'amour"

La jolie fille de Perth

Georges Bizet

Bass-baritone Evan Lazdowski is a recent graduate of Manhattan School of Music, where he earned a Bachelor of Music degree in Classical Voice Performance. He is currently continuing his training at The Juilliard School, where he is pursuing a Master of Music degree in Classical Voice Performance. Last season, Lazdowski was selected to join the 2020 Gerdine Young Artist Program at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. In previous seasons he attended the Chautauqua Institution, as well as the Young Artists Vocal Academy at Houston Grand Opera. Lazdowski's 2019/2020 highlights included singing the title role in Manhattan School of Music's mainstage production of Mercadante's rarely heard *I Due Figaro*, as well as being selected to sing in a master class led by world-renowned baritone Thomas Hampson. Previous operatic performances include Capellio/*I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, Theseus/*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Nourabad/*The Pearl Fishers*, and Guglielmo/*Così fan tutte*. As a concert soloist, Lazdowski has performed Carissimi's *Jephthah* and Charpentier's *Le Reniement de St. Pierre*, both in New York with the MSM Chamber Choir and Orchestra at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. The bass-baritone is a winner of the National Young Arts Foundation's Classical Voice division.



KATHRYN HENRY

"Piangete voi... Al dolce guidami... Coppia Iniqua"

Anna Bolena

Gaetano Donizetti

A 2021 apprentice artist at The Santa Fe Opera, the soprano—with one week's notice—stepped into the role of Lucy Harker in the world premiere of John Corigliano and Mark Adamo's *The Lord of Cries* earning critical acclaim. She appeared in 2020 as Micaëla/*Carmen* at Milwaukee's Florentine Opera, where she returns this season in the title role of Pauline Viardot's *Cendrillon*. While studying as a Toulmin Foundation Scholar at The Juilliard School, Henry appeared there as Arminda/*La finta giardiniera* and performed in Juilliard's celebrations of the 80th birthdays of William Bolcom and John Corigliano with the New York Festival of Song. As a Baumgartner Studio Artist with the Florentine Opera, she portrayed Barbarina/*The Marriage of Figaro*. She has also participated in the Wolf Trap Opera young artist program and the Ravinia Festival's Steans Music Institute. Henry was a finalist in the 2015 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Houston Grand Opera's 2018 Eleanor McCollum Competition for Young Singers, and the 2021 National Opera Association Carolyn Bailey and Dominick Argento Vocal Competition. Concert credits include performances with the National Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, and Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra. In recital, the soprano has performed alongside pianists Brian Zeger, Craig Rutenburg, and Mikael Eliassen. In 2017 Henry was invited to Japan as a guest singer in the Kyoto International Student Music Festival.



SUN-LY PIERCE

"Dopo notte"

Ariodante

George Frideric Handel

Originally from Clinton, New York, the Chinese American mezzo-soprano is a second-year Houston Grand Opera Studio artist and first-prize winner in HGO's 2020 Eleanor McCollum Competition *Concert of Arias*. For HGO's 2021/2022 season she will portray Mercédès/*Carmen*, Sister Mathilde/*Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Second Lady/*The Magic Flute*, and Stephano/*Romeo and Juliet*. Last season with HGO, she appeared as Liesl/"My Favorite Things: Songs from *The Sound of Music*" and as Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel* (HGO Digital). Pierce, who completed the graduate vocal arts program at the Bard College Conservatory of Music, holds a Bachelor's Degree in Vocal Performance from the Eastman School of Music. As a winner of the Marilyn Horne Song Competition, Pierce was set to perform on an international recital tour with pianist Chien-Lin Lu featuring the premiere of a new song cycle by two-time Grammy Award-winning composer Jennifer Higdon, which was cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic. In the fall of 2019, Pierce joined the Broad Street Orchestra as Dorinda/Handel's *Acis and Galatea*. A winner of the 2019 Marilyn Horne Song Competition, she returned to the Music Academy of the West as a Vocal Fellow in 2021.

COMPETITION FINALISTS



RICARDO CEBALLOS DE LA MORA

"Vous qui faties l'endormie"

Faust

Charles François Gounod

In 2020 the bass, a native of Colima, Mexico, joined the Barbara and Halsey Sanford Studio Artist Program at Kentucky Opera. He was a Studio Artist at Chautauqua Opera, where he portrayed Caronte/Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*. He has appeared in *Donizetti and Co.* with TDO; as Dulcamara/*The Elixir of Love* and Bartolo/*The Marriage of Figaro* at IU Opera Theater; and as Colline/*La bohème*, Simone/*Gianni Schicchi*, Friar Laurence/*Romeo and Juliet*, Melisso/*Alcina*, Zuniga/*Carmen*, and The Commendatore/*Don Giovanni*. Recently he won third place at the Central Region finals of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, after being a winner in the same competition at the Indiana District. He has also received first place at the Indianapolis Matinee Musicale competition, and won the online People's Choice vote in The Dallas Opera 2020 Lone Star Vocal Competition. Recently he completed his Performers Diploma working with bass Peter Volpe at Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, where he taught as an associate instructor in voice. Ceballos de la Mora has also studied with conductor Enrique Patron and Professor Barbara Hill-Moore. The bass, who received his training at IUBA (Mexico), CMA (Mexico), and Southern Methodist University, was part of the prestigious young-artist program at the International Society of Mexican Artistic Values (SIVAM) in Mexico.



SYLVIA D'ERAMO

"Song to the Moon"

Rusalka

Antonín Dvořák

A native of Tyler, Texas, the soprano is a second-year member of the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program and makes her Met debut this season as Countess Ceprano/*Rigoletto*. In the summer of 2021, she sang her first Mimi/*La bohème* at Switzerland's Verbier Festival. During the 2019/2020 season she joined LA Opera's Domingo-Colburn-Stein Young Artist Program, where she sang Fosforo/Landi's *La morte d'Orfeo*. She also made her company and role debut as Musetta/*La bohème* at Lyric Opera of Kansas City. D'Eramo was a 2018 and 2019 apprentice artist at The Santa Fe Opera, appearing as Barena/*Jenůfa* and the Cousin/*Madama Butterfly*. She has also been heard at Yale Opera as Gretel/*Hansel and Gretel* and Pamina/*The Magic Flute*. Her credits in concert repertoire include Verdi's *Requiem* (the Marvin Concert Series in Tyler) and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Marin Alsop conducting (Yale Philharmonia). D'Eramo has recorded the demanding role of Abigail Williams/*The Crucible* for Albany Records. She was a semifinalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, a winner in the Lois Alba Aria Competition, the recipient of a Career Grant from the Giulio Gari Foundation, and of an Encouragement Award from the Jensen Foundation.

PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD

A popular feature of the Vocal Competition is the People's Choice Award that allows all attendees to select one of the finalists as their personal favorite. Voting is by secret ballot, and once the ballots are counted, the winner receives a monetary award and the satisfaction of being selected as the audience's favorite contestant. The enthusiastic response has indicated that the People's Choice Award provides an extra dimension of participation and involvement for the audience and conveys additional recognition and encouragement to the winner. You will find a ballot in your program. Instructions will be announced. Beginning in 2019, the People's Choice Award has been named the Jonathan Pell People's Choice Award in recognition of his many years of service, commitment, and devotion to The Dallas Opera and the Vocal Competition.

COMPETITION SPONSORS

Underwriters

Dr. Robert and Martha Allday
1st Prize (\$10,000)

Katherine and Michael Phillips
2nd Prize (\$5,000)

The Puccini Society of Dallas
In memory of Cecile Bonte, Connie Klemow,
Eleanor Krebs, Marigny Lanier, Ed Lynch, and Jody Reed
3rd Prize (\$2,500)

Neil Oxford
Jonathan Pell People's Choice Award (\$1,500)

Cindy and Charlie Feld
Holly and Tom Mayer
Judges' Luncheon

Dr. Christopher A. Salerno
Hospitality

THE BESSYLEE PENLAND FUND

In 1990, Bessylee Penland, one of Dallas' most glamorous and beloved arts patrons, was named Sweetheart of the Year by The Dallas Opera Guild. Bessylee was an opera lover from her earliest years when she was taken to hear Enrico Caruso.

As an artist herself, she won a scholarship to the Parsons School of Design, and later established her own commercial art studio in Dallas' landmark Mercantile Building, soon after it was built. After her marriage to Buford Penland, Bessylee became a contributor to almost every major arts group in Dallas. Her support of The Dallas Opera totaled 42 years, including the 20 years either she or her husband served on The Dallas Opera Board. Bessylee also had a long-time involvement with the Women's Board of The Dallas Opera and The Dallas Opera Guild.

As a mother, Mrs. Penland instilled a love of and appreciation for the arts in her own family, which is manifested in their enthusiasm and support for the establishment of an award named in her honor.

The Dallas Opera Guild is honored that Mrs. Penland's daughter, Brooksie Agnich, her family and friends established The Bessylee Penland Fund for young singers in 2000. Proceeds from the Guild's 50th anniversary celebration "900 Nights of Opera" held in 2008 were added to The Penland Fund helping to ensure the future of the Vocal Competition. The competition's First Place Award is named for Bessylee Penland.



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COMPETITION HISTORY

In February of 1987, the presiding Dallas Opera Guild Co-Presidents Connie and Jerry Klemow proposed establishing a Guild-sponsored scholarship fund to financially assist qualified singers seeking a career in opera. With the approval of The Dallas Opera management and the enthusiastic support of Maestro Nicola Rescigno, a committee comprised of Pat Blankenship, Nora Sands, and Maria Santarelli, chaired by Connie Klemow, was entrusted to formulate a plan. Soon the committee welcomed the assistance of then General Director Plato Karayanis, Company Dramaturg Roger Pines, and The Dallas Morning News Classical Music Critic John Ardoin.

Mr. Ardoin suggested a grant program be established in lieu of a scholarship fund or a competition. His suggestion was approved. It was decided to focus on applicants from the North Texas area, ages 18-35 with some professional experience. Roger Pines named the program "The Career Development Grant for Singers" (CDGS) and after 20 months of planning the first CDGS program was presented on October 8, 1988 at SMU's Caruth Auditorium. We celebrate those who dreamed, supported, and labored to create this initial support program for aspiring young opera singers.

For any program to remain dynamic, change and growth must occur. Throughout the years, there have been many changes. From a grant program the concept evolved into The Dallas Opera Guild Vocal Competition and, until 2014, was focused on vocalists ages 18-30 with a Texas connection including Texas natives and residents, and those studying in Texas. The People's Choice Award was also added. Financial prizes are now awarded directly to the winners to use at their discretion. Through this event, the Guild also recognizes and honors members of The Dallas Opera community who have demonstrated a special interest in promoting the careers of talented young singers or have given exceptional support to The Dallas Opera and the Guild. Jonathan Pell, former Artistic Director of The Dallas Opera and the 2008 Honoree of the Vocal Competition, led the judges' panel for 26 years, providing invaluable guidance and support. The People's Choice Award is now named in his honor.

In 2015, the competition became a national competition with a newly expanded format. The 2021 National Vocal Competition attracted more than 360 applicants from across the United States, ages 21 to 32.

David Lomelí, TDO's Artistic Consultant, returns to Dallas to chair the judges' panel. The chosen finalists will perform with The Dallas Opera Orchestra, conducted by The Dallas Opera's Music Director, Emmanuel Villaume. This year, the finals and awards ceremony will take place in the Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House at the AT&T Performing Arts Center.

The Dallas Opera Guild remains dedicated to the original goal and commitment of the Vocal Competition to honor and support young singers. The distributed award monies are funded anew each year. Guild members graciously donate their time, energy, money and talents to make this annual competition a success.

PREVIOUS AWARD RECIPIENTS

2020

People's Choice Award –
Ricardo Ceballos de la Mora, bass

2019

First Place- Meghan Kasanders, soprano
Second Place – Reginald Smith, Jr., baritone*
Third Place –Christopher Oglesby, tenor*
People's Choice Award - Meghan Kasanders, soprano

2018

First Place – Aryeh Nussbaum Cohen, countertenor
Second Place – Josh Lovell, tenor
Third Place – Mario Rojas, tenor
People's Choice Award – Aryeh Nussbaum Cohen, countertenor

2017

First Place – Samantha Hankey, mezzo-soprano
Second Place – Laura Wilde, soprano
Third Place – Mane Galoyan, soprano
People's Choice Award – Kihun Yoon, baritone

2016

First Place – Virginie Verrez, mezzo-soprano
Second Place – Kang Wang, tenor
Third Place – Sol Jin, baritone
People's Choice Award – Kang Wang, tenor

2015

First Place – Anthony Clark Evans, baritone
Second Place – J'nai Bridges, mezzo-soprano
Third Place – Sarah Mesko, mezzo-soprano
People's Choice Award – J'nai Bridges, mezzo-soprano

2014

First Place – Audra Methvin, soprano
Second Place – Brent Reilly Turner, tenor
Third Place – Matthew Stump, bass-baritone
People's Choice Award – Reginald Smith, Jr., baritone

2013

First Place – Nicholas Masters, bass
Second Place – Matthew Stump, bass-baritone
Third Place – Audra Methvin, soprano
People's Choice Award – Nicholas Masters, bass

2012

First Place – Heather Hawk, soprano
Second Place – Amanda Woodbury, soprano
Third Place, Elisabeth Rosenberg, soprano
People's Choice Award – Amanda Woodbury, soprano

2011

First Place – John Holiday, Jr., countertenor
Second Place – Katrina Galka, soprano
Second Place – Maren Weinberger, soprano
People's Choice Award – Norman Garrett, baritone

2010

First Place – Kiri Deonarine, soprano
Second Place – Amanda Woodbury, soprano
Third Place – Juan José de León, tenor
People's Choice Award – *Katie Bolding, soprano

2009

First Place – *Steven LaBrie, baritone
First Place – Michael Sumuel, baritone
Third Place – Catherine Martin, mezzo-soprano
People's Choice Award – Icy Simpson, soprano

2008

First Place – Amber Welborn, soprano
Second Place – Nathaniel Peake, tenor
Second Place – *Scott Quinn, tenor
People's Choice Award –
Michael Anthony McGee, baritone

2007

First Place – Valerie Vinzant, soprano
Second Place – Dee Donasco, soprano
Third Place – Eric Berry, tenor
Third Place – Brian Shircliffe, baritone
People's Choice Award – Brian Shircliffe, baritone

2006

First Place – *Takesha Mishé Kizart, soprano
Second Place – Cody Fosdick, tenor
Third Place – *Steven LaBrie, baritone
People's Choice Award – *Steven LaBrie, baritone

2005

First Place – *Weston Hurt, baritone
Second Place – Phandulwazi Maseti, tenor
Third Place – Christina D. Major, soprano
People's Choice Award – *Weston Hurt, baritone

2004

First Place – Mireya Rodriguez, soprano
Second Place – Jennifer Root, mezzo-soprano
Third Place – NaGuanda Miller-Nobles, soprano
People's Choice Award –
NaGuanda Miller-Nobles, soprano

2003

First Place – *Erik Nelson Werner, baritone
Second Place – *Christopher Holmes, baritone
Third Place – *Matthew Treviño, bass
People's Choice Award –
*Erik Nelson Werner, baritone

2002

First Place – Marjorie Owens, soprano
Second Place – Angela Niederloh, mezzo-soprano
Third Place – Lisa Forstmann, soprano
People's Choice Award – Marjorie Owens, soprano

2001

First Place – Jennifer Black, soprano
Second Place – Erin Marie Wall, soprano
Third Place – Garrett Sorenson, tenor
People's Choice Award – Jennifer Black, soprano

2000

First Place – Jessie Hinkle, mezzo-soprano
Second Place – Letitia Singleton, mezzo-soprano
Third Place – Blythe Gaisert, mezzo-soprano
People's Choice Award – *Scott Scully, tenor

1999

First Place – *Katherine Bongfeldt, soprano
Second Place – *Jesús Garcia, tenor
Third Place – Jennifer Thyssen, soprano
People's Choice Award – Jennifer Thyssen, soprano

1998

First Place – *Latoria Moore, soprano
Second Place – Jessie Hinkle, mezzo-soprano
Third Place – *Scott Scully, tenor
People's Choice Award – *Latoria Moore, soprano

1997

First Place – *Dana Beth Miller, soprano
Second Place – *Michael J. Boschert, baritone
Third Place – *Jesús Garcia, tenor

1996

First Place – Karen Wasson, soprano
Second Place – *Dana Beth Miller, soprano
Third Place – *Weston Hurt, baritone

1995

First Place – So Young Yoo, soprano
Second Place – Soon Wha Lee, soprano
Third Place – Edwin Miller, tenor

1994

First Place – Kyung Mook Yum, baritone
Second Place – *Diane Syrcle, soprano
Third Place – Elizabeth Keusch, soprano

1993

*Diane Syrcle, soprano
Elizabeth Mumford, soprano
Carolyn Tims-Filak, soprano

1992

*Randalee Maddox, mezzo-soprano
*Kelly Kimball, mezzo-soprano

1991

Jie Liu, tenor
*Katherine Bongfeldt, soprano
*Clifton Forbis, tenor
*Randalee Maddox, mezzo-soprano

1990

*Clifton Forbis, tenor
*Jeffrey Snider, baritone
*Mary Dunleavy, soprano
Carol Attmore, soprano
*Nancy Keith, soprano

1988

*Kecia Ashford, soprano
Soo Hong Kim, soprano
*Richard Hobson, baritone

*Denotes a singer who has sung a title role on
The Dallas Opera Mainstage

PREVIOUS COMPETITION **JUDGES**

Sheila Allen, Ph.D.

John Ardoin*

Daniel Biaggi

Stephanie Blythe

Keith Cerny

Michael Cordovana, Ph.D.*

Carol Crawford

Peter Czornyj

Dominic Domingo

Ian Derrer

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Roberto Mauro

Charles MacKay

Joseph McClain

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Gayletha Nichols

Ann Owens

Jonathan Pell

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Richard Rodzinski

Lenore Rosenberg

Nicholas G. Russell

Nora Sands*

Christina Scheppelmann

Robin Thompson

Brad Trexell

Emmanuel Villaume

William Walker*

Joshua Winograde

Caroline Woodfield

Darren K. Woods

Brad Woolbright

Diane Zola

*Deceased

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- | | |
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Honoring Marilyn and Ward Halla |
| 2019 Susan Fleming, Ph.D., Chair
Linda McKown, Asst. Chair
Honoring Holly and Tom Mayer | 2004 Lynn Mock, Chair
Honoring Bilye Werner
In memory of Nora Sands |
| 2018 Patsy and Bob Brooks, Co-Chairs
Honoring Phyllis A. and Tom H. McCasland, Jr. | 2003 Pat Mattingly, Chair
Honoring Jeanette Hammack Wharton
In memory of Patricia G. Blankenship |
| 2017 Patsy and Bob Brooks, Co-Chairs
Honoring Dr. Susan Fleming | 2002 Bilye Werner, Chair
Honoring Connie Klemow
In memory of Jerry Klemow |
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Honoring Linda and John Gage | 2001 Bilye Werner, Co-Chair
Jeanette Wharton, Co-Chair
Honoring Pat Rosenthal |
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Honoring Enika and Richard Schulze | 2000 Sarah & Harvey McCormick, Co-Chairs
In memory of Bessylee Penland |
| 2014 Dr. Sharon Bird Stupp, Chair
Honoring Cecile and Dr. Fred Bonte | 1999 Pat Rosenthal, Chair
Honoring Margot and Bill Winspear |
| 2013 Dr. Sharon Bird Stupp, Chair
Honoring Katherine and Michael Phillips | 1998 Pat Rosenthal, Chair
In memory of Martha Steed Lynne |
| 2012 Sandra and Dr. Fred Ciarochi, Co-Chairs
Honoring Elaine and Bill Blaylock | 1997 Joanna L. Jones, Chair
In memory of Elizabeth Sloane Simpson |
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Honoring Patti Cody | 1996 Pat Blankenship, Chair
In memory of James E. McGarry |
| 2010 Don Jones, Chair
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Honoring Nancy Ritter | 1995 Hazel Prelow-Schmalz, Chair |
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Honoring Sylvia and Maurice Elton | 1994 Susie Sample, Chair
Honoring Mrs. Kirtman C. Anton |
| 2008 Don Jones, Chair
Honoring Jonathan Pell, Director
of Artistic Administration,
The Dallas Opera | 1993 Hazel Prelow-Schmalz, Chair |
| 2007 Greg McConeghy, Chair
Honoring Sandra and Bill Sanderson | 1992 Hazel Prelow-Schmalz, Chair
John Bayne, Co-Chair |
| 2006 Dr. Susan G. Fleming, Chair
Honoring Nancy and Harold Boehning | 1991 Naomi S. O'Sullivan, Chair
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| | 1990 Naomi S. O'Sullivan, Chair |

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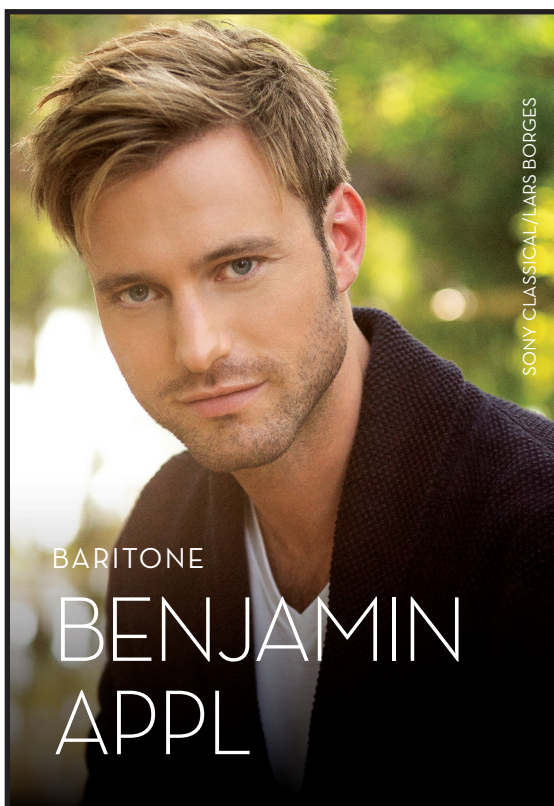
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A photograph of the interior of the Dallas Opera House. The view is from the back of the audience, looking towards the stage. The ceiling is a large, curved, dark structure with numerous long, thin, vertical light fixtures hanging from it, creating a starry effect. The stage is covered with a large, red, vertically-pleated curtain. The audience is seated in a semi-circular arrangement, filling the lower half of the frame. The overall lighting is warm and golden.

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