

2024/2025 SEASON

thedallasopera™

THE LINDA AND MITCH HART
INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN CONDUCTORS

SHOWCASE CONCERT



CHENG



GRINSTEIN



SAUL



WU

JANUARY 25, 2025, AT 7:30 PM
MARGOT AND BILL WINSPEAR OPERA HOUSE



A Message from Linda and Mitch Hart

Welcome to the Ninth-Annual Showcase Concert of the Linda and Mitch Hart Institute for Women Conductors.

Over the years, women have enjoyed great success in many areas of classical music—but conducting has historically been elusive for women who dream of standing on the podiums of the world’s great opera houses and symphonic halls. Because there have been only a few pioneering role models for aspiring women conductors, and even fewer pathways to close the gender gap, this Institute seeks to balance the scales.

Since its establishment in 2015, the Hart Institute each year has singled out some of the most gifted women conductors to receive intensive training in everything from podium technique to networking and career strategy. The program includes a week of virtual sessions in the fall and a nine-day residency in January, leading to the Showcase Concert. But each woman’s relationship with The Dallas Opera continues long after the final notes of the concert: TDO continues to counsel them and, wherever possible, integrate them into the company’s various programs. Almost 70 women have participated in the Institute so far, and they are already doing great things. Take a look at our list of illustrious alumnae on page 8.

Get ready to welcome The Dallas Opera Orchestra, our wonderful singers, and our stars of the concert, our Linda and Mitch Hart Institute for Women Conductors 2024/2025 class: Jiannan Cheng, Anna Castro Grinstein, Valery Saul, and CJ Wu. Remember their names!

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.



CHENG



GRINSTEIN



SAUL



WU

Season Sponsor: The VanSickle Family Foundation in honor of Edith and Elmer VanSickle

THE LINDA AND MITCH HART
INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN CONDUCTORS

SHOWCASE CONCERT

Producing Sponsor:
SUSAN AND MARK GEYER

Supporting Sponsor:
JENIFER AND PETER FLYNN

Hart Institute for Women Conductors
SHOWCASE CONCERT

JANUARY 25, 2025, at 7:30 PM

Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House

Approximate duration: 2 hours
including one intermission

**Indiana University Jacobs
School of Music Vocalists:**

Jinpark Choi, *tenor*
Josh Hooker, *tenor*
Ashley Ruckman, *soprano*
Veronica Siebert, *mezzo-soprano*
Robert Wente, *baritone*
Siyi Yan, *soprano*

Master Teachers:

Nicole Paiement
Emmanuel Villaume

CONCERT CREDITS

Lighting Designer:

Aaron Johansen

Assistant Lighting Designer:

Candice Mears

Wig & Make-Up Designer:

David Zimmerman

Music Preparation:

Christopher Devlin
Sophia Muñoz

Stage Manager:

Lisa Marie Lange

Supertitles:

Jeri Shaffer

Production Assistant:

Ivy Lariviere

*Program and artists subject to
change.*

The Dallas Opera is a member
of OPERA America.

From *Dido and Aeneas*

**Henry Purcell
(1659-1695)**

Conducted by **CJ Wu**

Overture

“Ah! Belinda, I am press’d with torment”

Veronica Siebert, *Dido*

“Whence could so much virtue spring” ... “Fear no danger to ensue”

Siyi Yan, *Belinda*

Ashley Ruckman, *Dido and Second Woman*

“But ere we this perform” ... “In our deep vaulted cell”

Siyi Yan, *First Witch and Voice 1*

Ashley Ruckman, *Second Witch*

Veronica Siebert, *Voice 2*

Jinpark Choi, *Voice 3*

“Thy hand, Belinda” ... “When I am laid in earth”

Veronica Siebert, *Dido*

From *Der Rosenkavalier*

**Richard Strauss
(1864-1949)**

Conducted by **Jiannan Cheng**

Waltz Sequence No. 2

“Di rigori armato il seno”

Jinpark Choi, *Italian Tenor*

“Mir ist die Ehre widerfahren”

Siyi Yan, *Sophie*

Veronica Siebert, *Octavian*

“Hab’ mir’s gelobt”

Siyi Yan, *Sophie*

Ashley Ruckman, *Marschallin*

Veronica Siebert, *Octavian*

INTERMISSION

From *Carmen*

Conducted by **Valery Saul**

Georges Bizet
(1838-1875)

Entr'acte to Act 3

“L'amour est un oiseau rebelle” (“Habanera”)
Veronica Siebert, *Carmen*

“Parle-moi de ma mère!”
Josh Hooker, *Don José*
Ashley Ruckman, *Micaëla*

“Votre toast, je peux vous le rendre” (“Toreador Song”)
Robert Wente, *Escamillo*

From *El último sueño de Frida y Diego*

Conducted by **Anna Castro Grinstein**

Gabriela Lena Frank
(b. 1972)

“¿Cómo hablar en la distancia?”
Robert Wente, *Diego*

“Mictlán ten piedad”
Ashley Ruckman, *Catrina*
Ensemble: Siyi Yan, Veronica Siebert, Jinpark Choi,
Josh Hooker, Robert Wente

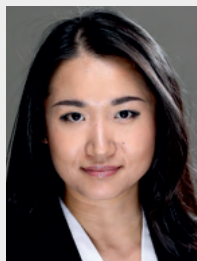
“Entre la vida y la muerte” (“El mundo”)
Veronica Siebert, *Frida*
Ensemble: Siyi Yan, Veronica Siebert, Jinpark Choi,
Josh Hooker, Robert Wente

“Volver...volver...dejando”
Veronica Siebert, *Frida*
Robert Wente, *Diego*

2024/2025 HART INSTITUTE CONDUCTORS

Giannan Cheng
CONDUCTOR

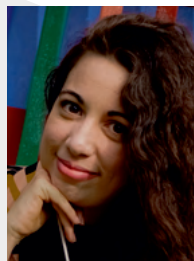
Sponsored by:
MARTHA WELLS



From: Chengdu, China
Career highlights: Giannan Cheng is the second-prize winner of the 2024 Romania Orchestra's Conductor Competition, a finalist in the Arthur Nikisch International Conducting Competition, and a second-prize winner of the 4x4 Competition for Composers and Conductors 2016. Her teachers and mentors have included world-renowned conductors such as Riccardo Muti, Kurt Masur, and Marcus Bosch. In 2024/25, Cheng has served as a Cover Conductor with the Philadelphia Orchestra. Other past professional positions include Conducting Fellow of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and the Miami Symphony Orchestra. She studied conducting at the China Conservatory of Music in Beijing, the University of Washington in Seattle, Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, and Hochschule für Musik und Theater Munich.

Anna Castro Grinstein
CONDUCTOR

Sponsored by:
CINDY FELD



From: Buenos Aires, Argentina
Career highlights: Anna Castro Grinstein hails from Buenos Aires, Argentina. This year, she leads performances of *The Barber of Seville* as Opera Holland Park's Young Artist conductor and will also return to London to lead Gothic Opera's production of Donizetti's rarely performed *Maria de Rudenz*. She was a conducting fellow for the 2023 Festival d'Aix-en-Provence and was selected as a Britten Pears Young Artist. In 2022, she was sponsored by Barbara Hannigan's initiative Momentum, our future now, and she served as artistic director of the Colectivo Sonoro Ensemble from 2015 to 2020. She earned her bachelor's degree in conducting in Buenos Aires and later pursued a master's degree at the Hochschule für Musik Freiburg in Germany.

Valery Saul
CONDUCTOR

Sponsored by:
JENIFER FLYNN



From: Portland, Oregon
Career highlights: Acclaimed as a "powerful presence on the podium" by Marin Alsop, Valery Saul's leadership spans prominent orchestras, including her recent appointment as Associate Conductor with the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra and cover conductor roles for the Minnesota Orchestra, Charlotte Symphony, Oregon Symphony, and St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. She's celebrated for her striking rendition of Chopin's *Piano Concerto No. 2*, securing second place at the Denver Philharmonic International Conducting Competition. Saul is a graduate of Peabody Institute (M.M. 2022). She has been mentored by Marin Alsop, Cristian Măcelaru, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, David Danzmayr, and George Manahan. In addition to conducting, Saul is a professional opera singer.

CJ Wu
CONDUCTOR

Sponsored by:
SUSAN GEYER



From: Taipei City, Taiwan
Career highlights: Originally a violinist, Taiwanese conductor CJ Wu has been invited to prestigious competitions and masterclasses, including the Riccardo Muti Opera Academy, Järvi Academy, BBC Concert Orchestra masterclass with Marin Alsop, and Rotterdam International Conducting Competition. She was selected by Riccardo Muti to conduct *Nabucco* for his Opera Academy in Milan and stood in for Muti at performances in Ravenna and Rimini. Wu was also invited to assist Music Director Jun Märkl with the Taiwan Philharmonic. She's worked with leading Danish orchestras, including Aarhus Symphony, Aalborg Symphony, and Odense Symphony, under the DKDM project. She won first prize at the U.K.'s BBCA Conducting Competition and Italy's Progetto Johannes Brahms competition. She holds a master's degree in Conducting from the Royal Northern College of Music and is nearing completion of her Soloist Diploma at the Royal Danish Academy of Music.

2024/2025 VOCALISTS

Jinpark Choi
TENOR



From: Seoul, South Korea
Career highlights: Jinpark Choi is a Performance Diploma student at the Jacobs School of Music, where he studies under Jane Dutton. He made his Indiana University Jacobs School of Music Opera and Ballet Theater debut in spring 2024, performing as Lensky in *Eugene Onegin*. Last summer, he participated as a Resident Artist at the Lake Area Music Festival. He holds a bachelor's

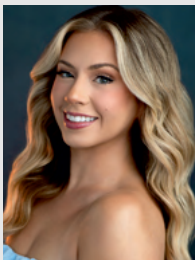
degree in vocal music from Yonsei University, where he studied under Jaeyoon Jung, and a Master of Music from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music under Daniel Weeks' tutelage. Additionally, he has studied with opera coaches Andrew Crooks, Donna Loewy, and Marie-France Lefebvre. While at Yonsei, he sang Tamino in *The Magic Flute*, and at CCM, Choi performed as Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi* and Colin in *L'Amant Anonyme*. In competitions, he won third place at the MIOpera Vocal International Competition, third place with honorable mention at the Indianapolis Matinee Musicale Competition, the merit award at the NSAL Voice Competition, and semi-finalist at the PARTNERS National Opera Competition.

Josh Hooker
TENOR



From: Midway, Utah
Career highlights: Tenor Josh Hooker is currently pursuing a Master of Music degree in Performance at the Jacobs School of Music, where he studies with Carol Vaness. He earned a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance from Utah Valley University as a student of Isaac Hurtado, where he performed as Hoffmann in Offenbach's *Tales of Hoffmann*, Arturo in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, covered Rodolfo in Puccini's *La bohème*, and was the winner of the Concerto Competition. He made his professional debut with Lyrical Opera Theater in Utah as Edgardo in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, followed by Rinuccio in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*.

Ashley Ruckman
SOPRANO



From: Overland Park, Kansas
Career highlights: Soprano Ashley Ruckman is pursuing her Master of Music at the Jacobs School of Music under the instruction of Carol Vaness. She is the proud recipient of the 2024-25 Georgina Joshi Graduate Fellowship. This past season with IU Jacobs School of Music Opera and Ballet Theater, Ruckman performed Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin* and Praskovia in

The Merry Widow. She earned a Bachelor of Music from Wichita State University, where she performed notable roles, including Hester in Lori Laitman's *The Scarlet Letter*, Arminda in *La finta giardiniera*, Esther in *The Path to Heaven*, and Despina in *Così fan tutte*. Her professional credits include Musetta in *La bohème* and Berta in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, both at Wichita Grand Opera. She won second place in the 2023 Naftzger Young Artists competition, first place and selected soloist for the 2023 Wichita State University Symphony Orchestra Concerto-Aria Concert, and first place, soprano edition, in the 2022 Rondelli Vocal Competition.

Veronica Siebert
MEZZO-SOPRANO



From: Winston-Salem, North Carolina
Career highlights: Veronica Siebert is a second-year master's student at the Jacobs School of Music, under Jane Dutton's tutelage. In summer 2024, she was a Ravinia Steans Music Institute fellow and a Gerdine Young Artist at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, where she covered Sesto in *Giulio Cesare*. In summer 2025, she'll return to OTSL, covering Hermia and performing

the role of Mustardseed in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, as well as covering Prince Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus*. Siebert recently made her professional symphony debut as soloist in de Falla's *The Three-Cornered Hat* with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra. She sang Rosa Saks in the world premiere of Indiana University's co-production of *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay* with the Metropolitan Opera in 2024. Previously, Siebert was a 2023 Ader Emerging Artist at Charlottesville Opera. She received her Bachelor of Music from the Eastman School of Music. Siebert has also received OTSL's Barbara and Stanley Richman Career Development Award and won first place at the Orpheus and Heafner-Williams competitions.

2024/2025 VOCALISTS

Robert Wente
BARITONE



From: Munster, Indiana

Career highlights: Baritone Robert Wente is a versatile and passionate performer of opera. He is pursuing a Master of Music in Vocal Performance, studying with Heidi Grant Murphy at the Jacobs School of Music, where he also completed his Bachelor of Science in Music with an outside field in Astronomy under Wolfgang Brendel's tutelage in 2023. He recently

attended The American Institute of Musical Studies, where he won first place in the 2024 Meistersinger Competition. With IU Jacobs School of Music Opera and Ballet Theater, he performed as Nardo in *La finta giardiniera*, Bob Becket in *H.M.S. Pinafore*, and Germont from *La traviata* in Heidi Grant Murphy's opera workshop. Robert has been in many opera choruses, including the world premiere of Shulamit Ran's *Anne Frank*, *The Barber of Seville*, and *Parsifal*, among others. Wente has also performed several oratorio works as a chorus member in Britten's *War Requiem* and Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9*; as the bass soloist of Beethoven's *Mass in C*; and the baritone soloist of Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*.

Siyi Yan
SOPRANO



From: Yibin, Sichuan, China

Career highlights: Described as "the absolutely brilliant soprano" by *Rutland Herald*, Chinese soprano Siyi Yan is currently pursuing an Artist Diploma at the Jacobs School of Music, studying under Heidi Grant Murphy, Kevin Murphy, and Gray Arvin. She earned her bachelor's degree from the China Conservatory of Music in 2021. In the past season, she debuted with

IU Jacobs School of Music Opera and Ballet Theater, portraying Yvette in *La Rondine* and Cunegonde in *Candide*. Yan also performed as Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute* (2021). She was most recently a resident artist with Opera North, where she performed the roles of Gilda in *Rigoletto*, Juno in *Orpheus in the Underworld*, and Florinda in *Into the Woods*. Yan's achievements include reaching the 2024 National Association of Teachers of Singing Artist Awards Competition semi-finals, being a 2022 Premiere Opera Foundation International Vocal Competition finalist, and clinching first prize in both the Indiana Chapter of the National Society of Arts and Letters Voice and the Tri-State College Vocal competitions.

2024/2025 FACULTY

MASTER TEACHERS

NICOLE PAIEMENT

The Martha R. and Preston A. Peak
Principal Guest Conductor, The Dallas Opera
Founder and Artistic Director, Opera Parallèle

EMMANUEL VILLAUME

The Mrs. Eugene McDermott Music Director,
The Dallas Opera

VISITING FACULTY

ELIZABETH ASKREN

Music Director, Sensorium Ex
Founder and Artistic Director,
Transylvanian Opera Academy

SERGE DORNY

General Director,
Bayerische Staatsoper

GABRIELA LENA FRANK

Composer-in-Residence,
Philadelphia Orchestra
Founder, Gabriela Lena Frank
Creative Academy of Music

LOUIS LANGRÉE

Music Director, Cincinnati
Symphony Orchestra
Director, Théâtre National de
l'Opéra-Comique in Paris

DAVID LOMELÍ

TDO Artistic Consultant
Chief Artistic Advisor,
Santa Fe Opera

ANNA SKRYLEVA

General Music Director,
Magdeburg Theatre

UPCOMING MAINSTAGE OPERAS

GLUCK

ORPHEUS
and EURYDICE

FEB. 7–15, 2025

Free Livestream: FEB. 15, at 7:30 PM

The story that inspired the Broadway hit, *Hadestown*. Orpheus ventures to hell and back to save his one true love.



PUCCINI

LA BOHÈME

FEB. 28–MAR. 9, 2025

To be young and in love and in Paris ... the original 'Bohemian Rhapsody' and one of the most popular operas of all time.



dallasopera.org or 214.443.1000 Winspear Opera House

Season Sponsor: The VanSickle Family Foundation in honor of Edith and Elmer VanSickle



CONDUCTOR AND ADMINISTRATOR ALUMNAE

CONDUCTORS

2015

Natalie Murray Beale
Jennifer Condon
Jessica Gethin
Stephanie Rhodes-Russell
Anna Skryleva
Lidiya Yankovskaya

2016

Elizabeth Askren
Mihaela Cesa-Goje
Alexandra Cravero
Tianyi Lu
Chaowen Ting
Zoe Zeniodi

2017

Alba Bomfim
Mélisse Brunet
Lina Gonzalez-Granados
Kärin Hendrickson
Carolyn Watson
Monika Wolinska

2018

Sonia Ben-Santamaria
Priscila Bomfim
Sarah Penicka-Smith
Audrey Saint-Gil

Maria Sensi Sellner
Emily Senturia

2019

Tiffany Chang
Tamara Dworetz
Jane Kim
Marta Kluczyńska
Madeline Tsai
Molly Turner

2020

Yeo Ryeong Ahn
Christine Brandes
Michelle Di Russo
Barbara Dragan
Chelsea Gallo
Elinor Rufeizen
Susannah Wapshott

2022

Celia Llácer Carbonell
Yuwon Kim
Blair Salter
Anna Sułkowska-Migoń

2023

Maria Benyumova
Micah Gleason
Shira Samuels-Shragg
Jingqi Zhu

ADMINISTRATORS

2017

Anh Le
Stefanie Mercier
Sara Noble
Jennifer Rivera

2018

Nicole Eubanks
Laura Smalley
Brooke Tolley

2019

Kristen Bigham
Beverly Love
Suzanne Vinnik

2020/2021

Jessica Gonzalez
Leah Johns
Yvette Loynaz
Megan Thompson

2022

Malikha Mayes
Mitra Sadeghpour
Jaime Sharp

OBSERVERS

Arianne Abela
Avlana Eisenberg
Laurann Gilley
Alexandra Grabarchuk
Laura Guili
Rebecca Henry
Sarah Klein
Ching-Chun Lai
Co Boi Nguyen
Catherine O'Shaughnessy
Amy Owens
Sara Parkinson
Michelle Rofrano
Maria Sensi Sellner
Hannah Threlkeld
Rachel Waddell
Carolyn Watson
Parisa Zaeri

FACULTY ALUMNI

MASTER TEACHERS

Elizabeth Askren
Paolo Bressan
Carlo Montanaro
Nicole Paiement
Emmanuel Villaume

PANELISTS & FACULTY

Carrie Ellen Adamian
Ana de Archuleta
Afton Battle
Natalie Murray Beale
Deborah Borda
Jennifer Bowman

Elizabeth Buccheri
Lisa Bury
Suzanne Calvin
Tiffany Chang
Chelsea Dennis
Ian Derrer
Serge Dorny
Rona Eastwood
Cynthia Floyd
Mariana Fonseca
Joel Ethan Fried
John Harpool
Karin Hendrickson
Diane Hosey
Yuki Izumihara
Quodesia D. Johnson

Rebecca Kirk
Julia Lagahuzère
Louis Langrée
Anh Le
Charlotte Lee
David Lomelí
Shawna Lucey
Gianluca Macheda
Thomas Maddrey
Anthony Manoli
Ella Marchment
Nick Martin
Susan Mathieson Mayer
Carlo Montanaro
Lee Anne Myslewski
Kim Noltemy

Cynthia López Pérez
Paolo Petrocelli
Jennifer Rivera
Kristian Roberts
Stephanie Rhodes Russell
Robyn Short
Jennifer Spencer
Beth Stewart
Marta M. Torres
Dmitry Vdovin
Teresa Coleman Wash
Sarah Williams
Jenna Wolf
Lidiya Yankovskaya



ALL TICKETS \$10

LONE STAR VOCAL COMPETITION

FRI., MAR. 7, at 7:30 PM, Winspear Opera House

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.

Tickets at dallasopera.org or 214.443.1000

Vocal Competition Founded by Dallas Opera Guild/Bravo!

THE DALLAS OPERA ORCHESTRA

2024/2025 SEASON

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^

SECOND VIOLIN

Kristin Van Cleve
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
Principal

PERSONNEL MANAGER

Brad Wagner

MUSIC LIBRARIAN

Shannon Highland

ASSOCIATE MUSICIANS

VIOLIN

Inga Kroll
Kathy Johnson
Amela Koci

FLUTE

Lance Sanford

OBOE

Elise Belk
Nathan Ingram

CLARINET

Corey Mackey
Chastine Hofmeister

BASSOON

Sara Scurry

HORN

Nancy Piper

TRUMPET

Ben Gerkins

PERCUSSION

Brad Wagner
Michael McNicholas

HARP

Laura Brandenburg

KEYBOARD

Christopher Devlin
Sophia Muñoz

^ Season Substitute

* On Leave