

Cleveland Opera Theater

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's

The Marriage of Figaro



Esther M. Haberlen - 2017

Templelive Cleveland Masonic Auditorium

Friday, April 28, 7:30 and Sunday, April 30, 3:00pm



Offers special thanks to

Dr. Vincent Branca

For his long standing and continued support of Cleveland Opera Theater!

Dr. Branca's generosity has made this, and many productions including *La Bohème*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Tosca*, *Clarimonde* and *La Rondine*, possible.

Bravo!

May the generosity and kindness of your gifts return to you a thousand fold in the enjoyment of this beautiful music!



A Mozart opera, performed in an acoustically perfect auditorium, by the excellent artists of Cleveland Opera Theater. It does not get much better.

Executive Artistic Director Scott Skiba and Music Director Maestro Domenico Boyagian have poured their hearts into preparing *The Marriage of Figaro*, because our promise to you is: excellence, exhilaration, and great entertainment. I can't wait to hear your response to the overture (my favorite).

Cleveland Opera Theater's vision is to build a sustainable opera company, one that lives long past individual lifetimes, and keep opera vital and vibrant for generations to come. We can do this through the efforts of dedicated staff, artists, musicians, advisors, board of directors, volunteers, patrons, and our audience.

Opera is an expensive art form. For opera companies, ticket sales, on average, cover only 25% of costs. Cleveland Opera Theater does significantly better; our tickets sales cover 40%. We control production costs by being frugal, using volunteers, and sharing resources with other arts organizations. But we need your help. Spread the word, like us on Facebook, bring your friends to our performances, and donate!

This year we kick off our Free Student Ticket Program. For every \$10 you donate to Cleveland Opera Theater, you provide a free ticket to a Northeast Ohio student. This year, students from the Boys and Girls Club to Cleveland Clinic Residents, and every age group in-between are here. Look around. See the opera audience of tomorrow.

Enjoy *The Marriage of Figaro* and thank you for your support.

Don Scipione, Cleveland Opera Theater Board President

Let us know how we're doing

Share your thoughts about your experience at the opera. Please fill out the survey at:

www.ClevelandOperaTheater.org/survey

Or scan the QR code to the right:



The Marriage of Figaro

(Le nozze di Figaro)

Music by WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Libretto by LORENZO Da PONTE

Based on based on a stage comedy by PIERRE BEAUMARCHAIS,

La folle journée, ou le Mariage de Figaro

(The Mad Day, or The Marriage of Figaro)

Creative Team

Conductor - Domenico Boyagian

Stage Director - Scott Skiba

Scenographic Design and Technical Director - Matthew D. McCarren

Costume Design - Esther Haberlen

Production Stage Manager and Assistant Stage Director - Robert Pierce

Scenic Artist - Jennifer Hitmar Shankland

Makeup Design -Tamiko Jenkins

Wardrobe Mistress - Mackenzie Malone

Wig Design and Rental - Wigs & Whiskers Ltd.

Assistant Conductor / Chorus Master - Gaddiel Dombrowner

Rehearsal Pianist and Performance Keyboardist - Tatiana Loisha

Assistant Technical Director & Carpenter - Caleb Wimbrow

Wig and Makeup Assistant - Danielle Tapp

Assistant Scenic Artist - Thomas Hitmar

Supertitle Operator - Marie Lineman

Supertitles by: Chadwick Creative Arts

Props & Furniture Rental - Cleveland Play House

Templelive Cleveland Masonic Auditorium

Property Manager - Romanina G. Campea

Production Manager - Lisa Campea-Kish



Continuing the legacy of “Opera For All”

Our heritage and motto is “Opera For All.” Cleveland Opera Theater continues to honor and celebrate the vision and mission of Opera Per Tutti (Italian for *Opera For All*) founder, Andrea Anelli by bringing opera to audiences throughout Northeast Ohio’s diverse communities through a diverse annual season of programming as we build a sustainable professional opera company for Cleveland and Northeast Ohio.

Our spring 2017 mainstage production of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Lorenzo DaPonte’s masterpiece, *The Marriage of Figaro* caps off an exciting spring. The characters in this opera each represent an aspect of our humanity as they embody our most passionate emotions of love, lust, jealousy, greed, revenge, nostalgia, and ultimate forgiveness. Mozart and DaPonte are masters of moving seamlessly between farcical moments that are painted with a broad brush and intricately detailed moments of poignant delicacy. Our spectacular scenography evokes Victorian-Era architecture that is beginning to show signs a wear as we move into the Edwardian-Era of the beautiful costume design. This subtle indication of the passing of time and the changing of styles is meant to honor the revolutionary spirit of Pierre Beaumarchais’ play on which this opera is based: *La folle journée, ou le Mariage de Figaro* (*The Mad Day, or The Marriage of Figaro*). The stylized lighting, make-up, and frenetic physicality highlight the farcical nature that cloaked or somewhat softened Beaumarchais’ intense satirical barbs against the Pre-Revolutionary French aristocratic reign.

The 2016 - 2017 season featured many new projects that are “revolutionary” and adventurous in their own right. The New Opera Works *{NOW} Festival*, an annual festival dedicated to the creation, development, and performance of new opera, launched in January, 2017. The innovative {NOW} Festival featured dozens of artists from around the country, and right here in Northeast Ohio, in readings, workshops, Cleveland and world-premieres and new productions, all of which were made possible through collaborations with The Cleveland Composers’ Guild, Baldwin Wallace Conservatory, Oberlin Conservatory and The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Plans are already under way for the 2018 {NOW} Festival.

The overwhelmingly enthusiastic response to *Opera UpClose*, our series of alternative-venue productions piloted in the 2015 – 2016 season, led to an expansion of this adventurous programming series for the 2016 -2017 season. The world-premiere performance of Händel’s opera *Serse* in an adaptation that was devised, conducted and directed by Timothy Nelson, who Opera News hails as “The Future of Opera.” This was performed in the Historic Arcade in Downtown Cleveland in a co-production with Baldwin Wallace Conservatory and the Hyatt Regency. An in-restaurant production at EDWINS entitled *Je t’aime* built on the previous year’s program success of paired food, wine and opera, *Harp & Heels* at the BopStop at the Music Settlement featured the

fusion of Opera, Jazz, Country, Broadway & Pop. This performance marked the first time in BopStop history that additional furniture had to be brought in to accommodate the beyond capacity crowd. We punctuated the spring *Opera UpClose* performances with a salute to George and Ira Gershwin and their musical talents. Presented in a new musical revue, *The Man that Got Away* that weaved the iconic music of the Gershwin brothers into a poignant story of love, life, loss and nostalgia in performances at Nighttown and for the first time in Akron at The Tangier.

Our *Opera For All* - FREE Summer Concert Series (featured on the back cover of this program) is expanded to include more than a dozen venues throughout the Greater Cleveland region, and will conclude with our largest Free Summer concert at the Dunham Tavern Museum Sunday, August, 27.

Thank you all in attendance for your support and for playing your integral role in the continued building of a sustainable professional opera company for Cleveland and Northeast Ohio. A special thank you to the donors who have helped make the experience of live opera accessible to thousands of students of all ages! Finally, a very special welcome to the students in attendance. On behalf of the Cleveland Opera Theater Staff, we hope that you enjoy this operatic experience, and we hope to see you at many future performances. You are our future and our best advocates for opera as an accessible, relevant and exciting art form!

Scott Skiba, Cleveland Opera Theater Executive Artistic Director

Special Thanks to our VIP Sponsor

Trader Joe's

Special Thanks to The Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite

Valley of Cleveland and the Templelive Cleveland Masonic Auditorium and Performance Arts Center staff especially Tony, and all of the Masons who assisted in making this production possible.

Special Thanks to CIM for the use of Music Stands and lights

CLEVELAND OPERA THEATER

Our mission is to build a sustainable, professional, outstanding Opera Company for Northeast Ohio, employing local, regional, and internationally acclaimed guest artists. Our heritage and our motto is “Opera For All.” This defines our work and frames our collaborative approach to make opera accessible, affordable, relevant, engaging and exciting in Cleveland and throughout Northeast Ohio.

Board of Directors

Don Scipione, President
Stacy Marinelli, Vice President
Leonard Liberman, Treasurer
Marci Alegant
Michael Borden
Giancarlo Calicchia
Spencer Dieck
Stacy Feiner Psy.D.
Cory Isler
Joe Mosbrook
Annie Chon-Mussard
Brad Roller
Danita Pagel-Thomas
John Edward Thomas
Rose Zitiello

Advisory Board

Jeannette Grasselli Brown
Jonathon Field
Richard Fleischman
David Gooding
James Levin
Timothy Mussard
Carol Arnold Porter
Michael Salkind

Staff

Executive Artistic Director - Scott Skiba
Music Director - Domenico Boyagian
Education and School Programs Director - Lisa Yanofsky
Outreach and Community Engagement Director - Megan Thompson
Ticket Operations and Financial Administrator - Cassie Goldbach

Artistic Administrator - Cliff Wilson
Public Relations and Customer Service - Rebecca Freshwater

Cleveland Opera Theater Donors 2016 - Present

FOUNDATIONS

\$25,000+

Cuyahoga Arts and Culture
The George Gund Foundation
The Nord Family Foundation

\$10,000 to \$24,999

Northern Ohio Italian American Foundation (NOIA)

\$5,000 to \$9,999

The Cleveland Foundation, Leonard Kreiger Fund
The City Mission with support from The Kulas Foundation

\$2,500 to \$4,999

The Cleveland Foundation, Clive and Mary Hamlin Fund
The Cleveland Foundation, Frank H. and Nancy L. Porter Fund
Ohio Arts Council

\$1,000 to \$2,499

Maine Community Foundation
The Cleveland Foundation

INDIVIDUALS

\$25,000+

Dr. Vincent Branca

\$10,000- \$24,999

Josephine and Don Scipione

\$5,000 to \$9,999

Clive and Mary Hamlin

\$1000- \$2,499

Harrison L. Adams

Bonnie Baker

Barbara Cromer

Rich and Julie Jerdonek

Brad Roller

Alan Rubin

Larry Santon

Scott Skiba

Lorraine Szabo

Nicholas James Villella in Memory of Rosemary Van Blyenburgh

Westown Community Development Corporation

\$500-\$999

Anonymous

Alan and Toni Lichtin

Up to \$499

Anonymous
Katherine S. Ball
Bentley de Bardelaben
Fran Belkin
E L Bennett
Michael Borden
Brent Buescher
Annie Chon Mussard
Susan Covey
Pamela Czarnota
Veronica McNamara Dever
James Doubrava
Walter H. Duval
Stacy Feiner
Diane Fraser
Thomas Froehlich
Gayle Hanisko
Marguerite Harkness
Patricia Heinz
Denise Hynick
Stanley Jaffe
Jennifer Jared
Mark Kilkenny

Leslie Lahr
Nora McNamara
Antoinette S. Miller
Daniel Milner
Joe Mosbrook
Susan Oelbracht
Michelle Paris
Michael Parry
Promise Partners
Michael Salkind and Carol Gill
Larry Santon
David and Janet Schiopota
Joseph Spagnuolo
Lorraine Szabo
Rosemary Taft-Milby
Danita Pagel-Thomas
John Edward Thomas
Richard Thome
Gary and Laura Williams in memory
Elliott J. Schultz
Stephanie Williams
Maria Wnek

WE BELIEVE IN
ideastream

"Your programs at ideastream
are beyond expectation."

- Jenny and Glenn Brown



Find out more at ideastream.org/support

***The Marriage of Figaro* Cast**

Figaro - CHRISTOPHER HOLMES

Susanna - MARIAN VOGEL

Count Almaviva - BRIAN KEITH JOHNSON

Countess Rosina - RACHEL E. COPELAND

Cherubino - AMANDA FINK

Don Bartolo - JASON BUDD

Marcellina - LAURA AVDEY

Don Basillio - ETHAN BURCK

Antonio - JAMES EDER

Barbarina - GILLIAN HOLLIS

Don Curzio - SPENCER LAWRENCE BOYD

Flower Girls / Wedding Singers – MEGAN SLACK & NICOLE FUTORAN

Chorus

Sopranos

Mary Grace Corrigan

Nicole Futoran

Gillian Hollis

Megan Slack

Dawna Rae Warren

Mezzo Sopranos

Lauren Wright

Amanda Krohne

Janessa Janke

Kara Ross

Tenors

Ethan Burck

Robert Bordon

Spencer Lawrence Boyd

Christian Thomas

Baritones / Bass Baritones

Timothy Bates

Michael Borden

Cody Russell Gould

Ryan Honomichl

Supernumeraries

Sue Hundermark

John Bowers

Beshoy Hanna

Cleveland Opera Theater Orchestra

Maestro Domenico Boyagian, Music Director

Flute – Virginia Crabtree

Oboe – Axl Pons

Clarinet 1 – Robert Davis

Clarinet 2 – Zachary West

Bassoon – Carly Gomez

Horn 1 – Gregory Hillis

Horn 2 – Samuel Hartman

Timpani – Kirk Georgia

Violin 1 – Chris Robinson +

Violin 1 – Xuecong Xia

Violin 1 – Marlene Moses

Violin 1 – Elizabeth Stewart

Violin 1 – Quinn Price

Violin 2 – Pablo Griggio *

Violin 2 – Eriko Yoshida-Daly

Violin 2 – Sarah Page

Violin 2 – Maggie Niekamp

Violin 2 – Winnie Liao

Viola – Audrey Naffe *

Viola – Emi Mizobuchi

Viola – Courtney Bonifant

Viola – Cordelia Brand

Cello – Bobby Nicholson*

Cello – Carlyn Kessler

Cello – Logan Dailey

Cello - Christian Standridge

Bass – Joel Negus

Orchestra Manager, Emily Rapson

Orchestra Crew

Quinn Price

Zachary West

+ Concert Master

* Principal

Artist Biographies

A native Clevelander, mezzo-soprano **Laura Avdey** (Marcellina) has performed with Opera Circle in many productions, including Charlotte in *Werther*, *I Puritani*, *Krol Roger*, *Linda di Chamounix*, *Thomas*, *Rigoletto*, and its original production of *Norma*. She has also been featured at the annual Opera in the Italian Garden. Ms. Avdey has also performed with Cleveland Opera in productions including *Sweeney Todd*, *Carmen*, *Aida*, *Turandot*, and *Iolanthe*, as well as the Ohio Chamber Symphony, Summit Choral Arts Society, and The Ohio Chamber Symphony. She has been recorded on the Studio Ecoute label with The Old Stone Singers on their recording, *Christmas With the Old Stone Singers* and has been heard on WCLV broadcasts. Ms. Avdey's repertoire includes major works by Handel, including the title role in Handel's Solomon, Bach, Vivaldi, Barber and Brahms. Ms. Avdey earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music and Business from Baldwin-Wallace University.

Domenico Boyagian (Conductor and Music Director) Known for his savvy style on the podium and ability to communicate, Maestro Boyagian has proven to be highly valuable, sensitive and compassionate in his aesthetic delivery. Born and raised in Bologna, Italy and the son of the internationally renowned Armenian-Italian Verdi baritone Garbis Boyagian, M° Boyagian arrived in the U.S. in 2000 to pursue his musical studies in piano and conducting. M° Boyagian was guest conductor with Opera North (NH) in his debut conducting *La Traviata* and conductor of *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *La Rondine* and *Tosca* with Cleveland Opera Theater. He is also an invited guest conductor with the Manhattan School of Music where he worked with young artists in scenes programs in 2014 and 2015. He is Associate Conductor with Florida Grand Opera where he conducted *Così fan tutte* in the spring of 2015 and he returned to Opera Southwest as Associate Conductor in *La Bohème* and In 2013 he was reengaged to conduct the National Symphony Orchestra and Chorus of Costa Rica in critically acclaimed performances of Verdi's Requiem. He made his New York debut conducting performances of Donizetti's *Don Pasquale* and served as cover conductor at Florida Grand Opera in Miami. He was invited to return to Albuquerque in 2013 where he conducted Opera Southwest in the première of Ethan Frederick Greene's opera *A Way Home*. In Cleveland M° Boyagian led a production of Szymanowski's rare and challenging *King Roger* with Opera Circle. Particularly adept in the standard Italian repertoire, he made his Canadian debut with Verdi's *La Traviata* for Opera Belcanto in Toronto and in Italy at Teatro della Regina, La Camerata Musicale Giovanile Orchestra (Bologna), Assisi Opera and Sofia Festival Orchestra. Equally masterful in orchestral repertoire, in 2011 Domenico Boyagian was named Music Director of the Ohio Philharmonic in Cleveland where he resides and is guest conductor with the Cleveland Philharmonic, Saint Ann Orchestra, and Suburban Symphony Orchestras. A collaboration with the celebrated Italian pianist Antonio Pompa-Baldi produced his recent recording debut for Centaur Records with the Ohio Philharmonic conducting the works of Edvard Grieg including the Holberg Suite, Opus 40. Earlier that year he led the Palm Beach Symphony in a Gala Concert fundraiser at Mar-a-Lago. M° Boyagian has recently been named "one of 10 most distinguished Italians in the U.S." by the Italy-America Chamber of Commerce in New York, the only musician among them.

Spencer Lawrence Boyd (Don Curzio), 23 year-old tenor from Canal Fulton, OH has been blessed with a rapid start to his singing career. Boyd sang the leading role of Vincent in Charles Gounod's *Mireille* in Périgueux, France (Summer '16) and took on two new roles in Fall '16: Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*) and Arlecchino (*Pagliacci*). Other 2016 engagements included Gherardo in *Gianni Schicchi* with Opera Chapman (Orange, CA) and a debut performance with the Pacific Symphony Orchestra (Costa mesa, CA) in *The Pirates of Penzance*. This April Boyd gave a Graduate Voice Recital in Ludwig Recital Hall at Kent State University. This coming summer he will be covering Nika Magadoff (The Magician) in Menotti's *The Consul* with Nightingale Opera Theater (Hudson, OH) and will also be invested in the young artist program there. Spencer has recently performed scenes from challenging roles including Roméo, Faust, Macduff, Hoffman, Don José, Rodolfo, Tamino, Fenton, among others. Accolades include being a three-time winner of the Voices of Canton Scholarship Competition (Canton, OH), premiering two new vocal works with the Cleveland Composer's Guild, and singing in masterclasses with such renowned performers as Rod Gilfry, Sally Wolf, Milena Kitic, and Bruce Sledge. Boyd continues his vocal studies with Professor Tim Culver at Kent State University and has previously worked with notable teachers Dr. Timothy Mussard and Dr. Peter Atherton. Also an up and coming voice teacher, his voice studio is comprised of about 20 high school students and he teaches at both Jackson and Massillon High Schools in Stark County, OH. This academic year, Boyd will be in the second and final year of his master's degree at Kent State University and holds a graduate assistant position there with both administrative and teaching duties.

Jason Budd (Don Bartolo), is hailed as a "buffo with a legitimate voice". Mr. Budd has garnered a reputation for being a consummate singer-actor, having received accolades for his performances across the United States and Europe. Jason recently made his South American debut with the title role in Verdi's *Falstaff* in São Paulo, Brazil. He has also had much success in vocal competitions over the years including wins at the Opera Columbus Competition, the Heinz Rehfuss competition with Orlando Opera, the Mary Jacobs Smith Singer of the Year competition with Shreveport Opera, and the Meistersinger Competition in Graz, Austria, which was broadcast on Austrian television. Recent engagements include performances with the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, SC, Boston Midsummer Opera, Toledo Opera, Fremont Opera in California, Opera Western Reserve in Youngstown, and Cleveland Opera Theater. This summer he will return to Boston Midsummer Opera to perform one of his favorite roles, Doctor Dulcamara in *The Elixir of Love*.

Ethan Burck (Don Basillio) is a sophomore Vocal Performance major at Baldwin Wallace University. He is extremely excited to be a part of his first mainstage production with Cleveland Opera Theater. Most recently, he appeared as Father Confessor in Baldwin Wallace University's production of *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, and as a tenor soloist in the Cleveland Opera Theater 2017 New Opera Works {NOW} Festival Scenes Workshop in collaboration with the Cleveland Composers'

Guild and the Baldwin Wallace Conservatory of Music. This summer he will perform the role of Nanki-Poo at the Hawaii Performing Arts Festival.

Lyric Coloratura, **Rachel E. Copeland** (Countess Rosina), continues to receive acclaim as a thriving young artist combining her crystalline voice with her compelling and energetic stage presence. Ms. Copeland recently debuted at Avery Fisher Hall as the soprano soloist in Mozart's Coronation Mass to rave reviews as well as Woglinde in Wagner's *Das Rheingold* with North Carolina Opera. Current and upcoming seasons also hold debuts with the Asheville Lyric Opera, Wilmington Opera, and repeat engagements with numerous national companies. Ms. Copeland recently sang with the Brussels Chamber Orchestra in a concert of arias and duets with the highly acclaimed 2012 Operalia winner, Anthony Roth Costanzo. Other career highlights include Frasquita and Micaela in Bizet's *Carmen* with San Diego, Indianapolis and North Carolina Operas, the title role of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* with New Jersey Opera and subsequent covering of the role with Cleveland Opera, and Queen of the Night in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* with Apollo's Fire, The Cleveland Baroque Orchestra. Other favorite roles include Juliette in Gonoud's *Romeo et Juliette*, Adina in Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*, Musetta in Puccini's *La bohème*, Lauretta in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*, and Zdenka in Strauss's *Arabella*. Dr. Copeland is currently on the faculty of East Carolina University School of Music where she teaches voice and diction, and is the Coordinator for Graduate Studies and Interim Associate Director of the School of Music. She is active in teaching nation-wide master classes and is on the faculty of the Cornish American Song Institute in England. She also is the Program Director for Oberlin in Italy, Oberlin Conservatory of Music's prestigious summer program in Arezzo, Italy.

Bass, **James Eder** (Antonio), received a Master of Music in Vocal Performance at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville studying with Andrew Wentzel. He received his Bachelor of Music studying Vocal Performance from The Ohio State University studying with Robin Rice. Acclaimed as having a "resonant" voice and being both "laugh-out-loud funny" and "marvelously sinister and threatening," James has appeared on stages throughout the country and world performing in a variety of concerts and in roles including Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte*, The Secret police Agent in *The Consul*, Colline and Alcindoro/Benoit in *La bohème*, Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, Collatinus in *The Rape of Lucretia*, Achilla in *Julius Caesar*, Baron Zeta in *The Merry Widow*, Escamillo in *Carmen*, Pistola in *Falstaff*, and Sir Joseph Porter in *H.M.S. Pinafore*. James has also performed several roles in world premieres of operas including Tutor and King Creon in Larry's Delinger's *Medea and Pathological Liar* and in Michael Ching's *Speed Dating Tonight!* Along with studying at OSU and UT, James spent the summers of 2012, 2013, and 2015 performing with the Janiec Opera Company at the Brevard Music Center in Brevard, North Carolina. In 2016, James was a Resident Artist and Cornetti Scholar with Opera Theater of Pittsburgh performing the roles of Achillas in *Julius Caesar* and Farfallo in *The Silent Woman*. Upcoming engagements include Elviro in Pittsburgh Festival Opera's *Xerxes* and Leporello in Opera Columbus's production of *#Uncle John (Don Giovanni)*.

Amanda Fink (Cherubino), mezzo-soprano, has most recently been seen in Washington, DC as the alto soloist in Beethoven's 9th Symphony with the Apollo Orchestra. Ms. Fink is an alumna of the Pensacola Opera Artist in Residence program's 2016 season, where she performed the role Flora/*La traviata*, Olga/*The Merry Widow*, and Zosha in Jake Heggie's *Out of Darkness*. While there, Amanda also performed the alto solos in Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with the Choral Society of Pensacola. Following her time in Pensacola, she returned to Washington, DC to perform as the alto soloist in Beethoven's *Mass in C* at the Washington National Cathedral under the late maestro J. Reilly Lewis. In July of 2016, Amanda made her Canadian debut singing Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro* with the Brott Music Festival. Amanda participated in the Dayton Opera Artist-in-Residence program in 2015, where she performed 2nd Lady in *Die Zauberflöte*, as well as Sister Lillianne in Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*. In the latter production, she was also given the opportunity to cover the lead role, Sister Helen Prejean. Amanda was an apprentice with Ash Lawn Opera in the summer of 2014, performing the role of Mrs. McLean in Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah*, and covering both the roles of Hodel and Chava in *Fiddler on the Roof*. In 2012, Amanda participated in the late Lorin Maazel's Castleton Festival, where she performed the role of Charlotte in Stephen Sondheim's *A Little Night Music*. She is a proud alumna of Chapman University in southern California, and the University of Maryland's 'Maryland Opera Studio'.

Gillian Hollis (Barbarina), soprano, has been described as "simply outstanding" (Encore Michigan); possessing "great flexibility and poise-filled musicality" (Sequenza21); and praised for her "grace, ease, and bright, sparkling sound" (Journal Sentinel). Most recently, she worked with Skylight Music Theater where she originated the lead role in their brand-new production of André Grétry's *Beauty and the Beast* (*Zémire et Azor*). The Journal Sentinel praised her for creating a "kindhearted and unselfish Zémire" and Milwaukee Magazine called her "the musical highlight of the evening." In 2016, Hollis appeared as Kathie in *The Student Prince* with Opera Grand Rapids and toured with Opera For The Young as Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute*. In previous seasons, Hollis played Beauty in Opera for the Young's *Beauty and the Beast*, Guilette in Chicago Folks Operetta's *The Ball at the Savoy*, Sister Lillianne in *Dead Man Walking* with Madison Opera, where she also covered Marie in *La Fille du Régiment*, and Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi* with Ash Lawn Opera. This season, she returns to Opera for the Young as Adina in *The Elixir of Love*, and makes her Ohio Light Opera debut as Kathie in their production of *The Student Prince*.

Christopher Holmes (Figaro) is a "powerful, melodious baritone" with "soul and passion". Outstanding musicianship and a rapidly expanding repertoire are quickly establishing this baritone as an artist in demand. With over 35 operatic roles to his credit, Christopher has been featured by companies such as Austin Lyric Opera, Central City Opera, Eugene Opera, Opera Idaho, Phoenix Opera, San Antonio Opera, Utah Symphony and Opera, and Utah Festival Opera. As a full-lyric baritone, Holmes is beginning to make his mark in the Verdi repertoire with such roles as *Di Luna*, *Renato*, and *Rigoletto*. As Iago with Winter Opera St. Louis critics commented, Holmes sings

Iago “with clarity and power, and with a skilled actor's ability to convey mood and character” and with “control and subtlety.” His Germont was praised “with crystal clear enunciation, truly polished, controlled, professional and superb.” Equally adept in concert repertoire, Mr. Holmes has performed with entities such as Ballet West, Gulfshore Opera, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, Salt Lake Chorale Artists, Utah Symphony, Temple Square Chorale and Orchestra at Temple Square in concerts in *St. John Passion*, *St. Matthew Passion*, Beethoven’s *9th Symphony*, Brahms’ *A German Requiem*, Orff’s *Carmina Burana*, the Fauré *Requiem*, Mozart’s *Mass in C Minor* and *Requiem*, Schubert’s *Mass in G Major*, Vaughan Williams’s *Dona nobis pacem* and Verdi’s *Messa di Requiem*. He has also performed Handel’s *Messiah* on several occasions, selections from Mendelssohn’s *Elijah*, *Porgy and Bess*, and pops concerts with music of Gershwin, Kern, and Porter. Having made his international debut in Italy as a guest of Opera Orvieto in the role of Don Giovanni, Holmes received music degrees from the conservatory at Oberlin College and Temple University.

Brian Keith Johnson (Count Almaviva) has performed many roles in opera from Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* to Ford in *Falstaff*. Favorite opera roles include Germont, Sharpless, Figaro, Almaviva, Marcello, Michele and Schicchi. As a member of Actor’s Equity Association, he has also performed a variety of musical theatre roles ranging from Jim in *Big River* to Father/God in *Children of Eden*. Favorite musical theater roles include Joe (Show Boat), Bill Sykes, Miles Gloriosus, Sweeney Todd and Audrey II. His concert repertoire includes most of the major baritone works such as *Carmina Burana*, *Elijah*, The Verdi Requiem, Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, The Brahms Requiem and The Faure’ Requiem. He has performed operatic and musical theatre roles across the United States including performances with The Cleveland Orchestra, Akron Symphony Orchestra, Canton Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Opera, Lyric Opera Cleveland, Blossom Festival Orchestra, Opera Theatre of Pittsburgh, Opera Western Reserve, Carolina Master Chorale, Charlotte Symphony Orchestra and Porthouse Theatre. Mr. Johnson received his Bachelor’s Degree from The University of Akron and has also studied abroad at The New Opera Academy of Rome in Rome, Italy and The American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria.

Scott Skiba (Stage Director and Executive Artistic Director) has directed *La Bohème*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Tosca*, *La Rondine*, *Gianni Schicchi*, *Suor Angelica*, *La Bohème*, *Il Tabarro*, *Pagliacci*, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, *Pirates of Penzance*, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, and *Il Segreto di Susanna* for Cleveland Opera Theater. Recent engagements include Bizet’s *Carmen* for Opera Western Reserve, *The Student Prince* with Opera Grand Rapids, *Suor Angelica* with Mobile Opera, and *Dialogues of the Carmelites* for Baldwin Wallace Opera. Upcoming directing engagements include: *Barbiere di Siviglia* for Natchez Festival of Music, and *Don Giovanni* for the Hawaii Performing Arts Festival. Scott has directed interdisciplinary collaborations in non-traditional venues that explore alternative, intimate, and contemporary approaches to producing opera including: the professional premiere of *Sweets By Kate* with Marble City Opera, which was performed in an installation at Sugar Mama’s Bakery in

Downtown Knoxville, and *Marguerite*; a world premiere adaptation of Gounod's *Faust* in co-productions between Cleveland Opera Theater and Cleveland Public Theatre. Other notable projects include: *The Spider* for Interlochen Opera Theater, the *New Opera Project*, which developed and presented the world premiere of six short operas in collaboration with Interlochen Arts Academy, Parallel 45 Theatre Company and the Inside Out Gallery in Traverse City, Michigan, the *iLyric* project – an installation of nine different operas throughout the historic piazze of the city of Arezzo, Italy in collaboration with the ICASTICA Festival and the city council and mayor's office of Arezzo. A strong advocate of arts education and the development of emerging talent in the field of opera, Scott has directed new productions of *Tobermory*, *Roman Fever* and *Trouble in Tahiti* for the Oberlin Conservatory of Music Opera Theater, *Serse* and *La finta giardiniera* for Oberlin in Italy, *The Crucible*, and *Falstaff* for Martina Arroyo's Role Preparation Program at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, *The Medium*, *Too Many Sopranos* and *The Crucible* for the Baldwin Wallace Conservatory of Music, and *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Dido & Aeneas*, and *Orpheus in The Underworld* for the Interlochen Opera Theater. He is currently the Executive Director of the Oberlin in Italy opera training program in Arezzo, Italy, movement and acting instructor for the Cornish American Song Institute, and stage director for the Hawaii Performing Arts Festival. Scott is the recently appointed Director of Opera Studies and Associate Professor for the Baldwin Wallace Conservatory of Music.

Lyric soprano, **Marian Vogel** (Susanna), is hailed as, “thrilling”, “surprisingly powerful”, and “bursting with dramatic intensity”. She has been recognized as a gifted performer both on the concert and the operatic stage. Ms. Vogel made her Carnegie Hall debut singing the soprano solos in the Mozart *Requiem* and Rutter's *Magnificat* under the baton of composer John Rutter. She has performed many leading operatic roles, including Cio-Cio San in *Madama Butterfly*, Mimi and Musetta in *La Bohème*, Tosca in *Tosca*, Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Donna Elivra in *Don Giovanni*, Pamina in *The Magic Flute*, Micaela in *Carmen*, Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel*, and Violetta in *La Traviata*, as well as many Gilbert & Sullivan heroines and musical theater roles. She will soon reprise her roles in The Cleveland Orchestra's groundbreaking production of *The Cunning Little Vixen* both at Severance Hall and in the European tour. Equally at home on the concert stage, Ms. Vogel has appeared in major works across the United States and in Europe. Among these are the *Requiems* of Verdi, Mozart, Brahms, and Faure, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, *Carmina Burana* by Orff, *The Seasons* by Haydn, Strauss's *Four Last Songs*, and Mozart's *Grand Mass in C Minor*, to name a few. Regarded as “resplendent both vocally and dramatically,” Ms. Vogel is a two-time first prize winner of the Metropolitan National Council District Auditions and the winner of the Belle O. Morse Young Artist Award. She is a graduate of the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.