

2021 Festival Season



falstaff



Glory DENIED

Music and Libretto by Tom Cipullo

Much Ado About

Shakespeare

Artistic Director's Welcome



Dear Friends,

What an absolute joy to be able to welcome you to Berkshire Opera Festival's sixth season! As we emerge from the darkness of the past 18 months, I can think of nothing more powerful than music to restore, fulfill, and exhilarate us.

With your help, we have emerged stronger than ever before, and with an expanded season. Tom Cipullo's *Glory Denied* is the inaugural production of our Second-Stage Series. This riveting story of America's longest-held prisoner of war is sure to touch and captivate you. Our free recital, "Much Ado About Shakespeare," shows the Bard's influence on the world of opera, and marks our first performance at The Mount. Finally, we wrap up this year's festival with our mainstage production of Verdi's *Falstaff*. An astonishing work of genius composed late in the life of a great master, *Falstaff* is undeniably a perfect comedy. As always, I present these to you with the internationally-renowned casts, outstanding ensembles, and high artistic standards you've come to expect from BOF.

Thank you so much for your continued support, and thank you for joining us tonight.

With open arms, I'm so happy to say: welcome back!

Brian Garman

Artistic Director and Co-Founder

Director of Production's Welcome



Hello Everyone,

I would like to extend my warmest and most heartfelt welcome to you for our 2021 summer season. After the last year and a half, our collective emotions are running high and there aren't words to express what we all must be feeling to be back together again in a theater, witnessing live opera and the unamplified human voice.

Last summer would have been our fifth anniversary season, which is a great milestone for any arts organization. Though we couldn't celebrate with you in person last year, the best way to celebrate BOF this year is by the sheer joy of bringing you live opera, thanks to the generosity of all of you, our great supporters.

I am thrilled that we are able to expand our programming this season to include a new Second-Stage Series, which will showcase new works, lesser-known works, American opera, baroque opera, and so much more. Additionally, we have two world-class guest stage directors tackling our productions this season. I so look forward to introducing the Berkshire audience to more great directors and their teams in the future.

I wish you all a wonderful summer full of live theater, music, and great health.

B

Jonathon Loy
Director of Production and Co-Founder

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Second-Stage July 21 & 23, 2022

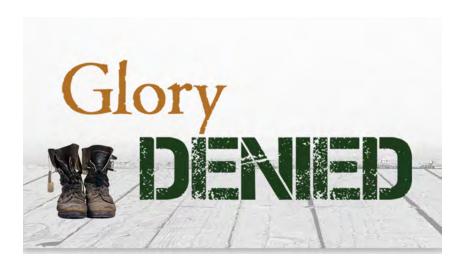
Three Decembers

Music by Jake Heggie * Libretto by Gene Scheer Based on an original play by Terrence McNally

Concert August 10, 2022

A Celebration of Music by Black Composers





Music and libretto by Tom Cipullo Based on the book by Tom Philpott

Thursday, July 22 at 7:30pm Saturday, July 24 at 1:00pm Bard College at Simon's Rock Daniel Arts Center, McConnell Theater Great Barrington, MA

CONDUCTOR
Geoffrey Larson

SCENIC DESIGNER

Cameron Anderson

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Tláloc López-Watermann

PRINCIPAL PIANIST AND COACH

Noah Palmer

DIRECTOR
Sarah Meyers

COSTUME DESIGNER
Charles Caine

HAIR AND MAKE-UP DESIGNER **Beckie Kravetz**

ENGLISH DICTION COACH

Lynn Baker

STAGE MANAGER
Cindy Knight

Opera in two acts Sung in English

Total performance time is approximately 1 hour, 20 minutes THIS PERFORMANCE WILL NOT HAVE AN INTERMISSION

Premiere: May 5, 2007, Brooklyn College Opera Theater, New York

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Clara F. Londoner



Cast

(in order of vocal appearance)

OLDER JIM **Daniel Belcher**

YOUNGER JIM

John Riesen

OLDER ALYCE
Caroline Worra

YOUNGER ALYCE
Maria Valdes

Synopsis

The action takes place during and after the Vietnam War.

Act I - In Captivity

Colonel Floyd James Thompson (Jim), America's longest-held prisoner of war, looks back on his years as a captive. He sees himself as a young man and recalls episodes from his nine-year ordeal – escape attempts, torture, the overwhelming loneliness of four years in solitary confinement, and being forced to sign a propaganda statement. Through it all, he finds the strength to survive in memories of his family. He recalls every letter his beloved wife, Alyce, sent to him before his capture. Pregnant with their fourth child, Alyce receives the news that Jim's surveillance plane has been shot down. Denied any reliable information about his status or whereabouts, Alyce soon begins a

relationship with another man, Harold. She eventually moves in with him and tells the children that their father has died. Alyce denies permission for Jim's name to be released to the public as missing in action, nor inscribed on one of the P.O.W. bracelets that were common at the time. She consults a lawyer in an effort to have him declared legally dead. In captivity, Jim finds comfort in the 23rd Psalm

Act II - Welcome Home

The P.O.W.'s are released and Jim returns home, but the Pentagon honors another man, a Navy pilot, as the longest-held prisoner. With the signing of the Paris Peace Accords, Jim receives a letter of welcome from President Nixon, the text noting ominously that "some things about America may appear to have changed" since his departure. Alyce meets Jim and confesses her new relationship. She offers to go away if that is what he wishes, but Jim decides to attempt a reconciliation. He notes how the nation has become different during his ordeal, and soon, the couple begins to fight. Jim complains that Alyce is not the wife he left behind. For her part, Alyce asserts her independence, refusing to be the docile and obedient wife. She tells of what her life was like during his absence, of the callous behavior of neighbors and family, of late-night crank calls from malicious strangers, and of her fear and loneliness. Jim visits the church where he and Alyce were married. He speaks to the congregation hopefully, ignoring the fact that his dream of home and family has been shattered.

Years pass and Jim, having suffered a stroke, lives alone and estranged from his family. He struggles with all that has occurred.

Composer's Note

by Tom Cipullo

Glory Denied may be the first opera adapted from an oral history. As such, it presents no linear narrative. Virtually all of the dialogue in the opera is taken literally from actual statements by the real people involved. On those few occasions where, for dramatic purposes, words have been changed or statements conflated, the composer has taken care not to alter the intent of the speaker.

Glory Denied has four singing roles. Jim and Alyce Thompson are each played by two singers. Thus, young Alyce presents the character as Jim remembers her from letters written long ago. Older Alyce is the person she has become since his capture. Likewise, the older Jim reflects back on his imprisonment while the younger represents his character during the ordeal. On occasion, the singers may assume the voices of other figures as well (i.e. Pentagon spokesman, Army General, Vietnamese guard, etc.).

In 2001, while in residence at the MacDowell Colony, I came across the New York Times review of Tom Philpott's *Glory Denied*. Immediately, I was intrigued. "Indeed, it is not too much to say," the review by Richard Bernstein stated, "that *Glory Denied*...encapsulate[s] something of the moral essence of the Vietnam War and the imperishable bitterness of the war's legacy."

For years, I had wanted to create a music drama that would address contemporary issues, one that would take ordinary people and place them in an extraordinary situation. This story, with all its suffering, heroism, selfishness, and dignity, struck me as completely and overwhelmingly operatic. Of course, crafting the libretto would present a huge number of challenges. How might I reflect the difference between Alyce and Jim's memories of her? I settled on having two singers play twin versions of the character. One would represent Jim's idealized vision, while the other would show what Alyce was actually doing and thinking while Jim was a prisoner. Two versions of Alyce led me to consider having Colonel Thompson portrayed by two singers. Young Jim would live through these events, while the older character would recall them from a distance. Perhaps the biggest challenge in writing the work was how to make Alyce a real, comprehensible, three-dimensional person. Some of her actions during Jim's ordeal were nothing short of shocking. Still, when Alyce sings, her music must be so beautiful and persuasive that people will say, "Yes, if I had been alone with four children - the last born the day my husband was captured – perhaps I could have done that too." I am no moral relativist. I believe strongly that behavior can be right or wrong. But my own memories of the time remind me that many good people did things they regret during the Vietnam era. It was as if there was a great madness in the land, and everyone, it seems, simply did the best they could.

Glory Denied is, above all, the story of an American family during one our nation's most turbulent eras. My hope is that those new to opera will find in the work's ensembles and arias a bridge to a fascinating, complex, and formative time for our country.

The opera *Glory Denied* is dedicated to my dear friend Steven Burke. Finally, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to Tom Philpott. His generosity of spirit is truly an inspiration.



Tom Cipullo

Much Ado About Shakespeare

Wednesday, August 11 at 6:00pm The Mount, Edith Wharton's Home Lenox. MA

SOPRANO

Jasmine Habersham

CONTRALTO
Alissa Anderson

TENOR

Jonas Hacker

BARITONE
Thomas Glass

PIANIST Christopher Koelzer

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"Perfidi! ... Pietà, rispetto, onore" from Macbeth

Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

Macbeth: Mr. Glass

"Ye gentle spirits of the air" from The Fairy-Queen

Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

Nymph: Ms. Habersham

"Vous soupirez, Madame ... Nuit paisible et sereine" from Béatrice et Bénédict

Hector Berlioz (1803-1869)

Héro: Ms. Habersham Ursule: Ms. Anderson

"Horch, die Lerche singt im Hain" from *Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor*Otto Nicolai (1810-1849)

Fenton: Mr. Hacker

Act 1 Ensemble from A Midsummer Night's Dream

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Helena: Ms. Habersham Hermia: Ms. Anderson Lysander: Mr. Hacker Demetrius: Mr. Glass

"O vin, dissipe la tristesse" from Hamlet

Ambroise Thomas (1811-1896)

Hamlet: Mr. Glass

"Ange adorable" from Roméo et Juliette

Charles Gounod (1818-1893)

Juliette: Ms. Habersham Roméo: Mr. Hacker

"Assisa a un piè d'un salice" from Otello

Gioacchino Rossini (1792-1868)

Desdemona: Ms. Anderson

"Brush Up Your Shakespeare" from Kiss Me, Kate

Cole Porter (1891-1964)

Two Gangsters: Mr. Hacker, Mr. Glass



Music by Giuseppe Verdi Libretto by Arrigo Boito

Saturday, August 21 at 1:00pm Tuesday, August 24 & Friday, August 27 at 7:30pm Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center, Great Barrington, MA

CONDUCTOR

Brian Garman

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LIGHTING DESIGNER
Alex Jainchill

CHORUS MASTER
AND ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR
Geoffrey Larson

MUSICAL PREPARATION Christopher Koelzer

DIRECTOR

Joshua Major

COSTUME DESIGNER
Charles Caine

HAIR AND MAKE-UP DESIGNER

Beckie Kravetz

PRINCIPAL PIANIST AND COACH

Nate Raskin

CHORUS REHEARSAL PIANIST

Noah Palmer

STAGE MANAGER
Cindy Knight

Comic opera in three acts

Sung in Italian with projected English translations

Total performance time is approximately 2 hours, 20 minutes

There will be one 25-minute intermission

Based on William Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Henry IV, Parts 1* and 2

Premiere: February 9, 1893, Teatro alla Scala, Milan, Italy

Projected English translations by Cori Ellison

Wigs provided by Steven Horak

Orchestral edition by Brian Higgins, by arrangement with Motet Music

Cast

(in order of vocal appearance)

DR. CAIUS **Lucas Levy**

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF **Sebastian Catana**

BARDOLFO

Max Jacob Zander

PISTOLA

Jeremy Harr

MRS. MEG PAGE Joanne Evans

MRS. ALICE FORD
Tamara Wilson

MRS. QUICKLY
Alissa Anderson

NANNETTA

Jasmine Habersham

FENTON

Jonas Hacker

FORD Thomas Glass

HOST OF THE GARTER INN **Brian Hailes**

Chorus of townspeople, servants, masqueraders

SEASON PRESENTING SPONSORS
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Synopsis

The action takes place in Windsor during the reign of Henry IV.

Act I

Sir John Falstaff is dining at the Garter Inn. Dr. Caius bursts in and accuses Falstaff of having broken into his house and beaten his servants. He further accuses Falstaff's two henchmen, Bardolfo and Pistola, of having gotten him drunk and robbing him. Falstaff, with mock solemnity, makes the decision that Caius's case is unfounded. Caius leaves in a fury. Falstaff tells Bardolfo and Pistola that he intends to repair his poor finances by seducing Alice Ford and Meg Page, two wives of wealthy Windsor residents. He orders the henchmen to bring love letters to the two women, but they refuse, saying it's against their honor. Falstaff gives the letters to a page and mocks Bardolfo and Pistola about their newfound "honor" before throwing them out (*L'onore! Ladri!*).

The letters have arrived at Ford's house, and Meg and Alice discover that the letters are identical except for the names. Alice's daughter Nannetta and Mrs. Quickly join them in a plan to trick Falstaff. Ford arrives with Bardolfo, Pistola, Dr. Caius, and Fenton. They besiege Ford with the tale of Falstaff's plan to seduce his wife. Ford vows to keep careful watch. Meanwhile, Nannetta (whose father wants her to marry the elderly Dr. Caius) steals a few moments with her true love, Fenton, to exchange kisses (Duet: *Labbra di foco*). The wives have perfected their plan, and Mrs. Quickly has agreed to be the messenger in arranging a rendezvous between Alice and Falstaff. Ford has devised his own plan and decides to visit Falstaff under an assumed name.

Act II

Bardolfo and Pistola rejoin Falstaff's service at the Garter Inn, pretending to be contrite. They present Mrs. Quickly, who delivers messages from both Alice and Meg (Duet: Reverenza!). Alice sends word that her husband is out each afternoon from 2:00 until 3:00. Meg, however, sends word that her husband is almost never away. Falstaff assures Quickly that the young women will not be disappointed, and she leaves. Ford arrives, and is introduced under the name "Fontana." He asks Falstaff's help in his seduction of Alice, and gives him a bag of gold as encouragement (Duet: C'è a Windsor una dama). Falstaff says that he himself has an appointment with Mrs. Ford within the hour and will arrange everything. He hurries off to get ready, while Ford remains behind to denounce the faithlessness of women (È sogno? O realtà?). Falstaff returns, dressed in his finest clothing, and the men leave after exchanging compliments.

Back at Ford's house, the wives are ready for Falstaff (Trio: *Gaie comare di Windsor*). Falstaff arrives and begins his courtship of Alice, boasting of his aristocratic youth as page to the Duke of Norfolk (*Quand'ero paggio*). Meg

soon interrupts, as planned, and says that Ford is coming home. Falstaff hides behind a screen and watches Ford storm in with Dr. Caius, Bardolfo, and Pistola. When the men scatter to search the house, the women squeeze Falstaff into a basket of dirty laundry. Ford returns and hears the loud smack of a kiss from behind a screen (Ensemble: Se t'agguanto!). Furious, he knocks down the screen, only to discover his daughter and Fenton, whom he has forbidden her to see. When the men leave again, Alice summons the servants and orders them to dump the laundry out the window into the River Thames.

Act III

Falstaff is back at the Garter Inn, wet and weary after his experience at Ford's house (*Ehi! Taverniere!*). Mrs. Quickly arrives with a letter from Alice, suggesting a midnight rendezvous, and Falstaff falls into the trap. He is to go to Windsor Park, disguised as the Black Huntsman, and wait for Alice at Herne's Oak. Alice, Nannetta, Meg, and Ford enter to discuss the details of their new prank against Falstaff. Ford also promises Dr. Caius that, when the fun is over, he can marry Nannetta.

Fenton arrives at Herne's Oak (Dal labbro il canto), and is reunited with Nannetta, who is disguised as the Fairy Queen. The young lovers leave as the clock strikes twelve and Falstaff enters to meet Alice. Falstaff begins his seduction, but is interrupted by Meg, who cries that the fairies are coming. Falstaff falls to the ground in terror and hides his face, since to see the fairies means death. Nannetta summons her followers, disquised as fairies, goblins, and witches (Sul fil d'un soffio etesio). They attack Falstaff, pinching and poking him until he promises to change his ways (Chorus: Ruzzola, ruzzola!). In the midst of the attack, Falstaff realizes he's been tricked. Nannetta and Fenton have changed some disguises, and Bardolfo is now dressed as the Fairy Queen, entering with Dr. Caius. Nannetta, now disguised as a nymph, enters with Fenton, who is masked. Ford unites the two couples in marriage and all unmask. To the horror of Caius, he is now married to Bardolfo. With everyone laughing at Ford's expense, he has no choice but to forgive Nannetta and Fenton and bless their union. All agree that the whole world is a joke, but he who laughs last, laughs best (Fugue: Tutto nel mondo è burla).

Program Notes

by Cori Ellison

There's literally nothing like *Falstaff*. Among the operas of Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901), it is preceded by over two dozen gloomy, tragic operas which sprang from and further developed the great Italian bel canto tradition of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Bellini's *Norma*. But *Falstaff*, Verdi's last opera and only his second comedy, has no real precedent in Italian, or any other kind of, opera. It inherits no tradition and doesn't really begin one.

Verdi had wanted to write comic opera for some forty years. But the existing prototypes of Italian comic opera---the cartoonish opere buffe of Rossini and the sentimental opere semiserie of Donizetti---were just not Verdi's style. He seemed to understand early on that he needed to write, in his own words, "a lyric comedy quite unlike any other".

Verdi had tried his hand at comedy once before Falstaff. His second opera, the comedy Un giorno di regno (1840), hastily written after the death of his young wife and two infant children, was perhaps his biggest flop, withdrawn after just one performance at La Scala. He was understandably gun-shy about comedy after that and typecast as a tragedian. As late as 1879, Rossini was quoted as declaring Verdi incapable of writing comic opera.

Yet, if we pay close attention, we can see Verdi subtly honing his comic chops all along. Think of the black humor of the murderer Sparafucile in Rigoletto; the spiteful belly-laughs of the two conspirators in Act II of Un ballo in maschera; and the clownish bluster of Friar Melitone in Act III of La forza del destino.

But how did he get from there to Falstaff? Verdi had decided to retire at age 58, after Aida (1871). And why not? He was rich, famous, accomplished, sick of the theatrical rat race, and discouraged about the singer-centric Italian operatic style losing ground to the orchestrally-driven music dramas of Wagner, his exact contemporary. Verdi retreated to his villa Sant' Agata, near his hometown of Bussetto, to be a gentleman farmer, along with his second wife, retired soprano Giuseppina Strepponi, and a menagerie of animals. It was not until 1884 that a cabal led by his wife, his publisher Giulio Ricordi, and the young composer-librettist Arrigo Boito managed to coax Verdi out of a 13-year retirement. The irresistible temptation was a libretto based on Othello by Shakespeare, Verdi's idol; the result was Otello (1887), Verdi's greatest opera to date. Now the 74-year-old composer could surely retire.

But no, not according to Boito: "I would like to make that bronze colossus resound one more time". In 1889, Boito tempted Verdi with another Shakespearean libretto, pouring it on thick: "I don't think that writing a comedy should tire you out....The jokes and laughter of comedy exhilarate mind and body....There's only one way to finish better than with Otello and that's to finish triumphantly with Falstaff. After having sounded all the shrieks and groans of the human heart, to finish with a mighty burst of laughter---that is to astonish the world." Boito had made Verdi an offer he couldn't refuse. "Amen, so be it!," wrote the composer. "We'll write this Falstaff, then! We won't think for the moment of obstacles or age or illness....What a joy!" Boito's libretto for Falstaff was based on The Merry Wives of Windsor, possibly Shakespeare's messiest, least focused play, hurriedly written to please Elizabeth I, who had so enjoyed the character Falstaff in Henry IV, Part

2, that she ordered Shakespeare to write a play about "the fat knight in love". Boito bolstered the rickety play with excerpts from *Henry IV, Parts 1* and 2, and *Henry V*, as well as material of his own. He rearranged and both added to and streamlined Shakespeare, focusing the plot on Falstaff's two major come-uppances, the basket scene in Act II and the forest scene in Act III. The result of this heavy tampering is one of most genuinely Shakespearean of opera librettos. If in *Otello* Verdi and Boito had equaled Shakespeare, in *Falstaff* they surpassed him.

Verdi worked on Falstaff from 1890 to 1892. Rehearsals began in Milan on January 4, 1893, with Verdi supervising a handpicked cast and revising as they rehearsed. Soprano Adelina Patti, observing a rehearsal, called Verdi "such a wonderful man, 80 years of age and only looks 60...as jolly and gay as a lad".

The premiere, at La Scala on February 9, 1893, was, predictably, a hot ticket and a success. Yet the startlingly original *Falstaff* baffled critics, who claimed to hear in it traces of Scarlatti, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Rossini, and even Wagner. What they actually heard was none of those things; it was a new Verdi.

"The music isn't difficult,' claimed Verdi, "but it must be sung differently from modern comic operas and the old opere buffe. I wouldn't want it sung like, for instance, *Carmen*, nor even like *Don Pasquale*....It's a study all on its own...." Boito countered, "[It] is very difficult; and it must appear very, very easy."

Like Otello, Falstaff has no overture or prelude, plunging us immediately into the action. From there, the whole opera is pure propulsion, cast in "real time" as opposed to slowed-down "opera time", until the final scene. It teems with musical ideas, with precious few repeats of music or text. In Falstaff Verdi rejects predictable formulas---arias, cabalettas, schematic ensembles--crafting instead a seamless chain of dramatic moments perfectly balanced between the declamatory and the lyrical, the vocal and the instrumental.

In Falstaff, the orchestra figures more importantly than in any previous Verdi opera, providing both a vast, vibrant backdrop and a wealth of pictorial and dramatic detail. Yet, deploying the busy orchestra with masterful economy, Verdi never lets it dominate the voices. It's as if he's saying, "So there, Wagner!"

But Falstaff is still an Italian opera through and through. Its prevailing speech-like vocal textures blossom now and again into tiny ariosi, songs, monologues, and ensembles. And each character speaks his own special musical language. Falstaff's Act I monologue, "L'onore! Ladri!" is cast in "overstuffed" 14-syllable lines of verse, and his comic compatriots, Dame Quickly, Bardolfo, Pistola, and Dr. Caius, are also drawn with Hirschfeld-like economy and precision.

In Alice Ford, Verdi created a new kind of prima donna, with no grand entrance or show-stopping aria, but nevertheless dominating the action; as Verdi put it, "It's she who stirs the polenta". In Act II, Sc. 1, he gives her doubtless the shortest aria ever given a diva, "Gaie comari di Windsor", in which the exaggerated romantic ninths and suspensions roundly spoof 19thcentury Italian Romantic opera.

Alice's husband Ford stands apart from the rest, speaking the musical language of the operatic tragedy which was for so long Verdi's home ground. Venting his anger and jealousy in his monologue in Act II, Sc. 1, he seems to be cousin to Otello.

Ironically, the two youngest characters are the most old-fashioned: Nannetta and Fenton, Verdi's most poetic pair of young lovers, sing extended lyrical lines, an old man's idealized memory of luminous young love. Their meetings are stolen moments, mini-duets which provide idyllic refuge from the opera's madcap intrigues. Wrote Boito, "I would like as one sprinkles sugar on a tart to sprinkle the whole comedy with that happy love without concentrating it at any one point."

In Act III, Verdi seems to be bidding a deliberate farewell to opera. After the relentless rush of events and musical ideas in the first two acts, the final scene is a nocturnal masque that slows to a measured pace, beginning with two stylized set pieces: Fenton's short aria, in strict sonnet form (derived from Shakespeare's Sonnets 8 and 128) and Nannetta's sublime, diaphanously scored, strophic nocturne.

This ethereal mood is abruptly shattered when Falstaff, awaiting a tryst, is tormented and terrified by all of Windsor. No spoilers here, but let's just say that all ends happily, as it must in a comedy. And please don't fail to notice that the men are outwitted, while the Merry Wives triumph.

Verdi draws Falstaff, and his operatic career, to a brilliant and unique close. After gracing us with 28 mighty tragedies, the 80-year-old composer's last words to us are: "Tutto nel mondo è burla. L'uom è nato burlone." ("Everything in the world is a joke. Man is born a jester.") To seal his most forward-looking opera, he reaches back to the distant past, the Baroque era, bidding adieu with a dazzling fugue, virtually unheard of in opera. Its virtuosic interweaving of equal parts---the perfect way to illustrate reconciliation, equality, and the restoration of order---encrypts Verdi's valedictory message: tolerance, understanding, and a sense of humor. None of us, not even the great Verdi, can afford to take ourselves too seriously.

Biographies

Hailed for her "deliciously over the top" and "powerful mezzo" by Opera News, **Alissa Anderson** (Mrs. Quickly, *Falstaff*) wields her comic prowess, striking features, and her powerful vocalism to great acclaim. She achieved considerable success when she stepped in as Florence Pike in The Santa Fe Opera's *Albert Herring* conducted by Sir Andrew Davis. The 2019-20 season saw her debut with Opera Philadelphia as Princess Clarissa in Prokofiev's *The Love for Three Oranges*, Mrs. Lovett in *Sweeney Todd*



with Royal Danish Opera, and Madame de la Haltière in Massenet's Cendrillon at Opera Birmingham, which was cancelled due to the pandemic. The 2018-19 season included Ms. Anderson's return to San Diego Opera as Maddalena in Rigoletto, her debut with Opera San Antonio as Marthe in Faust, and both Marcellina in Le Nozze di Figaro and Mrs. Andrews/The Bird Woman in Mary Poppins at Utah Festival Opera. Additional highlights include The Witch in Into the Woods with Utah Festival Opera, Frugola/La Zia Principessa in Puccini's Il Trittico with Opera Delaware, and Tisbe in La Cenerentola with San Diego Opera. Future seasons bring Erda in Das Rheingold with Opera Santa Barbara, Marcellina in Le Nozze di Figaro with Austin Opera, and performances with Angers-Nantes Opera and Opera Philadelphia.

GRAMMY-winning baritone **Daniel Belcher** (Older Thompson, *Glory Denied*) has performed in many of the world's music capitals, including Paris, London, New York, San Francisco, Berlin, Stuttgart, Amsterdam, Geneva, Madrid, Toronto, Montreal, Tokyo, Seoul, and Houston. With a repertoire of over 80 roles, he recently created the roles of Inspector Kildare in Puts and Campbell's *Elizabeth Cree* at Opera Philadelphia, James Addison III in Gordon and Vavrek's *The House Without a Christmas Tree* at



Houston Grand Opera (released on the Pentatone label), Lord Bellingham in Laitman's *The Scarlet Letter* at Opera Colorado (released on the Naxos label), Brian Castner in Beck's *The Long Walk* with Opera Saratoga, and Robert Kennedy in de Raaff's *Waiting for Miss Monroe* for his debut at The Netherlands Opera and Holland Festival. Other world premiere roles include John Brooke in Adamo's *Little Women*, Andy Warhol in Daugherty's *Jackie O*, and multiple roles in Machover's *Resurrection*, all with Houston Grand Opera. Recent highlights include his debut with On Site Opera as Melchior in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, Ponchel in *Silent Night* at Utah Opera, William in Boston Lyric Opera's digital version of Glass's *The Fall of the House of Usher*, and Max Detweiler in *The Sound of Music* with Houston Grand Opera.

Mr. Belcher's engagement is sponsored by Theresa Cerezola.

Romanian-born baritone **Sebastian Catana** (Sir John Falstaff) has built an outstanding name in the opera world as an interpreter of Verdi baritone roles. Mr. Catana has performed with The Metropolitan Opera, Rome Opera, Arena di Verona, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Philadelphia Opera, Israeli Opera, Oper Stuttgart, Opéra National de Paris, Teatro Massimo Palermo, Teatro Leipzig Oper, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Teatro Verdi Trieste, Teatro Municipal Santiago,

Opéra de Lyon, Teatro Regio di Torino, Royal Danish Opera, Munich Radio Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh Opera, Opéra de Lausanne, and Teatro Lirico di Cagliari, among many others. His roles include the title roles in Nabucco, Macbeth, and Rigoletto, Scarpia in Tosca, di Luna in Il Trovatore, Diomede in Rossi's Cleopatra, Miller in Luisa Miller, Ezio in Verdi's Attila, Germont in La Traviata, Alfio in Cavalleria Rusticana, Seid in Verdi's II Corsaro, Don Carlo in Ernani, and Ford in Falstaff.



Other recent and upcoming engagements include Amonasro in Aida at the Arena di Verona, the title role in Rigoletto at Rome Opera and Northern Ireland Opera, Germont in La Traviata at Rome Opera and Teatro Municipal de Santiago, Barnaba in La Gioconda at Teatro Municipale di Piacenza, Giovanni in Tutino's La Ciociara at Teatro Lirico di Cagliari, and Scarpia in Tosca at Teatro la Fenice and Israeli Opera.

Mr. Catana's engagement is sponsored by Clara F. Londoner.

Hailed as "a singer to watch" (Classical Voice America), London-born mezzo-soprano Joanne Evans (Mrs. Meg Page, Falstaff) prides herself on her versatility in spanning various musical genres, and on her comic timing. Ms. Evans recently made her solo operatic debut in the role of Cherubino in Mercadante's I Due Figaro at the Manhattan School of Music, of which City Journal wrote, "From the moment that Evans stepped onstage ... one recognized the presence of a star." Professional credits



include a six-month North American tour with a cappella group Gobsmacked, along with performances in Hong Kong, Edinburgh, and London. She made her professional acting debut as Charlie/The Singer in the UK regional premiere of Laura Wade's Posh. She also has performed with Opera Holland Park and Third Hand - The Puppet Opera Company. A graduate of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, Ms. Levy is beginning her second year in the Graduate Vocal Arts Program at Bard College Conservatory. She will perform the role of Madame Flora in Menotti's The Medium this semester, as well as a concert version of György Kurtág's "Kafka Fragments."

Baritone Thomas Glass (Ford, Falstaff) is a Grand Prize winner of the 2019 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and a recent alumnus of the Houston Grand Opera Studio. In the 2020-21 season, he returns to Minnesota Opera as the Vicar in Albert Herring, and returns to Wolf Trap Opera for a production of Sweeney Todd before his performances with Berkshire Opera Festival. Previously scheduled engagements include his debut at the Metropolitan Opera as Moralès in Carmen, as well



as a return to Arizona Opera as Stanley Kowalski in André Previn's A Streetcar Named Desire. In concert, he rejoins Minnesota Opera for a performance featuring holiday-themed repertoire. Highlights of recent seasons include house and role debuts at Atlanta Opera as Dandini in La Cenerentola and at Arizona Opera as John Lassiter in Craig Bohmler's Riders of the Purple Sage, as well as role debuts at Houston Grand Opera as Marcello in La Bohème and the title role in Il Barbiere di Siviglia. Born in Edina, Minnesota, Mr. Glass earned his Master of Music in Vocal Performance from the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University and completed his undergraduate studies at the University of St. Thomas in Saint Paul, Minnesota.

American soprano **Jasmine Habersham** (Nannetta, *Falstaff*) received her bachelor's degree in Vocal Performance at Shorter College and her master's degree and Artist Diploma from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. She has performed in numerous concerts, and is well versed as a crossover artist in opera and musical theater. Her 2019-20 season included performances of Adina in *L'elisir d'amore* at the Phoenicia International Festival of the Voice, while performances of



Sarah Ruth in Prestini's Edward Tulane with Minnesota Opera and Frasquita in Carmen at Gran Teatre del Liceu were postponed due to the pandemic. Her 2018-19 season included Pip in Heggie's Moby Dick with Opera San Jose, Katie Jackson in Puckett's The Fix with Minnesota Opera, and Clara in Porgy and Bess with the Baltimore Symphony. An avid performer of new works, Ms. Habersham has premiered the role of Mariola in Heggie's Out of Darkness: Two Remain with Atlanta Opera. She has appeared as Pip in Moby Dick with Utah Opera, Pamina in The Magic Flute with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis: Opera on the Go, Papagena in Die Zauberflöte at Cincinnati Opera and Glimmerglass Festival, Esther in Gordon's Intimate Apparel with Cincinnati Opera Fusion, and Clara in Porgy and Bess with Utah Festival Opera.

Tenor **Jonas Hacker** (Fenton, *Falstaff*) regularly receives high praise for his "attractive tenor voice" and his ability to convincingly portray characters across genres from Mozart to Glass. Mr. Hacker hails from Lake Delton, Wisconsin and completed his studies at the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia. He received his master's degree in Voice Performance from the University of Michigan–Ann Arbor and his bachelor's degree in



Voice Performance from the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire. In the 2019-20 season, he made his Arizona Opera debut reprising the role of Timothy Laughlin in Gregory Spears's Fellow Travelers and returned to Washington Concert Opera to sing Laertes in Ambroise Thomas's rarely-performed operatic version of Hamlet. Concert appearances include his Canadian debut with the Orchestre Métropolitain as the tenor soloist in Mozart's Great Mass in C Minor under the baton of Maestro Yannick Nézet-Séguin and Bach's Mass in B Minor with Jane Glover and Music of the Baroque, and again with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Nézet-Séguin. In April, Mr. Hacker was scheduled to make his European debut with the Theater St. Gallen singing the Boy/Young King in George Benjamin's opera Lessons in Love and Violence.

Bass **Jeremy Harr** (Pistola, *Falstaff*) has been described as "astounding" and praised for his "resonance, power, and assurance." In the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, he won the Washington, DC District and placed third in the Mid-Atlantic Regional Finals. Most recently, Mr. Harr was a 2020-21 Resident Artist at Pittsburgh Opera, where he performed Cadmus/Somnus in Handel's *Semele* and Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte*. Mr. Harr will return to Pittsburgh Opera in the



fall to perform several roles in the 2021-22 season. Additional engagements this season included his debut with Opera NexGen as Don Alfonso and his return to Wolf Trap Opera to cover Death in Holst's Savitri and Judge Turpin in Sweeney Todd. Past role highlights include the title role in Le Nozze di Figaro, Dulcamara in L'elisir d'amore, Basilio in Il Barbiere di Siviglia, Frank Maurrant in Weill's Street Scene, Gremin in Eugene Onegin, and Collatinus in Britten's The Rape of Lucretia. Mr. Harr is an alumnus of the Wolf Trap Opera, Opera Saratoga, and Miami Classical Music Festival young artist programs, and is a graduate of Oberlin Conservatory and the University of Maryland Opera Studio, where he studied with Kevin Short.

Tenor **Lucas Levy** (Dr. Caius, *Falstaff*) is gaining recognition for bringing "operatic power" (Tampa Bay Times) to his portrayals, for his "suave and dark" voice (La Scena Musicale), and for being "a joy to watch" (Broadway World). The 2020-21 season began with a debut at Opera Company of Middlebury, while upcoming seasons include his debut with Maryland Lyric Opera. The 2019-20 season saw Mr. Levy in an immersive production of *Rigoletto*



at infamous New York City nightclub The Box. The 2018-19 season featured his return to St. Petersburg Opera as Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi*, and to Opera Maine for their 25th anniversary season as Monostatos in *Die Zauberflöte*, for which Opera News noted his "vocally forward and strong" performance. He was also seen in performances of Haydn's *The Creation*, Schubert's *Mass in G Major*, and Mozart's *Requiem*. Recent performance highlights include *Falstaff* with Opera Omaha, *La Traviata* and *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* with St. Petersburg Opera, and *Otello* with LoftOpera. An alumnus of the young artist programs of Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Sarasota Opera, and Opera Maine, he received his Bachelor of Music degree from Oberlin Conservatory, and his Master of Music degree from Westminster Choir College.

Tenor **John Riesen**'s (Younger Thompson, *Glory Denied*) career includes significant work in opera, musical theater, and concert. Recent highlights include his professional debut as Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette* as a guest artist with the Janiec Opera Company, his Michigan Opera Theater debut as Pirelli in *Sweeney Todd*, Younger Thompson in *Glory Denied* with UrbanArias, Opera Birmingham, and Des Moines Metro Opera, Bill Calhoun



in Kiss Me, Kate with Intermountain Opera Bozeman, and Ralph Rackstraw in HMS Pinafore with Pensacola Opera. He has also appeared as Prince Charming in Massenet's Cendrillon with Opera Company of Middlebury, Lensky in Eugene Onegin with Intermountain Opera Bozeman, Alfredo in La Traviata with the Pacific Symphony and Gulfshore Opera, the title role in Candide with Chautauqua Opera, and his Lincoln Center debut as Tony in West Side Story Suite with the New York City Ballet. Mr. Riesen has sung for political figures including President Barack Obama, President Jimmy Carter, and Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. He has released two studio recording albums that have reached over 500,000 streams on Spotify and Apple Music. He has also collaborated with Emmy-nominated pianist Marina Arsenijevic in both video performance during COVID-19 and in studio recordings to be released in 2021. Mr. Riesen's engagement is sponsored by Thomas M. Fynan, MD and William

F. Loutrel.

American soprano **Maria Valdes** (Younger Alyce, *Glory Denied*) was described as a "first-rate singing actress and a perfectly charming Gilda" by The New York Times. During the 2020-21 season, Ms. Valdes was slated to return to Houston Grand Opera to sing Amy in the world premiere of Joel Thompson's *The Snowy Day*, and to make her Hawaii Opera Theater debut as Euridice in Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld*. In 2021, Ms.



Valdes sang the role of Younger Alyce in *Glory Denied* at Atlanta Opera, joined NYFOS@Home for their "It's Summer in South America" recital, covered the role of Lucy in Weill's *The Threepenny Opera* for Atlanta Opera, and joined the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra for their series of short films called "In the Key of Bach." Highlights of her 2018-19 season included a debut with Atlanta Opera as Doris Parker in Charlie Parker's Yardbird, a company debut with Washington Concert Opera, and a return to the Phoenix Symphony for Handel's Messiah. Ms. Valdes also made her company and role debut as Violetta in La Traviata at Gulfshore Opera, her Rochester Philharmonic debut reprising the role of Despina in Così fan tutte, and debuted with West Edge Opera as Euridice in Gluck's Orfeo ed Euridice.

Ms. Valdes's engagement is sponsored by Lester and Ilene Bliwise.

Soprano **Tamara Wilson** (Mrs. Alice Ford, *Falstaff*) continues to garner international recognition for her interpretations of Verdi, Mozart, Strauss, and Wagner, and is a recipient of the prestigious Richard Tucker Award. Other recent honors include an Olivier Award nomination and Grand Prize in the annual Francisco Viñas Competition held in Barcelona, Spain. Opera and orchestra credits include Houston Grand Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Lyric Opera of Chicago, The Metropolitan Opera, Los Angeles



Opera, Washington National Opera, English National Opera, Teatro alla Scala, Oper Frankfurt, Opernhaus Zürich, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Opera Australia, Théâtre du Capitole, Arena di Verona, Gran Teatre del Liceu, Bayerische Staatsoper, The Cleveland Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, BBC Proms, Swedish Radio Orchestra, Concertgebouw Orchestra, Netherlands Radio Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony, Milwaukee Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra, and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. Additionally, she has appeared with some of the foremost conductors of her time, such as Christoph von Dohnanyi, Sebastian Weigle, Seiji Ozawa, Fabio Luisi, Patrick Summers, Carlo Rizzi, Marin Alsop, Marco Armiliato, Valery Gergiev, Daniel Oren, Harry Bicket, James Conlon, Edo de Waart, Franz Welser-Möst, and Leonard Slatkin. Upcoming engagements include debuts with Teatro La Fenice and The Santa Fe Opera, and returns to Houston Grand Opera, Bayerische Staatsoper, and The Cleveland Orchestra. *Ms. Wilson's engagement is sponsored by William Briggs and Donald Usher.*

Soprano **Caroline Worra** (Older Alyce, *Glory Denied*) has been hailed by Opera News as "one of the finest singing actresses around," and has sung over 90 roles in over 70 different operas. Her live recording of Jenny in Bennett's *The Mines of Sulphur* received a GRAMMY nomination, and her other live recordings, including Hartke's *The Greater Good*, or the *Passion of Boule de Suif, Faccio's Amleto*, and *Glory Denied*, were on the Best CDs of the Year lists from Opera News, The New York Times, and The Washington Post. In 2019,

her recording of Richards's "44 Ambitions for Soprano and Piano" was released, and this year, she records Sankaram's The Emperor and the Queen. Ms. Worra has worked with over 80 different opera companies, including The Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Boston Lyric Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, Fort Worth Opera, Dallas Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, and New York City Opera. Overseas, she has sung Anne Trulove in The Rake's Progress at Teatro Massimo Bellini in Catania, Jenny



in *The Mines of Sulphur* at Wexford Festival Opera (winner of The Best Opera of Ireland Award), Violetta in *La Traviata* with ECAI in Brasilia, and the title role in *The Merry Widow* with Musica Viva in Hong Kong.

Ms. Worra's engagement is sponsored by John K. O'Brien and Jamie Lehrer.

The "athletically comic" and "strong-voiced" tenor **Max Jacob Zander** (Bardolfo, *Falstaff*) is a native of Great Neck, NY. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, he was scheduled to sing the Witch in *Hansel and Gretel* with City Lyric Opera, Enoch Snow in *Carousel* with Cedar Rapids Opera Theatre, and cover Father Grenville in *Dead Man Walking* at Opera Idaho. Performances during the pandemic included a live-streamed recital for Hub City Opera,



"Songs of Isolation and Connection" with Cedar Rapids Opera Theatre, Gherardo in Gianni Schicchi and Dr. Caius in Falstaff with Social Distance Opera, and the Witch in Hansel and Gretel with Bel Cantanti Opera. Recent highlights include Bardolfo in Falstaff with Sir Bryn Terfel and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Pong in Turandot with Cedar Rapids Opera Theatre, Guillot de Morfontaine in Manon with Opera Idaho, Kaspar in Amahl and the Night Visitors with Opéra Louisiane, Don Issachar and Cacambo cover in Candide with Des Moines Metro Opera, Dr. Caius in Falstaff with Opera Saratoga, Remendado in Carmen with the Indianapolis Symphony, and Harry in La Fanciulla del West with Apotheosis Opera. Mr. Zander holds bachelor's and master's degrees in Vocal Performance from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music.

Maestro **Brian Garman** (Conductor, *Falstaff*) is the Artistic Director and Co-Founder of Berkshire Opera Festival, having conducted their inaugural production of *Madama Butterfly* in 2016, and every subsequent mainstage production. He also joined the Crested Butte Music Festival in 2018 as the new Music Director of Opera, leading a production of *Falstaff*. Prior to this, he opened Seattle Opera's season conducting *La Traviata*, and the preceding fall was appointed the inaugural Music



Director of the Seattle Opera Young Artists Program. He was previously on the conducting roster at New York City Opera and concurrently led runs of Verdi's *Un Giorno di Regno* and Chabrier's *L'Étoile* at Wolf Trap Opera Company. Maestro Garman was the Resident Conductor at Pittsburgh Opera for ten years, leading several productions to unanimous critical acclaim. Additionally, he was at the helm for numerous performances as Music Director of the Pittsburgh Opera Center. On the senior music staff of The Santa Fe Opera for six years, he was an associate conductor and assisted in the musical preparation of dozens of operas. As a pianist and coach, Maestro Garman is sought after

by numerous singers of renown, and has been called upon frequently to give recitals and master classes around the United States and Europe.

Geoffrey Larson (Conductor, *Glory Denied*) is the founding Music Director of the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber Orchestra. At home in both the symphonic and operatic repertoire, he serves as Chorus Master and Assistant Conductor of Berkshire Opera Festival, where Opera News has praised his "precise choral work." He has collaborated with artists such as baritone Sherrill Milnes, violinist Michael Jinsoo Lim, and pianist Kevin Murphy. From performing with the hit Seattle rapper Wanz to conducting



music of Vivaldi and Mason Bates in a two-story nightclub, Mo. Larson's adventurous projects have explored the storytelling power, rich variety, and universal relevance of orchestral and operatic music. Passionate about the music of our time, he has given the premieres of numerous works and has worked closely with composers such as Gabriel Prokofiev, Erberk Eryılmaz, Reena Esmail, and Leonardo Balada. His recording with the Carnegie Mellon Contemporary Ensemble appears on the Naxos label. He is currently completing a doctoral thesis at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music under the mentorship of Arthur Fagen, Thomas Wilkins, and Walter Huff, where he is Assistant Conductor of IU Opera and Ballet Theatre. He additionally counts Robert Page, David Neely, and George Hurst among his teachers in conducting.

Toronto-born **Joshua Major** (Stage Director, *Falstaff*) began his opera stage directing career at the age of 23 with *La Cenerentola* for Opera Omaha. Soon after, he worked as an assistant at the Welsh National Opera, to Rhoda Levine at Juilliard, and to Cynthia Auerbach at Chautauqua Opera and New York City Opera. He has worked as a stage director throughout the United States and Canada, developing a diverse repertoire of productions including Argento's *Postcard from Morocco*, Leoncavallo's



La Bohème, Donizetti's L'assedio di Calais, Massenet's Cendrillon, Gluck's Armide and Ezio, Vaughan Williams's Sir John in Love, Roméo et Juliette, Gianni Schicchi, Menotti's The Medium, Verdi's Un Giorno di Regno, Lucia di Lammermoor, Britten's The Turn of the Screw, Poulenc's Les Mamelles de Tirésias, and the North American premiere of Rossini's La Gazzetta. Mr. Major has worked for numerous companies including Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Wolf Trap Opera, Central City Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, Cape Town Opera, and Odyssey Opera. In August 2012, he became Chair of Opera Studies at New England Conservatory after 20 years on the faculty of the University of Michigan. From 2003-14, he was the Artistic Director of the Pine Mountain Music Festival, where he produced over 300 concerts of opera, symphony, and chamber music.

Sarah Meyers (Stage Director, *Glory Denied*) is a stage director, scholar, and author based in NY whose work has received acclaim whether seen on the grand stage of the Metropolitan Opera or in more intimate and unexpected locations. In 2018, she directed the premiere of Gregg Kallor's *Dramatic Sketches from Frankenstein* in the catacombs at Green-Wood Cemetery, which was declared one of WQXR's standout performances of 2018. This collaboration with Kallor built upon their previous success with his monodrama *The Tell-Tale Heart*, which

took place in a crypt. In 2016, Ms. Meyers began working with Lesley Karsten and Stephen Wadsworth on That's Not Tango, a monodrama about Astor Piazzolla, and directed the performances for Jazz at Lincoln Center in 2019. Additional highlights include the world premiere of Ueno's Gallo, and Britten's Noye's Fludde for the Music School of Lighthouse International and Arts at the Park. Ms. Meyers is also the author of a new translation and adaptation of Die Fledermaus, most recently performed by



MassOpera. She has been a member of the directing staff at the Metropolitan Opera since 2006, and holds a PhD in Theatre from Columbia University. Upcoming engagements include a staged cinematic concert of Die Walküre for New Orleans Opera, and performances of *That's Not Tango* in Amarillo.

Cameron Anderson (Scenic Designer, Glory Denied) is an internationally-acclaimed scenic and projection designer, and has designed extensively at the world's leading theatre and opera companies. Recent projects include Byhalia Mississippi (Kennedy Center); The Niceties (Manhattan Theatre Club, Mc-Carter Theatre Center, The Huntington, and Geffen Playhouse); Yerma, Becoming Cuba, and Sweat (Huntington Theater); La



Fille du Régiment, The Consul, Vinkensport, and The Merry Widow (Opera Saratoga); Photograph 51 (South Coast Repertory); Madama Butterfly (Pacific Symphony): West Side Story (Kilden Performing Arts Center, Norway and Vancouver Opera); and Simon Boccanegra (Teatro Colón). Select opera credits include Glimmerglass Festival, San Francisco Opera, Seattle Opera, Central City Opera, Minnesota Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Wolf Trap Opera, Manhattan School of Music, Opera Boston, Pittsburgh Opera, Indiana University Opera, and New England Conservatory. Select Off-Broadway credits include Roundabout Theatre Company, Playwrights' Horizons, LAByrinth Theater Company, Naked Angels, Ars Nova, and Brooklyn Academy of Music. Her upcoming projects include Emmeline (Tulsa Opera), the world premiere of A Torrent of Light (Tapestry Opera and PuSh Festival/Vancouver Opera), and the world premiere of The Leopard (South Miami Dade Cultural Center). Ms. Anderson is an Associate Professor of Theatre Arts at Brandeis University.

Lynn Baker (English Diction Coach, Glory Denied) is a vocal coach, English diction specialist, and collaborative pianist. She is the vocal coach and casting consultant for New York City Ballet as well as English diction coach and adjunct faculty at The New School. Since 2017, she has been the English diction coach for multiple operatic productions at Opera Philadelphia and the Curtis Institute of Music. She was Artistic Director of Crested Butte Opera Studio from 2012-18 and was an assistant



conductor and English diction coach at New York City Opera until its closing in 2013. Other coaching and performing credits include the Philadelphia Orchestra, Seattle Opera, Atlanta Opera, Washington National Opera, Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, Bard SummerScape Festival, Spoleto Festival USA, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and the Juilliard Opera Center. Ms. Baker is a frequent vocal recital pianist and an avid performer of contemporary opera and art song.

Charles R. Caine (Costume Designer) brings his enormous talent and experience to our stages again this season, having designed for all Berkshire Opera Festival productions. He started his illustrious career as resident costume designer at the Metropolitan Opera. He was responsible for the look of every artist appearing on the Met stage, and worked with such luminaries as Tyrone Guthrie, Franco Zeffirelli, Jean-Pierre Ponnelle, and



Cecil Beaton. For the acclaimed Marc Chagall production of *Die Zauberflöte*, he worked in a Met studio hand-painting each costume alongside Chagall himself. Mr. Caine designed a Luisa Miller production that appeared on PBS's *Live from Lincoln Center* starring Placido Domingo, Renata Scotto, and Sherrill Milnes. After 17 seasons at the Met, he designed for several other companies including Florida Grand Opera, Dallas Opera, Connecticut Opera, Opera Pacific, Palm Beach Opera, Seattle Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, and Michigan Opera Theatre. He has also designed for Martina Arroyo's *Prelude to Performance* program. His body of work has been featured in the Berkshire publication The Artful Mind, and he still presents lectures and displays showing his work from the Met and other venues.

Stephen Dobay (Scenic Designer, *Falstaff*), born and raised in Puerto Rico, received his BA from Williams College and his MFA from the University of Washington. Mr. Dobay returns to Berkshire Opera Festival after working on *Beauty and the Beast* (North Shore Music Theatre), *Come Back, Little Sheba* (Huntington), *Our Town* (Huntington, Almeida Theatre London, Broad Stage, Kansas City Rep), *God of Carnage*, and *Miracle on 34th Street* (John Engeman theatre). His opera credits include *Han-*



sel und Gretel directed by Jonathon Loy (Opera Fairbanks), Verdi's Un Giorno di Regno, Mascagni's Zanetto and L'Amico Fritz, World-Ferrari's Il Segreto di susanna, Vaughan Williams's Sir John in Love, Walton's The Bear, Sullivan's The Zoo (Odyssey opera), L'elisir d'amore, L'Italiana in Algeri, Don Pasquale, Donizetti's Il Campanello, Nicolai's Die lustigen Weier von Windsor, Flotow's Martha (Boston Midsummer Opera), Die Entfuhrung aus dem Serail, Pagliacci (Opera Columbus), Agrippina (New England Conservatory), and The Play of Daniel (The Cloisters).

Alex Jainchill (Lighting Designer, Falstaff) has served as associate lighting designer for Significant Other and Old Times on Broadway. His Off-Broadway and regional credits include A Raisin in the Sun (Williamstown Theatre Festival), BLKS (MCC), Black Super Hero Magic Mama (Geffen Playhouse), The Wiz (Theatre Under The Stars), Mankind (Playwrights Horizons), MacBeth (Denver Center for Performing Arts), Campfire (Lincoln Center Education), Uni/Son (Oregon Shakespeare Festi-



val), Blossom (Dixon Place), Crude (Ars Nova/Black Lab), All We Have Left (La Mama ETC), and Five Guys Named Moe (Arena Stage/Cleveland Playhouse). He was the associate lighting designer for the world premiere of Dear Evan Hansen. Mr. Jainchill's upcoming projects include All Hallows Eve (Connelly Theater) and Gun and Powder (Signature Theatre, DC).

GRAMMY-nominated pianist Christopher Koelzer (Associate Pianist, Falstaff) hails from the San Francisco Bay Area and performs and coaches regularly in the New York City and Washington, DC metropolitan areas. He has worked as a vocal coach and pianist with many opera companies, including Washington National Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Maryland Lyric Opera, and Northern Lights Music Festival, and coached and performed



with the Maryland Opera Studio from 2013-17. He has performed and recorded several new musicals in New York City by Blake Allen, as well as world premieres of operas in Washington, DC and South Carolina. He was nominated for a 2019 GRAMMY Award for his work with the National Orchestral Institute Philharmonic on the album "Ruggles, Stucky & Harbison: Orchestral Works" with conductor David Alan Miller. Mr. Koelzer began collaborating in opera, musical theater, and chamber music at age 13, and he has performed around the world both as a solo and collaborative pianist. He received his bachelor's degree in Piano Performance at Brigham Young University, and holds both Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees in Collaborative Piano from the University of Maryland, College Park.

Beckie Kravetz (Hair and Make-up Designer) trained as a theatrical mask maker. A job at The Santa Fe Opera introduced her to the mask-like scale of operatic make-up, and she served as the assistant wig master and principal make-up artist with LA Opera for over 20 years, where she had the pleasure of doing makeup for Placido Domingo, Sir Thomas Allen, Samuel Ramey, Carol Vaness, and Rod Gilfry, among many others. Ms. Kravetz's mask making evolved into fine art figurative sculpture. Her work



has been exhibited in galleries, museums, and opera houses across the country, and many of her pieces are inspired by the opera. She has work currently on display at the Norman Rockwell Museum, and lives in Cummington, MA.

The designs of **Tláloc López-Watermann** (Lighting Designer, Glory Denied) have been seen at Virginia Opera, Opera Southwest, Opera Santa Barbara, Ballet Virginia International, Lakes Area Music Festival, Pittsburgh Opera, North Carolina Opera, Utah Opera, Opera Delaware, Opera on the James, Opera Naples, Castleton Festival, Brevard Music Center, Toledo Opera, Utah Festival Opera, Opera Roanoke, Shreveport Opera, and Crested Butte Music Festival, among many others. Some highlights in-



clude II Postino, The Long Walk, Hydrogen Jukebox, The Ballad of Baby Doe, Sondheim on Sondheim, La Cenerentola, Carmen, Street Scene, Die Zauberflöte, Amadeus, 9 to 5, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Sweeney Todd, South Pacific, Roméo et Juliette, the world premiere of Scalia/Ginsburg, Ulysses, Pirates of Penzance, Così fan tutte, the world premiere of Bovinus Rex, Man of La Mancha, Salome, La Bohème, Le Nozze di Figaro, Madama Butterfly, The Crucible, Eugene Onegin, Il Trovatore, La Traviata, Falstaff, Tosca, and Don Giovanni. He received an MFA in Design from NYU Tisch School of the Arts.

Conductor and pianist **Noah Palmer** (Principal Coach and Rehearsal Pianist, *Glory Denied*) is one of the Capital Region's most in-demand collaborators. As choral director at Skidmore College in 2021, he led the college's two choral ensembles through innovative virtual performances during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, he was appointed Artistic Director of the Battenkill Chorale. He is assistant director and accompanist for Albany Pro



Musica, and assistant conductor of the Broad Street Chorale and Orchestra in Kinderhook, NY. He also directs, in collaboration with soprano Sylvia Stoner, the Skidmore College Opera Workshop. He made debuts conducting both Albany Pro Musica and the Broad Street Orchestra in 2018, and in 2019 conducted the Broad Street Chorale and Orchestra in Vaughan Williams's Serenade to Music. In 2016, Mr. Palmer was an apprentice coach and chorus master with the Merola Opera Program, the San Francisco Opera's prestigious young artist program. He spent two seasons on the music staff of the Midwestern Institute of Opera in Illinois, where he made his debut conducting Ravel's L'enfant et les Sortilèges, and has worked with regional opera companies such as Sarasota Opera and Opera North.

Pianist **Nate Raskin** (Principal Coach and Rehearsal Pianist, *Falstaff*) is an assistant conductor at the Metropolitan Opera, having joined the roster for 2019's *Ring* Cycle, and a staff coach for the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program. He has prepared operatic productions for Wolf Trap Opera, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Chautauqua Institution, and the Castleton Festival. As a frequent recital partner, Mr. Raskin has been



seen recently with singers in important venues in South Korea, Washington DC, Santa Fe, and New York City. As an educator, he has taught diction classes at The Juilliard School and classes in art song at the Merit School of Music in Chicago. Mr. Raskin is a graduate of the Metropolitan Opera Lindemann Young Artist Development Program, The Juilliard School, and Northwestern University. He also trained at the Aspen Music Festival, the Middlebury College Language Schools, and in Vienna, Austria. He is indebted to his many mentors and teachers, including Ken Noda, Margo Garrett, Jonathan Feldman, Brian Zeger, Diane Richardson, Sylvia Wang, and the late Carolyn Hague.

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Berkshire Opera Festival Orchestra

FIRST VIOLINS

*Charles Stegeman, Concertmaster Drs. Eduardo and Lina Plantilla Chair
Tobias Chisnall, Assistant Concertmaster
Susan Heerema
Gabrielle Faetini
Kae Nakano
Robert Radliff

SECOND VIOLINS

Mitsuko Suzuki, Principal Gregory Tompkins Deborah Katz Johnny Weizenecker

VIOLAS

Gregory Williams, Principal *Orlando Wells J.J. Johnson Gretchen Frazier

CELLOS

*Hikaru Tamaki, Principal Jonathan Tortolano Richard Mickey

BASSES

Patrick O'Connell, Principal Ryan Bassett

FLUTES

*Karen Bogardus, Principal Yoshi Weinberg

PICCOLO

Yoshi Weinberg

OBOE

Andrew van der Paardt, Acting Principal

ENGLISH HORN

Andrew van der Paardt

CLARINET

*Diego Vásquez, Principal Noreen Doyle Chair

BASS CLARINET

Diego Vásquez

BASSOON

Zachary Feingold, Principal

HORNS

*Eva Conti, Principal Kenneth and Susan Kramer Chair William Hughes

TRUMPET

Eric Berlin, Principal

TROMBONE

Brian Diehl, Principal

TIMPANI

Deane Prouty, Principal
Richard and Carol Seltzer Chair

PERCUSSION

Benjamin Harms, Acting Principal
**Joseph Tompkins

HARP

*André Tarantiles, Acting Principal

GUITAR

Eva Conti

PIANO

**Noah Palmer

PERSONNEL MANAGER

*Deane Prouty

All musicians are performing in Falstaff unless otherwise indicated.

^{*} indicates Falstaff and Glory Denied

^{**} indicates Glory Denied only

Berkshire Opera Festival Chorus

SOPRANOS

Paula Farbman Kalia Kellogg Lily Lothrop Schauntice Shepard

ALTOS

Rachel Abrams Jessica A. Passetto Mary Verdi Lisa Woods

BARITONES & BASSES

Andrew Boisvert Siddharth Dubey Brian Hailes Jermaine Woodard Jr.

TENORS

Thomas Gruenthal Ryan Nash Kevin Ruby Matthew Taylor

Messages From Our Supporters

Thank you, Berkshire Opera Festival, for allowing us to experience the power and beauty of live opera once again.

- Terry Cerezola

Congratulations on SIX years! Here's to 6X6 more! What an honor to be with you since Day 1. Huge shout out to Brian Garman and Jonathon Loy on a spectacular job!

- Drs. Ed and Lina Plantilla

Welcome back BOF and congratulations BOF on another wonderful season of opera! XOXO

- Clara F. Londoner



Executive Director's Note



Dear Friends,

Last year, Berkshire Opera Festival (BOF) made the difficult yet necessary decision to cancel our season of live. in-person performances. Instead, we pivoted to produce two virtual events: "From Stage to Screen: The Show Must Go On(line)" featuring at-home performances from the cast of our canceled production of Mozart's Don Giovanni, as well as "Where is Justice? The Trial of Susan

B. Anthony" featuring acclaimed mezzo-soprano and BOF alumna Adriana Zabala (BOF's 2017 Ariadne auf Naxos).

In addition to producing new, virtual performances - a first for BOF! - we embarked on a robust fundraising campaign to support those who were scheduled to perform and work with us during our 2020 season before COVID-19 changed our plans. Thanks to the incredible generosity of our donors, we raised over \$108,000 to provide honorariums to these 64 immensely talented and hardworking artists, musicians, and staff. We cannot thank you enough for stepping up and supporting our artists when they needed it most!

Though there is much to celebrate as we return to the stage this summer, there is still much work to be done. The havoc the pandemic has wreaked on our industry will take years to fully recover from, which is why we need your support now, more than ever.

Please consider making a 100% tax-deductible contribution to Berkshire Opera Festival before our fiscal year ends on September 30, 2021.

On behalf of everyone at Berkshire Opera Festival, I cannot thank you enough for your ongoing friendship and support, and hope you enjoy the show!

Abigail Rollins Executive Director



Berkshire Opera Festival is a proud supporter of Soldier On Soldier On offers a continuum of programs to ensure that homeless and at-risk veterans and their families have access to immediate and long-term housing with support services delivered to them where they live. SOLDIERON

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Falstaff's Feast Acknowledgments

On June 27, 2021, approximately 60 friends and supporters of Berkshire Opera Festival gathered for Falstaff's Feast, an evening of food, music, and merriment in support of BOF's 2021 season. BOF would like to



thank everyone who attended this special fundraiser and acknowledge the following individuals and institutions for being premium table hosts: Chicago Title Insurance, Noreen Doyle, Kenneth and Susan Kramer, and John O'Brien and Jamie Lehrer.

Thank you for FEASTING with us!

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