

2024/2025 SEASON

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VERDI

LA TRAVIATA

OCTOBER 18–27, 2024



performances
MAGAZINE

The Legacy of Vesuvius

BOURBON DISCOVERIES ON THE BAY OF NAPLES

September 15, 2024–January 5, 2025



MEADOWS MUSEUM | DALLAS

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This exhibition has been organized by the Meadows Museum, SMU, Dallas, and the Edith O'Donnell Institute of Art History at the University of Texas at Dallas and is funded by a generous gift from The Meadows Foundation, with additional support provided by the Edith O'Donnell Institute of Art History.

Promotional support provided by the Dallas Tourism Public Improvement District and the Consulate General of Italy in Houston.



Antonio Joli (Italian, 1700–1777), *Departure of Charles of Bourbon for Spain, seen from the Harbor* (detail), 1759. Oil on canvas, 50 3/8 × 80 3/4 in. (128 × 205 cm). Naples, Museo e Real Bosco di Capodimonte, inv. 24. © Museo e Real Bosco di Capodimonte.

FROM THE GENERAL DIRECTOR AND BOARD CHAIR



IAN DERRER
The Kern Wildenthal
General Director and CEO

Welcome to the 2024/2025 season at The Dallas Opera!

We are thrilled to offer this new production of Verdi's iconic *La traviata* to Dallas audiences. The co-production's premiere at The Santa Fe Opera this summer was a huge success and I know you will enjoy its 1930s setting, inspired by one of the most stylish and creative periods of twentieth-century Paris.

This *La traviata* marks the Dallas Opera debut of Chilean soprano Yaritza Véliz as Violetta. TDO has a legendary legacy of Violettas, which you can read more about on pages 14-15, and we feel sure Ms. Véliz will leave her indelible mark. We also welcome back two distinguished artists loved by Dallas audiences—superstar tenor Javier Camarena and baritone Alfredo Daza as father and son.

A very special welcome to guest conductor Iván López Reynoso who makes his podium debut, along with a creative team that also comes to TDO for the first time: director Louisa Muller, set and costume designer Christopher Oram, and lighting designer Marcus Doshi.

Let the season begin—and savor every note!



QUINCY ROBERTS
Board Chair

Welcome! Thank you for being here and helping us kick off the 2024/2025 Season.

The Dallas Opera offers something for everyone this season, from mainstage operas to an intimate recital by Christian Gerhaher, our annual Hart Institute for Women Conductors Showcase Concert, productions for families, livestreams, and more.

This season's productions range from grand romantic classics by Verdi and Puccini to the Dallas premieres of Debussy's *Pelleas and Melisande* and Gluck's *Orpheus and Eurydice*. Both new-to-Dallas productions tell their timeless stories in an innovative and relevant way. We are thrilled to finally bring these masterpieces to life at the Winspear.

Equally important, though, are the ways that The Dallas Opera engages with new audiences within the community. The work TDO does to connect thousands of school children of all ages with this amazing artform is truly awe-inspiring, as is our work bringing family-friendly productions all over North Texas. There is nothing better than a shared arts experience and opera provides just that, whether it's *The Three Little Pigs* or *La traviata*.

I firmly believe that opera is for everyone, and I know that the full company of The Dallas Opera agrees—that's why amplifying their important work is the best part of my job as Chair.

Thank you for being here and for sharing your opera experience. Enjoy!

Talita Von Furstenberg - Lecce, 2023



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Performances Magazine is published
to serve performing-arts venues
throughout the West.

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Printed in the United States.

LAND AND PEOPLE ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Creating a place of belonging for everyone to experience this art form is a vital part of inspiring generations of opera lovers and honoring those who came before us. As an opera company, we are storytellers of the full human experience, and that includes the narratives we share about this land and its people.

We are on the original land of the Caddo, Wichita, and Comanche sovereign nations, whose people faced horrible treatment and policies that forced their removal from the land.

People were also stolen from their homes in Africa, enslaved, dehumanized, and forced to build Dallas through free labor.

While none of us created these conditions, we have the opportunity, responsibility, and honor to uplift these communities through truth-telling, greater connection, and holistic celebration.

Thank you for joining us in acknowledging this land and these peoples.

THE DALLAS OPERA



PHOTO: CURTIS BROWN

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GIUSEPPE VERDI
LA TRAVIATA

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LINDA AND MITCH HART SEASON OPENING NIGHT PERFORMANCE: OCTOBER 18

thedallasopera™

presents

LA TRAVIATA

Opera in Three Acts by Giuseppe Verdi
Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave

Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House at the
AT&T Performing Arts Center

CAST IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

Violetta Valéry YARITZA VÉLIZ*
SARA GARTLAND (Oct. 27)

Flora Bervoix SIPHOKAZI MOLTENO*

Marchese D'Obigny MALCOLM PAYNE, JR.

Baron Douphol ERIK EARL LARSON

Doctor Grenville BEN BRADY*

Gastone ANDREW TURNER

Alfredo Germont JAVIER CAMARENA*

BEKHZOD DAVRONOV* (Oct. 27)

Annina JOCELYN HANSEN

Giuseppe DYLAN ELZA

Giorgio Germont ALFREDO DAZA

Messenger BRANDON GIBSON

Flora's Servant BRYCE SMITH

Conductor IVÁN LÓPEZ REYNOSO*

Director LOUISA MULLER*

Set and Costume Designer CHRISTOPHER ORAM*

Lighting Designer MARCUS DOSHI*

Choreographer MATTHEW STEFFENS*

Chorus Director PAOLO BRESSAN

Wig and Make-Up Designer DAVID ZIMMERMAN

Assistant Director GREGORY LUIS BOYLE

Stage Manager ANGELA TURNER

Concertmaster AMI CAMPBELL

Assistant Conductor JINGQI ZHU*

Music Preparation SOPHIA MUÑOZ

JINGQI ZHU*

Assistant Chorus Director JULIAN REED

Projected Titles JERI SHAFFER

Assistant Stage Managers DANIELLE BREWBAKER

CAITLYNN SANDOVAL

Production Assistant IVY LARIVIERE*

*The Dallas Opera debut

Performance dates:

October 18, 20 (matinee),
23, 26, and 27 (matinee), 2024

La traviata is a co-production
with The Santa Fe Opera,
Lyric Opera of Chicago, and
Garsington Opera

Sung in Italian with projected
English titles; written by
Christopher Bergen

Approximate duration: 2 hours
and 40 minutes including one
intermission

First Performance:
Teatro La Fenice, Venice, Italy
on March 6, 1853.

The Dallas Opera is a proud
member of OPERA America

Solo Dancers
EMILY CARDEA
NICHOLAS SNIPES

AN OPERA IN THREE ACTS

ACT I

Violetta's salon. A revel is in full swing and its hostess, Violetta Valéry, the most beautiful courtesan in Paris, wonders how much longer her health will permit her to carry on this way. Her friend Gastone brings her a new suitor who he says has been in love with her for a year. Her escort, the Baron Douphol, disapproves. She laughs off such devotion, but the young man, Alfredo Germont, swears that his love could cure her. She protests again: friendship, not love, is all that she can offer. She gives him the camellia from her dress and tells him to bring it back when it has wilted. Alfredo is thrilled. When the party is over, she searches her soul: amid her frenzied life of parties and pleasures, could she possibly fall in love?

ACT II

Scene 1: *Violetta and Alfredo's country home.* Violetta has left Paris for a bucolic idyll. She and Alfredo are happier than either has ever been. She has been selling her jewels to maintain their lifestyle. A visitor is announced, who she expects will be her business agent. She is shocked to learn that he is Giorgio Germont, Alfredo's father. He asks Violetta to leave Alfredo so that his daughter can organize a proper marriage. Violetta tells Germont how ill she is and how much she needs Alfredo, but she agrees to make the sacrifice. When Germont leaves, she writes a note to the Baron telling him she will meet him at her friend Flora's soirée that evening. Alfredo returns to find his father waiting for him, urging him to return home to Provence. An enraged Alfredo finds the invitation to Flora's and rushes off to Paris.

INTERMISSION

Scene 2: *Flora's ball in Paris.* Everyone wonders what has become of Violetta and Alfredo. She enters on the arm of the Baron. Soon Alfredo appears, looking haggard. He sits down immediately to gamble, intending to win enough to buy back what Violetta has sold. As the guests go into dinner, Violetta slips away to meet Alfredo and begs him to leave. She fears the Baron will challenge him to a duel. Alfredo flings the doors wide and calls everyone in. He hurls insults at Violetta and throws his money at her: "You are all my witnesses that I have hereby paid her!" Violetta faints in Flora's arms. Germont enters in search of his son. Only he truly understands the significance of the scene he beholds, but he cannot speak of it. Alfredo is remorse-stricken.

ACT III

Violetta's bedroom. Violetta, very weak, asks her maid Annina to open the curtains and let in the light. The streets still swell with revelers: it is the Carnival season. Violetta asks Annina to check the coin purse to see how much money remains. The faithful Doctor Grenville arrives; Violetta makes an effort to greet him and asks him not to forget about her. He puts on a cheerful face with her and then whispers to Annina that her mistress has but hours to live. Violetta sends Annina out to distribute coins to the poor. She re-reads the letter she has had from Giorgio, promising that both he and Alfredo will come to ask her forgiveness for her terrible sacrifice. Annina returns, breathless with joy. Alfredo rushes into the room, takes her in his arms, and they vow to go away together to a quiet place where all will be restored. But it is too late. She struggles across the room. Giorgio Germont and Doctor Grenville have entered. She rises, painless at last...and falls.

Synopsis provided by Lucy Yates

TDO PERFORMANCE HISTORY

The company first performed *La traviata* in the 1958/1959 Season, starring Maria Callas, with eight more stagings, the last of which was in the 2017/2018 Season.

Creating a Violetta for Our Times

By Michael Clive

Louisa Muller, director of The Dallas Opera’s new production of *La traviata*, has a question for you: How well do you really know Violetta Valéry? Yes, she is the courtesan who breaks your heart, self-sacrificing and doomed; she is Camille, made legend by Greta Garbo and Sarah Bernhardt; she is the real-life Marie Duplessis, who fascinated Franz Liszt and besotted Alexandre Dumas the younger. “But it was a priority of our creative team to make the audience really sit up and take notice,” says Muller, “We went back to the score, back to the libretto, back to the source material to rediscover what is really there.” They found a woman in command of her life choices—nobody’s victim, always the force driving the action.

Clearing away our preconceptions, Muller’s reframed staging updates the action by about sixty years—from the original’s Belle-Epoque Paris to the artistic and intellectual ferment of the late 1930s, when Paris was not only a leader in design esthetics, but also an incubator of modern ideas. This brings us closer to the woman who inspired Dumas’ tragic play and novel *The Lady of the Camellias*, the semi-autobiographical account of his love affair with Duplessis. Dumas and Verdi chose to frame her story not as a narrative of doomed love, but as a sad reminiscence; like them, Muller sees the drama as a memory play. “From the beginning,” she notes, “Violetta knows that the end of her life is approaching. The libretto is not linear, but rather a series of episodes as Violetta reflects on her past.” As the opulent sets rotate on a turntable, these remembered scenes pass fluidly from one to the next.



PHOTO: ERIC MELEAR

By updating the action, Muller places Violetta in a setting that has taken root in the American imagination. “This is a period that we feel connected to,” she says. “Paris in the 1930s was a cultural crossroads, a gathering place with incredible parties where all kinds of people—from wealthy aristocrats to impoverished artists—would meet and exchange ideas. Looming behind all this dynamism and extravagance was the shadow of impending war and the rise of fascism. It was certainly a period that suggests parallels for our times.”

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ONE-PAGE GUIDE TO LA TRAVIATA

“Life is only pleasure...For those who don’t know love!” —Violetta & Alfredo, Act I, Scene 1

A bright-eyed young man is swept up in the excitement of a lavish party and falls in love with an elite escort, but money and illness conspire against true love. Sound familiar? Films like *Pretty Woman* and *Moulin Rouge* have taken their cue from *La traviata*. Written in 1853, this story still resonates with audiences because, as *Moulin Rouge* puts it, this is “A story about time. A story about a place. A story about the people. But above all things, a story about love.”



60-SECOND SYNOPSIS

(Detailed synopsis on page 6)

During a decadent party, Alfredo falls in love with Violetta. She isn’t looking for love but falls for Alfredo anyway. They spent three months in the countryside madly in love, but slowly going broke. Alfredo’s father, Germont, demands that Violetta leave Alfredo to save his family’s reputation. Later, at another decadent party, Alfredo wins a fortune at the gambling table. He angrily throws his money at Violetta’s feet as payment for her services (this is a major insult). Months later, as illness takes its toll, Alfredo is summoned to Violetta’s deathbed. Alfredo, Violetta, and Germont all reconcile, but just as Violetta’s strength is returning, she dies.

WINSPEAR OPERA HOUSE HELPFUL HINTS

- In *Pretty Woman*, Vivian (played by Julia Roberts) says, “It was so good, I almost peed my pants,” after seeing *La traviata*. Restrooms are located on the far East and West sides of every floor. Unisex restrooms are available on the 6th floor and the West side of the 1st, 3rd, and 4th floors.
- In addition to concession stands on floors 1-5, there are water fountains on the west side of the 1st, 3rd, and 4th floors.
- English translations are projected above the stage. Don’t panic if the screen is blank! There is a lot of repetition in opera and titles are only shown the first time something is said.

WHAT’S IN A NAME?

La traviata [lah trah-vee-AH-tah] translates as “The Fallen Woman”

WHO’S WHO:

Violetta [vee-oh-LET-tah]: our leading lady, a courtesan with a cough

Alfredo [al-FRAY-doe]: a naïve man in love with Violetta

Germont [djair-MON]: Alfredo’s disapproving father

Baron Duphol [doo-FOLE]: a past romantic fling of Violetta’s

Flora [FLOH-rah]: a friend of Violetta’s who throws wild parties

TRAVIATA TRIVIA

- Originally, *La traviata* was set in 1853 (the year it was written), but censors insisted that new productions be set 100 years earlier to ensure the opera didn’t hit too close to home.
- After its first performance, Verdi wrote a friend, “*La traviata* last night a failure. Was the fault mine, or the singers’? Time will tell.” The second performance was a smash hit. Opera lovers seem to agree, Verdi’s music wasn’t at fault!
- The novel *La dame aux camélias* (*The Woman of the Camellias*) by Alexandre Dumas **fils** (not to be confused with his father, literary titan Alexandre Dumas **père**) was based on the true story of his affair with famed courtesan Marie Duplessis.
- A stage adaptation of *La dame aux camélias* inspired Verdi to write *La traviata* which he completed in less than a month while composing another masterpiece: *Il trovatore*. Both operas are among the 20 most performed operas worldwide today. Now that’s a successful month!

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Iván López Reynoso CONDUCTOR



From: Guanajuato, Mexico
Dallas Opera: debut
Career highlights: Iván López Reynoso is Principal and Artistic Director of the Orchestra of Teatro Bellas Artes in Mexico City and Principal Guest Conductor of the Oviedo Filarmonia in Spain. He made his debut at Opera Bellas Artes at the young age of 20 with Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, followed by a list of some of the most significant titles of the repertoire including *La traviata*, *Aida* and *Madame Butterfly*. He has led productions at some of the world's most distinguished opera houses, and his current opera repertoire of 44 operas ranges from Mozart to Sciarrino, including Rossini, Donizetti, Bellini, Verdi, Wagner, Humperdinck and Bizet. López Reynoso's versatility on the podium has led him to symphonic programs as well, and he has led some of the most important orchestras both in Europe and Mexico as a regular guest conductor with Mexico's National Symphony Orchestra and Symphony Orchestra of Mexico State. Iván López Reynoso began piano and violin lessons at a young age. At 15, he entered Conservatorio de las Rosas in Mexico City to further his studies in conducting, graduating with honors. He plays piano, violin, and sings (countertenor).

Christopher Oram SET AND COSTUME DESIGNER



From: Penzance, England
Dallas Opera: debut
Career highlights: Christopher Oram is the designer of *Frozen* the musical. He is a UK based, multiple award-winning set and costume designer who has worked extensively abroad, as well as in the United Kingdom. He's had multiple productions at the Sheffield Crucible and Donmar Warehouse, and seasons at the Wyndhams, Noel Coward, and Garrick theaters, as well as work at the National and Royal Shakespeare Company. His opera work includes Glyndbourne, Garsington, Houston Grand Opera, and the Metropolitan Opera, with ballet experience and Northern Ballet and Tulsa Ballet.

Louisa Muller DIRECTOR

The James R. Seitz, Jr. Stage
Director in Honor of John Gage



From: Westerly, Rhode Island
Dallas Opera: debut
Career highlights: Louisa Muller marks her debut with The Dallas Opera by bringing her acclaimed production of *La traviata* that originated at The Santa Fe Opera this past summer. This season, she also makes her debut with the Theater an der Wien with *Der kleine Prinz* and returns to Juilliard for *Dialogues des Carmélites*, both new productions. Future engagements include new productions for The Metropolitan Opera and Opera North. She will also remount her productions in her debut with Canadian Opera Company and in returns to Lyric Opera of Chicago and Garsington Opera. In addition to her triumph with *La traviata* at Santa Fe Opera, last season she directed new productions of *Platée* at Garsington Opera and *Rinaldo* for Pinchgut Opera. She recently brought Dame Ethel Smyth's *The Wreckers* to Houston Grand Opera. Her production of *The Turn of the Screw* received the Royal Philharmonic Society Award and was named by *The Guardian* as one of the Top Ten Classical Music Performances of the Year. Other recent new productions include *Amadigi di Gaula*, *Das Rheingold*, *The Rake's Progress*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *The Ghosts of Versailles*, *The Rape of Lucretia*, *Roméo et Juliette*, and *Tosca*.

Marcus Doshi LIGHTING DESIGNER



From: Waterbury, Connecticut
Dallas Opera: debut
Career highlights: Marcus Doshi is an international theater maker who designs lighting and sets for theater, opera, and dance, and collaborates with artists and architects on a wide array of non-performance-based work. His work is known for its essentialist point of view, bold visual style, musicality, and dramaturgical integration—all driven by his manifesto: "Good Lighting for the Stage." He is the author of *Towards Good Lighting for the Stage: Aesthetic Theory for Theatrical Lighting Design*. His work has been seen on and off-Broadway, at most major regional theatre and opera companies, and extensively around the world. He is a frequent collaborator with NYC's Theatre for a New Audience and Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre Company, and his work for opera has been seen across the US and internationally at the world's major opera companies and houses.

Matthew Steffens

CHOREOGRAPHER



From: Virginia Beach, Virginia
Dallas Opera: debut
Career highlights: Matthew Steffens is an international director and choreographer, Broadway performer, teacher, and film actor. He served as Associate Choreographer on the Broadway production and tour of the 6-time Tony-nominated *Into The Woods* and was choreographer for the 2024 production of *La traviata* at Santa Fe Opera. A graduate

of the University of Virginia, he majored in Government with a minor in Theater. For seven years, Steffens worked in advertising before pursuing performing full-time. He has toured the country with numerous Broadway musicals and appeared on Broadway in *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* with Patti Lupone, and *Promises, Promises* opposite Sean Hayes and Kristin Chenoweth. Steffens has also danced, fought, and flown his way through 23 operas—including *The Tempest*, *Damnation of Faust* and *La traviata*—at the Metropolitan Opera. For over two decades, Steffens has worked with kids at Camp River’s Bend. He also helped create the D.A.R.E.® America Dance Program, and as a community leader, he works closely with Broadway Cares / Equity Fights AIDS. Matthew lifts up his voice each week as a member of the St. Joseph’s contemporary choir, the GSUS BAND.

Yaritzia Véliz

VIOLETTA VALÉRY



From: Coquimbo, Chile
Dallas Opera: debut
Career highlights: Yaritzia Véliz is quickly establishing herself as one of the most significant lyric sopranos of her generation. She won the 2023 Emerging Stars Competition at the San Francisco Opera, and returned last season to The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden as Mimì in *La bohème*. Other recent

appearances included Violetta in a new production of *La traviata* for Norwegian National Opera and Adina in *L’elisir d’amore* for Santa Fe Opera. In the 2024/2025 season and beyond Yaritzia will make debuts in major roles at the Opéra national de Paris, the Bayerische Staatsoper, Houston Grand Opera, Staatsoper Hamburg, the Semperoper Dresden, and she will return to the Royal Opera and the Glyndebourne Festival, where she made her debut at in 2022 as Mimì in a new production of *La bohème*. During the 2022/2023 season she appeared at the San Francisco Opera as Catrina in Gabriela Lena Frank’s opera *Frida y Diego*, and sang Violetta in *La traviata* at the Opera nacional de Chile, Santiago. Véliz made her US debut singing the title role of Handel’s *Rodelinda* in 2021 at the Aspen Festival, where she was the inaugural “Renée Fleming Artist.”

David Zimmerman

WIG AND MAKE-UP DESIGNER



From: Dallas, Texas
Dallas Opera: *The Barber of Seville* (2006/2007, debut), more than 50 productions since
Career highlights: David Zimmerman has worked with numerous opera companies around the world, including the Metropolitan Opera and the companies of St. Louis, Santa Fe, Paris, Philadelphia, Chicago, Minnesota, Santa Barbara, Amsterdam, and

more. His career extends to Broadway, where he has worked with such shows as *Wicked*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Show Boat*, *South Pacific*, and *Evita*. Some of his personal clients include Renée Fleming, Joyce DiDonato, Susan Graham, Patricia Racette, Martha Stewart, and Ricky Martin. Zimmerman has also worked with DIFFA Fashion Runway, Dallas Fashion and Art, and *Yelp.com Fashion Magazine*; credits include spreads in *Opera News*, *Vanity Fair*, and *The New Yorker*. TV and film credits are *Glamour Magazine’s Women of the Year*, *Margaret* (starring Anna Paquin), and *Hostiles* (starring Christian Bale and Rosemund Pike).

Sara Gartland

VIOLETTA VALÉRY (10/27)



From: St. Paul, Minnesota
Dallas Opera: *La bohème*, *Carmen*
Career highlights: American soprano Sara Gartland is garnering critical acclaim for her powerful portrayals of some of opera’s leading lyric heroines. A passionate interpreter of opera, concert repertoire, and song, Gartland has firmly established herself as an artist to watch displaying a talent for dramatic storytelling and comedy. Highlights

of recent seasons include a return to Des Moines Metro Opera for her first performances of the title role in Strauss’ *Salome*; debuts at Pittsburgh Opera in *Rusalka* (title role), Opera San Antonio in *Pagliacci* (Nedda), Minnesota Opera in *Don Giovanni* (Donna Elvira), and a return to DMMO for *Bluebeard’s Castle* (Judith). Gartland created the role of Rose in the world premiere production of *A Thousand Acres* for the 50th Anniversary season at the Des Moines Metro Opera, where she has also sung the title roles of Jenůfa, *Wozzeck* (Marie), *Queen of Spades* (Liza), *Roméo et Juliette* (Juliette), and *Regina* (Alexandra). Additional performance credits include Utah Opera, Arizona Opera, Opera Omaha, Opera San Jose, Austin Lyric Opera, San Diego Opera, and the Jacksonville Symphony. Gartland is a graduate of the prestigious Adler Fellowship Program at San Francisco Opera where she was seen in numerous productions. Prior to becoming an Adler Fellow, Sara participated in the Merola Opera Program.

Javier Camarena
ALFREDO GERMONT



From: Xalapa, Mexico
Dallas Opera: Solo recital (2021/2022); mainstage debut
Career highlights: Appearances at the Metropolitan Opera in *La Cenerentola*, *Don Pasquale*, and *La Fille du Régiment*, which he also sang at Madrid's Teatro Real, at Barcelona's Liceu, and at London's Royal Opera House. Javier Camarena was recently honored by the prestigious

International Opera Awards as Male Singer of the Year. Among his most notable roles are Rossini's Almaviva, Don Ramiro, and Comte Ory; Mozart's Belmonte and Ferrando; Donizetti's Nemorino and Arturo; Verdi's Fenton; and Bellini's Elvino. In recent years, he has added new roles to his repertoire: Edgardo in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Gualterio in Bellini's *Il Pirata*. He has collaborated with such eminent conductors as Claudio Abbado, Daniele Gatti, Fabio Luisi, Zubin Mehta, and Franz Welser-Möst, among others. Camarena has received numerous awards in the opera field, as well as from his hometown, Xalapa, Mexico, which awarded him the Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada Medal as distinguished citizen. Mexico's *Quién* magazine named him as one of 50 leaders transforming their nation. Javier Camarena began his musical studies at the Universidad Veracruzana before graduating with honors at the University of Guanajuato.

Alfredo Daza
GIORGIO GERMONT



From: Puebla, Mexico
Dallas Opera: *The Pearl Fishers* (2021/2022, debut)
Career highlights: Mexican baritone Alfredo Daza is recognized internationally for his interpretations of leading baritone roles in the Italian repertoire. In recent years, he has focused on Verdi's roles such as Francesco Moor in *I masnadieri*, Stankar in *Stiffelio*, Rodrigo in *Don Carlo*, Renato in *Un*

ballo in maschera, and Ford in *Falstaff*. He first portrayed Giorgio Germont in *La traviata* in 2006. Highlights of his recent seasons are Fedora at the Teato Prez Galds in Las Palmas, his debut at the Liceu Theater in Barcelona as Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Ezio in *Attila* in Tenerife, Joaquin in *La del manojito de rosas* in Oviedo and Diego Rivera in the acclaimed world premiere *El último sueño de Frida y Diego* by Gabriela Lena Frank at the San Diego Opera, a role that he also performed at the San Francisco and LA Operas. In 2024/2025, Daza returns to the Staatsoper Unter den Linden to sing the role of Paolo Albiani in Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra*. For 15 years, Alfredo Daza was part of the ensemble at the Staatsoper Unter den Linden, and he has recorded with Deutsche Gramophone, Medici TV and MSM, Harmonía Mundi, and Naxos Deutschland.

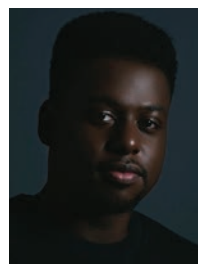
Bekhzod Davronov
ALFREDO GERMONT (10/27)



From: Samarkand, Uzbekistan
Dallas Opera: debut
Career highlights: Bekhzod Davronov was the Second Prize winner at Operalia in 2021. The 2024/2025 season sees Davronov make a series of house and role debuts including Alfredo Germont in *La traviata* and Rodolfo in *La bohème* at The Dallas Opera, Sir Edgardo di Ravenswood in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Rodolfo in

La bohème at Dresden Semperoper, and Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto* at Irish National Opera, before making his debut at the Salzburg Festival in summer 2025. Future seasons will see his debuts at Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Opernhaus Zurich and make returns to The Metropolitan Opera, Bayerische Staatsoper, and Wiener Staatsoper. Davronov's recent highlights include Cassio in *Otello* at Wiener Staatsoper, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* at Teatro di San Carlo, Prunier in *La rondine* at The Metropolitan Opera, Alfredo Germont in *La traviata* at Santa Fe Opera, Rodolfo in *La bohème* at Prague State Opera and on the Glyndebourne Festival Opera Tour, Anatol Kuragin in a new Dmitri Tcherniakov production of *War and Peace* conducted by Vladimir Jurowski at Bayersiche Staatsoper, and Aljeja in *The House of the Dead* at Ruhrtriennale Festival. He was previously a member of the ensemble at The Bolshoi Theatre.

Andrew Turner
GASTONE



From: Tacoma, Washington
Dallas Opera: *Romeo & Juliet* (2023/2024, debut)
Career highlights: Andrew Turner holds degrees in Vocal Performance from Washington State University and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, as well as an Artist Diploma from The Juilliard School. In recent seasons, he sang the role of Miles Zegner in Missy Mazzoli's *Proving*

Up, workshopped the role of Eli in Gregory Spears new opera *The Righteous* which premiered in 2024 at The Santa Fe Opera, and the title role in *La Clemenza di Tito* at The Juilliard School. Turner was a Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist in the 2021/2022 season. His roles included First Priest/First Armored Man (*Magic Flute*), The Beloved/Horus (*The Rose Elf*), Policeman/The Man (*In a Grove*), Remendado (*Carmen*) and Policeman/Buddy #1 (*Blue*). In 2022 and 2024, Mr. Turner was an apprentice artist at The Santa Fe Opera where he made his debut as Agent 2 in Huang Ruo's *M. Butterfly* and has appeared in *The Righteous*, *Don Giovanni*, and *The Elixir of Love*. Turner performed two seasons as an apprentice artist at Des Moines Metro Opera performing the role of Tchapliksky in *The Queen of Spades* and covering the role of Tobias Raggs in *Sweeney Todd* (2021); he made his debut as Parpignol in DMMO's production of *La bohème* in 2019.

Siphokazi Molteno

FLORA BERVOIX



From: East London, South Africa

Dallas Opera: debut

Career highlights: A recent alumna of the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program, Siphokazi Molteno made her Met debut in the 2022/2023 season as Flora in *La traviata*, followed by Soeur Mathilde in *Dialogues des Carmélites*. Other previous highlights include Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* with

Opera Saratoga, soloist in Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, Haydn's *Theresienmesse*, Mozart's *Sparrow Mass*, Haydn's *Missa Sancti Nicolai*, Mozart's *Coronation Mass*, and Verdi's *Requiem*. During her tenure as a member of the Young Artist Program at Cape Town Opera, Molteno performed the roles of Romeo in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, and Third Lady in *The Magic Flute*. She was twice the recipient of the Fleur Du Cap Theatre Award for "Best Performance in an Opera" (Female Division). Additionally, she was honored with the Rising Star Encouragement Award in the 2020 Glyndebourne Opera Cup, and received both the Ana María Martínez Encouragement Award and the Audience Choice Award at Houston Grand Opera's Eleanor McCollum Competition in 2017. Siphokazi Molteno holds degrees from Nelson Mandela University and the University of Cape Town, and attended the Aspen Music Festival and School.

Malcolm Payne, Jr.

MARCHESE D'OBIGNY



From: Blytheville, Arkansas

Dallas Opera: *Show Boat* (2015/2016, debut), *Rigoletto* (2022/2023), *Romeo and Juliet* (2023/2024)

Career highlights: Malcolm Payne, Jr. is an alumnus of the University of North Texas with performance degrees in voice and flute. He made his Carnegie Hall debut as a featured soloist with the Turtle Creek Chorale in the world premiere of

Dreamland: Tulsa 1921. He is a former Hattie Mae Lesley Resident Artist with Fort Worth Opera, where he originated the role of Stephen Biko in the world premiere of Joe Illick's *Stand Up*. Recent engagements include singing Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* with the Flower Mound Symphony Orchestra and a guest artist recital in the Warfield Concerts Series.

Erik Earl Larson

BARON DOUPHOL



From: Evansville, Wisconsin

Dallas Opera: *Rigoletto* (2022/2023, debut), *Tosca* (2023/2024), *Romeo and Juliet* (2023/2024)

Career highlights: In recent years, Larson joined the Memphis Symphony for Handel's *Messiah*, sang the title role in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* for Virginia Opera, performed the role of Moncada in *Zorro* with Fort Worth Opera, made his Carnegie

Hall debut in Mark Hayes' *Gloria*, and joined the Atlanta Opera as Tiger Brown in *Three Penny Opera*. He also made debuts with Austin Opera in *Rigoletto*, the Memphis Symphony Orchestra in *Carmina Burana*, Fort Worth Opera in *La bohème*, and *Hänsel and Gretel*. He was featured in *Frontiers*, the company's pioneering new music initiative, where he sang selections from new operas by Steven Aldridge (*The Hatfield-McCoy Triptychs*), Paul Fowler (*Behold the Man*), and Brian Rosen (*Death of a Playboy*). Other recent roles have included Figaro in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Sid in Britten's *Albert Herring*, Maguire in Tobias Picker's *Emmeline*, and Golaud in Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* at Boston University's Opera Institute. Erik Earl Larson has been in the young artist programs at Des Moines Metro Opera, Sarasota Opera, and Music Academy of the West, and has received recognition in competitions including the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

Ben Brady

DOCTOR GRENVILLE



From: Denver, Colorado

Dallas Opera: debut

Career highlights: In the 2023/2024 season, Ben Brady joined The Metropolitan Opera for the workshop of Mason Bates' new opera, *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay* (Sheldon Anapol). This summer, he appeared in *Pelléas et Mélisande* (Arkel/the Physician) and *Tosca* (Sciarrone) at The Santa Fe Opera, as well

as at Dayton Opera for *Sweeney Todd* (Judge Turpin) and was the bass soloist in Handel's *Messiah* with both Dayton Opera and the Pacific Chamber Orchestra. He was an apprentice artist with The Santa Fe Opera in 2022. Previously, Brady was a participant in the Merola Young Artist Program and performed in *Roberto Devereux* (Page) at San Francisco Opera. Other operatic credits include *Das Rheingold* (Fafner) with Dayton Opera; *La bohème* (Colline) with Opera Modesto; *Macbeth* (Banco), *Nabucco* (Zaccaria), and *Fidelio* (Rocco) with West Bay Opera; and *Acis and Galatea* (Polyphemus) and *Die Zauberflöte* (Speaker) with Eugene Opera, among others. He was a semifinalist in the 2020 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and a finalist in the 2023 Irene Dalis Vocal Competition with Opera San José.

Jocelyn Hansen

ANNINA



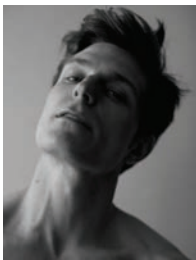
From: Fort Dodge, Iowa
Dallas Opera: *Rigoletto* (2022/2023, debut); *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*, *Elektra* (2023/2024)

Career highlights: Crossover artist
Jocelyn Hansen has maintained an active schedule in both musical theatre and operatic productions alike. Most recently, Hansen appeared in the title role of *Mary Poppins*; she also originated the role of

Nancy Karinski in the 2023 world premiere of *Goin' Hollywood* at WaterTower Theatre. She has performed as the soprano soloist in Handel's *Messiah* with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra and the Amarillo Symphony, and with the Abilene Philharmonic in *Broadway a la Carte*. Other highlights include Nellie Forbush in *South Pacific*, Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, Anne Egerman in *A Little Night Music*, and Soeur Constance in *Dialogues des Carmélites*. Hansen serves as the voice coordinator and assistant professor of instruction in musical theater voice at the University of Texas at Arlington. She holds a Bachelor's Degree from Iowa State University, a Master's Degree from Michigan State University, and is completing her doctorate at the University of North Texas.

Nicholas Sipes

DANCER

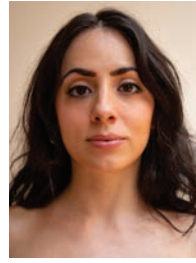


From: Baltimore, Maryland
Dallas Opera: debut
Career highlights: Nicholas Sipes began dancing at the age of four. He attended The Baltimore School for the Arts for high school before moving to New York City to continue his training at The School of American Ballet. After SAB, Mr. Sipes joined the Pennsylvania Ballet where he danced in various ballets including Jerome Robbins's

The Concert, Balanchine's *The Four Temperaments*, Matthew Neenan's *Carmina Burana* and premiered in Peter Quanz's Jupiter Symphony. He then joined the second National Tour of *Billy Elliot the Musical* and made his Broadway debut as Older Billy in the Broadway production one year later. He's since toured Europe for two years in a production of *West Side Story*, has performed in an Encores production of *On Your Toes* at New York City Center, and danced in the *Nutcracker Rouge* with Company XIV. Sipes has performed at The Metropolitan Opera for five seasons as a dancer and has television and advertising credits, as well. In Los Angeles, he has performed with LA Opera, Mixed Emotions Theatrical and Laurie Sefton Creates. This summer, he premiered in the principal dancer role in Santa Fe Opera/Dallas Opera co-production of *La traviata*, as well as appearing as Leopold in *Rosenkavalier*.

Emily Cardea

DANCER



From: New York, New York
Dallas Opera: debut
Career highlights: Emily Cardea is a performing artist whose work is inspired by human connection and authentic storytelling. Cardea began studying dance at Studio Maestro/Manhattan Youth Ballet and then attended Professional Performing Arts School and School of American Ballet where she trained with teachers such as

Peter Boal, Garielle Whittle, Katrina Killian and Darci Kistler. As a child performer, Ms. Cardea earned roles with The Metropolitan Opera, New York City Ballet, and American Ballet Theatre. At age eighteen, she began dancing with Orlando Ballet, where her repertoire included featured roles in *The Nutcracker*, *Giselle*, *Carmen*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Swan Lake*. She has also performed and acted Off-Broadway, and in numerous dancing guest roles in both theater and television. Ms. Cardea has been a member of NYC-based dance companies such as MorDance and Woman in Motion, and is currently in her third year of dancing with The Metropolitan Opera. Her repertoire at The Met Opera includes *La traviata*, *Aida*, *Tannhäuser* and *Turandot*. Most recently, she made her Santa Fe Opera debut as a principal dancer in the original cast of Louisa Muller's *La traviata*, as well as an actor in *L'Elisir d'Amore*.

The Dallas Opera thanks those who have made special gifts to support the T. Peter Townsend Memorial Production of *La traviata*. The October 20 performance of *La traviata* is dedicated in loving memory of T. Peter Townsend.

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Sarah Titus and
Tilda Morris
Joanna Townsend
John and Kathy Ward
Martha Wells
Kern and Marnie
Wildenthal

VÉLIZ JOINS A LEGENDARY LEGACY

By Lee Cullum



Beverly Sills as Violetta in 1976.

Prepare to be dazzled by Yaritza Véliz, the young lyric soprano starring in her first Violetta in the U.S. at The Dallas Opera. It's a daunting role that she first sang in Santiago, Chile, her home country. When not on the road, she lives in Santiago with her fiancé, a double bass player she met at university. It is there that she recharged for two weeks after a successful run at The Santa Fe Opera in *The Elixir of Love* to gather her energies again for *La traviata*.

It was the Jetta Parker Artists Program at the Royal Ballet and Opera in London that boosted Véliz into world opera orbit from Coquimbo, in Northern Chile, where she grew up. This program for young musicians gave her classes with true masters such as conductor Sir Antonio Pappano who taught her how to perform “the natural shape of the language...like speech.”

“Why so loud?” he asks at one point in a master class I watched on YouTube. “If you're too loud right away you've given away what's coming.” For Véliz the vocal

power—and she has plenty of it—is there to be used. From Pappano she learned to switch gears in her singing, shifting into full force only when the moment is right.

Talking with her on Zoom in her summer house on Canyon Road, courtesy of The Santa Fe Opera, I found Véliz to be enchanting, but before long realized that this is only part of her personality. Though beguilingly young at 33, once on stage, if in a heavy role, she sings with the bittersweetness of a woman who has seen it all and reconciled herself to none of it. That includes the fate of Violetta, a ravishing courtesan, adored by French fashionistas but doomed to lose everything to tuberculosis.

Even apart from that, Violetta “doesn't have an easy life,” Véliz points out. She has “been with men for money.” When finally, with Alfredo, “she feels a man loves her for real,” his father puts an end to it to preserve the reputation of the family. “If Alfredo is here,” Véliz says, “I will survive. She will die if he leaves.”

Véliz tells me that she learned from her beloved granny, who died of cancer last December, how to play a woman struggling to endure under a sword of Damocles. Her granny was “like my mother, my real mother,” she explains. Véliz grew up in her granny's house, going with her to work in the houses of others after her husband left her with five children. She “doesn't know how to write,” Véliz continues, “she doesn't know how to read [but she was] very powerful, one of the strongest women I know.”

Violetta also is strong. That's how Véliz plays her, with emotion as well as stamina. Indeed, in Act One she must hold the stage alone for 15 minutes, in the musical style of a lyric coloratura, tripping up and down the scales with disciplined abandon, paradoxical perhaps but central to the insouciant persona of Paris's reigning courtesan.

None of this phases Véliz. She is not bothered by the lack of a tenor who can sing enough lines to give her a break. Moving around the stage to keep the scene from going static is well blocked by the director, she tells me, who in this case is Louisa Muller, the excellent and inventive director of the co-production in Dallas and Santa Fe Opera, which also includes a stylish set that revolves from scene to scene. Her only concern, says Véliz, is she must bring her voice down from the high notes of Act One to the entirely different lyric-soprano singing of Act Two while changing clothes quickly (and quietly since she's not far from the action) to go back on stage immediately. When it works, it's a fantastic *tour de force*.

In bringing her Violetta to the Winspear, Yaritza Véliz stands in a long line of divas who have been here before. Maria Callas did her last Violetta in Dallas. Though in the throes of leaving her husband Giovanni Meneghini, 30 years her senior, for shipping tycoon Aristotle Onassis and fighting with Rudolf Bing who fired her from The Met, Callas electrified audiences at the State Fair Music Hall. Then she waved to her fans with the same mannered gesture as the Queen of England's.

While Callas dominated the show, Beverly Sills was achingly vulnerable when she sang *La traviata* in Dallas almost 20 years later. But she soared to what Milan Kundera called “the unbearable lightness of being” in the big scene at the end of Act One. Her breathtaking bel canto may not have been faster than anybody else's but it certainly seemed so.

Sondra Radvanovsky brought a big voice to Violetta in Dallas in 2004, plus a gift for playing big heroines on the edge. (A teacher once told her to be the best at one thing and certainly she is.) Montserrat Caballé did *La traviata* here only six years after Callas. She sang with limpid perfection but without, I suspect, the desperate urgency of Yaritza Véliz.

For all that, however, Véliz currently does only two heavy roles: *La bohème*'s Mimì, a break-through role for her at Glyndebourne in 2022, and *Violetta*. Otherwise, she wants to sing the lives of women who are young and happy, like her, with no resemblance to the tragic figures she plays so convincingly well.



Maria Callas as Violetta in 1958.



Montserrat Caballé as Violetta in 1965.



Franco Zeffirelli and Maria Callas on the *La traviata* set in 1958.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF
THE DALLAS OPERA ARCHIVES

PHOTO: JOHN ARDOIN



PHOTO: WILFRIED HOESL, BAYERISCHE STAATSOPER

Rocking the Boat: How *Pelleas and Melisande* and *Orpheus and Eurydice* Changed Opera

By Laura Chandler

The Dallas Opera's 2024/2025 Season begins and ends with two of the world's most popular operas, which have been seen many times in Dallas. But the two operas encased within those bookends are new to us and are brought to you in thought-provoking new productions as well. Here's what you need to know about *Pelleas and Melisande* and *Orpheus and Eurydice*—operas that were written 140 years apart, but which were so groundbreaking in their time that they opened new vistas to the future.

Pelleas and Melisande, which follows *La traviata* this fall, is the sole opera by the French composer Claude Debussy (1862–1918), a maverick who lived much like the characters you will see in *La bohème* later this season—in a cavalier (some would say irresponsible) way, often too depressed to compose, and always struggling to pay the bills.

Debussy had tried in vain for years to compose an opera, but when he saw Maurice Maeterlinck's symbolist play *Pelleas and Melisande* in 1893, he instantly recognized that it was ideal as the basis for the kind of opera he was interested in composing—one that would be as unconventional as he himself was. He acquired the rights soon thereafter, but it wasn't until 1902 that his opera premiered at Paris's Opéra-Comique. The invited audience who saw the dress rehearsal jeered the new work, because it broke with so many traditions, but from the premiere on,

interest grew and *Pelleas* became a success for the Opéra-Comique, controversy notwithstanding. Dallas Opera General Director Ian Derrer says that in many people's minds, *Pelleas* divided time: there was opera before *Pelleas* and after it.

So, what was so controversial about *Pelleas and Melisande*? First, there are no arias, duets, or trios in it—very seldom do any two singers even overlap. The non-rhyming text was taken almost directly from the dialogue of the play, so the opera comes across as conversation. On the surface, the opera is about a love triangle, consisting of two half-brothers, Golaud and Pelleas, and the woman they both love, Melisande, all living together with the men's mother and grandfather. Debussy's focus is not on plot, however, but on the inner worlds of these characters, and his highly original music reveals both the beauty and tragedy within. Despite the inward focus, there is much going on in the opera—and especially in this production.

The Dallas Opera joined the Bayerische Staatsoper as co-producer of *Pelleas and Melisande* largely because of director Jetske Mijnsen's innovative concept, says Derrer. Set at the turn of the century, when the opera was composed, *Pelleas* exposes "a family locked up in their own lives. Everyone wants the family to work, and yet they fail all the time." US director Kathleen Smith Belcher, who will stage the production for TDO, spent a couple of weeks in Munich observing as Mijnsen

prepared for the production's premiere this past July. She explains that Mijnsen found the heart of her concept in words spoken about Melisande by the half-brothers' grandfather, Arkel, in the last act. "They translate to 'she was a poor, mysterious being, like everyone,'" Belcher says. "Jetske's idea is that we are all alone, struggling to find our way." One directorial innovation that heightens the tension considerably is that Mijnsen sometimes has the entire family onstage, overhearing a conversation that was originally meant to be a private matter between two people. And the climactic scene? No spoilers here, but Belcher says it is "moving, heartbreaking, and thought provoking. I felt a lot."

Another game-changer opera, *Orpheus and Eurydice*, premieres on the Winspear stage in February. The prolific Christoph Willibald Gluck was 48 years old and had already composed 29 operas in 1774 when he undertook an opera based upon the Orpheus myth, in which Orpheus is allowed to journey to the underworld to reclaim his dead wife, Eurydice. Up until then, his operas had generally acquiesced to the prevalent style of the time, opera seria, which heavily featured the singers in florid, repetitive arias. But Gluck was part of a growing movement of composers who wanted to strip away the artifice in favor of "simplicity, truth, and naturalness." This meant no more indulgent arias. Recitatives would be integrated with arias so the story could flow unhindered. Storylines were to be simple, not convoluted. Thus, *Orpheus and Eurydice* became the first of Gluck's three "reform" operas.

"We had engaged Joachim Schamberger to be the director," says Derrer, "and were talking about the different ways he might approach it, and he came back with an idea grounded in his experience dealing with his father's dementia and how music was part of that journey. It's an approach that will resonate with so many people," Derrer adds.

Schamberger elaborates, "The original story of Orpheus and Eurydice is a metaphor to begin with. So I was looking at what it means when someone goes to the underworld. What is the underworld? It has been looked at as a part of our psyche, a place we not only don't know but are also afraid of." He thought of losing his father by degrees—it was like a "farewell in installments"—and realized that might be the key to telling the Orpheus story.

In Schamberger's production, Eurydice is not dead in the conventional sense at the beginning of the opera, but her mind has retreated into the shadows, and that is the loss Orpheus is mourning. But the personification of love, Amore—exemplified to Schamberger by his mother, because of the tender, selfless way she cared for his father—"gives him a chance to go to the underworld, her psyche, and bring her back—and with the power of music, he is able to reach her," he adds. Music also helped Schamberger connect with his father. "He still played the piano and was moved to tears by what he played. I could communicate with him on Facetime not by speaking but by whistling. I would whistle a little tune, and he would whistle back in the same tune," says Schamberger.

If you are familiar with the Greek myth, you know that after reaching Eurydice, Orpheus loses her again. If you know Gluck's retelling, you know he interjected a happy ending, with Eurydice once again restored. We won't give away exactly how those events play out in Schamberger's production, but the details have been carefully thought through and the libretto is highly supportive of his interpretation.

Both of these operas and their composers were gamechangers in the evolution of opera, demonstrating new ways of creating opera and opening doors for the composers who followed. And these operas in the hands of brilliant directors and singers? Well, that's when magic happens.

Paolo Bressan
CHORUS DIRECTOR AND HEAD OF MUSIC



From: Varese, Italy
Dallas Opera: *Tosca* (2015/2016, debut), multiple productions since
Career highlights: Internationally acclaimed conductor Paolo Bressan is a committed musician, educator and vocal coach, as well as co-founder and general and artistic director of the LacMus International Music Festival at Lake Como, Italy (2017-current). In addition to his long

tenure at The Dallas Opera (2015-current), where he is Chorus Director and Head of Music, he has worked as an assistant with conductors such as Christian Thielemann (2015 Salzburg Easter Festival for *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*) and Emmanuel Villaume and Valery Gergiev (2019 Salzburger Festspiele for *Simon Boccanegra*). Bressan launched his career at the Mecklenburgische Staatstheater Schwerin (2007-2014), where he conducted a wide range of repertoire. He has worked worldwide, from critically acclaimed debuts at the Vienna Konzerthaus (2015) with Joseph Calleja and at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris (2016) with Bryn Hymel to operas at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg (2019-20). Bressan has also conducted opera productions in Karlsruhe, Vendôme, Rijeka, Vladivostok, Flensburg, Schwerin and symphonic concerts, among others, with the Spanish National Orchestra, the Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano and the PKF Prague Philharmonia. He studied orchestral and choral conducting, piano, vocal coaching and composition at the Conservatory “Giuseppe Verdi” in Milan, Italy, at the University for Music “Franz Liszt” in Weimar and studied piano with Louis Lortie.

2024/2025 THE DALLAS OPERA CHORUS

SOPRANO

Kristin Tallett Bittick
Carelle Flores
Dana Francis Goodnuff
Stephanie Jennings
Tiffany Lynne Lopez
Kristen Mata
Haichen Peng^
Helen Dewey Reikofski
Judith Rodriguez
Catherine Swindle

MEZZO-SOPRANO

Sheila Baker^
Karina Buruca-Kunda^
Lisa Huffaker
Sabatina Mauro*
Rachel Moon
Denise Stom
Maiya Williams*

CONTRALTO

Arielle Collier
Shannon Moy
Lisa Schlepp

TENOR

David Bogaev
Johnny Brown
Dan Crowell
Dylan Elza^
Joshua Friend
Jerry Johnston
Samuel PJ Lopez
Karl Martin^
Scott Sutton*
Jared Welch*

BARITONE

Brandon J. Gibson^
Armon Golliday
Uram Park^
Matt Woodbury

BASS

Fred Craven*
Christopher Harrison
Donald Jones
Eric Lara*
Travis Wiley McGuire
Bryce Smith^

^ Substitute Regular Chorister

* Auxiliary Chorister

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Franco Zeffirelli and Maria Callas as Violetta

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2024/2025 THE DALLAS OPERA ORCHESTRA

FIRST VIOLIN

Ami Campbell
The Mary Anne Cree
Concertmaster in
memory of Rosine Smith
Sammons

Grace Kang Wollett
Acting Associate
Concertmaster

Florence Wang Conrad
Acting Assistant
Concertmaster

Amy Faires

David Miles Wolcott

Junsoo Park

Paige Kossuth

Natalie Floyd

Samantha Bennett

Lauren Haseltine^

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Principal

Sondra Brudnak
Assistant Principal

Suneetha D'Apice

Minhee Bae

Emily Loh

Seowon Lee

Diego Campos Medina

Yuhong Sun

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

Esther Seitz

Craig Leffer

BASS

William Gowen
Principal

Michael Lelevich
Assistant Principal

Steve Brown

Kirby Nunez

FLUTE

Helen Blackburn
Principal

Ebonee Thomas

PICCOLO

Ebonee Thomas

OBOE

Gina Ford
The Eleanor Ford
Penrose Principal
Oboe Chair

Stewart Williams

ENGLISH HORN

Stewart Williams

CLARINET

Kenneth Krause
Principal

Danny Goldman*

Ben Quarles^

Phillip O. Paglialonga^

BASS CLARINET

Phillip O. Paglialonga^

BASSOON

John Searcy
Principal

Shannon Highland

HORN

Katie Wolber
The Linda VanSickle
Principal Horn Chair

Shelby Nugent

Jackson Prasifka

Stacie Mickens^

TRUMPET

John Holt
Principal

Rick Bogard

TROMBONE

Jacob Muzquiz
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

Joe Ferraro
Principal
Drew Lang

HARP

Barbara Biggers
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OBOE

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PHOTO: KYLE FLUBACKER

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The Dallas Opera Makes a Difference in Our Community

“We know that there are some children who have attended The Dallas Opera programs who have gone on to perform or work in opera in some capacity in later years. You never know where the seeds are going to be planted.”

— Kristian Roberts, TDO Director of Education

The Dallas Opera offers a wide variety of programs for all ages, from young children and families to seasoned opera-goers.

For Schools

Through its education and community engagement programs, The Dallas Opera brings more than 65 performances and numerous workshops each year to schools across North Texas, providing access to dress rehearsals and mainstage performances, online resources, and Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills-aligned interdisciplinary curricula. Every teacher is equipped with the tools necessary to incorporate TDO’s curriculum into their classroom, complementing learning opportunities.

Offenbach’s *Pépito* and Davies’ *The Three Little Pigs* are this season’s pieces of focus, which are the basis of half of The Dallas Opera’s work with students in and after school.

In the Community

Thanks to Roberts Trucking, OperaTruck—a mobile stage on an 18-wheeler—brings free family-friendly operas to communities all over North Texas. From churches and libraries to parks, retirement homes, and community centers, outdoor operas for all ages bring the art to you. In addition, performances without the truck take place in smaller community settings.

“Opera Boot Camp was extremely positive...Our youth left with a new appreciation for opera and, equally, the many forms that creative expression can take.”

— Teresa Coleman Wash, Executive Artistic Director, Bishop Arts Theatre Center



PHOTO: KAREN ALMOND, THE THREE LITTLE PIGS

At the Winspear

Four matinees are featured at the Winspear Opera House each season in our family opera series, with all tickets priced at just \$5.

Pre- and Post-Performance

Pre-performance talks occur at all opera presentations; most Sunday performances also offer post-performance Q&A’s or discussions, led by a TDO staff member with a cast or member of the production’s creative team. These are free to all ticketholders.

The Dallas Opera is dedicated to expanding the audience for this unique artform at home in North Texas and supporting educators through its online education portal. All published learning materials related to past and present productions are available digitally, as are a library of Virtual Kids Opera Boot Camp sessions.

2023/2024 SEASON BY THE NUMBERS

Audiences reached:



29 school districts
221 schools



12 retirement homes



21,000+ people

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GOOD STORIES + GOOD MUSIC = FUN OPERA FOR KIDS!

THE THREE LITTLE PIGS

SATURDAY, OCT. 26 at 2:00 PM

PÉPITO

SATURDAY, NOV. 16 at 2:00 PM

Performances are less than 60-minutes with no intermission. Join us in the lobby at 12:30pm for pre-show family activities including crafts.

Introduce the children in your life to the wonderful world of opera!

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Orpheus Legacy Society members make a profound impact on the future of The Dallas Opera by making a commitment in their estate plans.

At The Dallas Opera, **80% of our revenue comes from charitable giving.** Legacy gifts provide crucial support in raising **\$14M** in annual funds.

The Orpheus Legacy Society ensures that future generations can experience the magic of The Dallas Opera. Make a legacy gift to join the Orpheus Legacy Society, a dedicated group of opera lovers who have made their commitment.

Please let us know if you have included us in your estate plans.

For more information on joining the Orpheus Legacy Society, please contact Senior Giving Officer Diana Rivas-Smith at diana.rivas.smith@dallasopera.org or 832.878.3282.

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Orpheus Legacy Society members are invited to exclusive events throughout the year including:

- Season kick-off event celebrating OLS members in early December hosted in a private home
- *Orpheus and Eurydice* pre-opera reception, Sunday, February 9, 2025, Inner Circle lounge
- Celebration event hosted by Communities Foundation of Texas, April 2025

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Gifts from estates make a profound impact to the future of The Dallas Opera. We are deeply grateful to the following individuals who included The Dallas Opera in their estate plans.

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“Giving to the Orpheus Society is perhaps the easiest way ever to support our beloved Dallas Opera! A simple bequest in your will, of any amount, is all that is needed. Your love of opera will live on.”

—Scott Chase and Debra Witter



PHOTO: KYLE FLUBACKER

LONE STAR VOCAL COMPETITION

FRI, MAR 7, 2025, at 7:30 pm, Winspear Opera House

ALL TICKETS \$10

Dreams come true as Texas talent converges for a chance to sing on the Winspear stage—and win cash prizes! Singers compete for the opportunity to dazzle our judges and win the hearts of our opera-loving audiences.

dallasopera.org or 214.443.1000 Winspear Opera House

Vocal Competition Founded by Dallas Opera Guild/Bravo!



ORPHEUS and EURYDICE

BY CHRISTOPH WILLIBALD GLUCK

FEB 7, 9/M, 12, & 15, 2025

DEVOTION, DESPAIR, AND HOPE—A JOURNEY FOR LOVE

In this classic myth of unwavering love that celebrates the transcendent power of music, Orpheus descends to the land of shadows to rescue his bride Eurydice. The gods allow her to return but only on the condition that Orpheus lead her back without gazing upon her face.

Director Joachim Schamberger's new production envisions the couple later in life with Eurydice's "death" being a descent into dementia. A heartbroken Orpheus uses love and music to connect with her throughout this journey.

Gluck's original 1762 score is conducted by Music Director Emmanuel Villaume, leading The Dallas Opera Orchestra and Chorus.

Panel Discussion: January 23, 2025

SAVE THE DATE

Melodies of Hope: Music, Dementia, and Brain Health
Winspear Opera House

As an exclusive benefit, season subscribers and Inner Circle+ members will be invited to explore the topic of the healing power of music and dementia. Director Joachim Schamberger will share his personal story behind the production concept in a panel discussion with specialists from UT Southwestern. The evening will conclude with a musical performance from the opera.

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The Dallas Opera mourns the recent passing of these extraordinarily generous and committed supporters. Each one filled a special place at the Opera and in our hearts. Their loss is deeply felt.

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