



*Lyric*

THE PATRICK G.  
AND SHIRLEY W.  
RYAN OPERA  
CENTER

# *Rising Stars in Concert*

Members of the Lyric Opera Orchestra  
Ari Pelto, *conductor*

# RISING STARS IN CONCERT

**Sunday, January 19, 2020, 2 p.m.**

Featuring the 2019 | 20 Ensemble of  
The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center at Lyric Opera of Chicago

Generously made possible by  
*Lead Sponsor:* **Donna Van Eekeren Foundation**

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Sunday, January 26, beginning at 7 p.m., generously sponsored by the  
**Donna Van Eekeren Foundation.**

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## PROGRAM

Francis Poulenc (1899   1963)	<i>Les mamelles de Tirésias</i> , Prologue, “Publique, attendez sans impatience”	CHRISTOPHER KENNEY (Theater Director)
Vincenzo Bellini (1801   1835)	<i>La sonnambula</i> , Act Two, cavatina and cabaletta, “Ah, non credea mirarti...Ah, non giunge”	EMILY POGORELC (Amina)
Gioachino Rossini (1792   1868)	<i>Il turco in Italia</i> , Act Two, duet, “D’un bell’uso di Turchia”	ANTHONY REED (Selim) DAVID WEIGEL (Geronio)
Charles Gounod (1818   1893)	<i>Roméo et Juliette</i> , Act Two, recitative and aria, “L’amour! L’amour!...Ah! lève-toi, soleil”	MARIO ROJAS (Roméo)
Giuseppe Verdi (1813   1901)	<i>Un ballo in maschera</i> , Act Two, aria, “Re dell’abisso, affretati”	LAUREN DECKER (Ulrica) MATHILDA EDGE, KATHLEEN FELTY (Female Chorus) MARIO ROJAS (Riccardo)
Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872   1958)	<i>Sir John in Love</i> , Act One, duet, “This is my father’s choice”	EMILY POGORELC (Anne) ERIC FERRING (Fenton)
Hector Berlioz (1803   1869)	<i>Béatrice et Bénédicte</i> , Act Two, recitative and aria, “Dieu, que viens-je d’entendre?...Il m’en souvient”	KAYLEIGH DECKER (Béatrice)

Richard Strauss (1864 1949)	<i>Der Rosenkavalier</i> , Act Three, trio and final duet, "Marie-Theres'!...Hab' mir's gelobt... Ist ein Traum"	KATHLEEN FELTY (Octavian) MATHILDA EDGE (Marschallin) EMILY POGORELC (Sophie) RICARDO JOSÉ RIVERA (Faninal)
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## Intermission

Gabriel Fauré (1845 1924)	Piano Quartet No.1, Op.15, Fourth Movement, <i>Allegro molto</i>	MADELINE SLETTEDAHL (piano) ROBERT HANFORD (violin) CAROL COOK (viola) CALUM COOK (cello)
Gaetano Donizetti (1797 1848)	<i>Lucia di Lammermoor</i> , Act Three, recitative and duet, "Orrida è questa notte...Ashton! Sì!"	MARIO ROJAS (Edgardo) RICARDO JOSÉ RIVERA (Enrico)
Claude Debussy (1862 1918)	<i>Pelléas et Mélisande</i> , Act Two, Fountain Scene, "Vous ne savez pas où je vous ai menée?"	CHRISTOPHER KENNEY (Pelléas) KAYLEIGH DECKER (Mélisande)
Georges Bizet (1838 1875)	<i>Carmen</i> , Act Two, Toreador Song, "Votre toast"	DAVID WEIGEL (Escamillo) EMILY POGORELC (Frasquita) KAYLEIGH DECKER (Mercédès) KATHLEEN FELTY (Carmen) CHRISTOPHER KENNEY (Moralès) ANTHONY REED (Zuniga)
Léo Délibes (1836 1891)	<i>Lakmé</i> , Act One, recitative and aria, "Prendre le dessin d'un bijou...Fantaisie aux divins mensonges"	ERIC FERRING (Gérald)
Donizetti	<i>La favorite</i> , Act Two, recitative, cavatina, and cabaletta, "Oui, tous ces courtisans... Léonor, viens...Léonor, mon amour brave"	RICARDO JOSÉ RIVERA (Alphonse)
Jacques Offenbach (1819 1880)	<i>La fille du tambour major</i> , Act Three, duet, "L'autre jour, contre toute attente"	KAYLEIGH DECKER (Duchess) ANTHONY REED (Monthabor)
Verdi	<i>Aida</i> , Act Two, recitative and duet, "Silenzio, Aida versa noi s'avanza...Fu la sorte dell'armi"	LAUREN DECKER (Amneris) MATHILDA EDGE (Aida)
Victor Herbert (1859 1924)	<i>Naughty Marietta</i> , Act Two, finale	FULL ENSEMBLE

Director: **Louisa Muller**

Lighting Designer: **Sarah Riffe**

Stage Management: **Bill Walters, Alaina Bartkowiak, Amy C. Thompson**

Musical and Language Preparation: **William C. Billingham, Julia Faulkner, Laurann Gilley, Jonathan Gmeinder, Derek Matson, Jerad Mosbey, Matthew Piatt, Celeste Rue, Madeline Slettedahl, Craig Terry**

Wardrobe, Hair, and Makeup: **Wendy McCay, Lana McKinnon, Bridget Rzymyski**

Projected Titles Translations: **Roger Pines, Francis Rizzo**

Cover Photo: **Todd Rosenberg**

*Il turco in Italia* - By arrangement with Boosey & Hawkes, Inc., Agent for Ricordi, publisher and copyright owner.

# Artist profiles



## ARI PELTO | CONDUCTOR

### Lyric debut

The conductor is music director at Opera Colorado, where this season he leads *The Barber of Seville*, *Pagliacci*, and *Tosca*. He also conducts *Hansel and Gretel* at San Diego Opera and San Francisco Opera's Schwabacher Summer Concert. Among Pelto's major achievements at Opera Colorado have been the world premieres of Lori Laitman's *The Scarlet Letter* (released on CD) and Gerald Cohen's *Steal a Pencil for Me*. Recent guest-conducting includes *Eugene Onegin* (Lyric Opera of Kansas City), and *Salome* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Virginia Opera). Pelto has also conducted at New York City Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Chicago Opera Theater, Opera Memphis, Chautauqua Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, The Minnesota Opera, and Utah Opera. International appearances include the New National Theatre of Tokyo, the Teatro Nacional Sucre (Quito, Ecuador), and the Bochumer Philharmoniker (Germany). Pelto regularly works with leading conservatories and young-artist programs including Wolf Trap Opera, The Juilliard School, The Curtis Institute, Manhattan School of Music, Oberlin Conservatory, and the Jette Parker Young Artist Programme at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.



## LOUISA MULLER | DIRECTOR

**Previously at Lyric:** Three productions since 2012|13, most recently *Carmen* (associate director, 2016|17); *Madama Butterfly* (2013|14). Directed *Rising Stars in Concert* in 2019.

Coming off an acclaimed U.K. debut with *The Turn of the Screw* (new production, Garsington Opera), the American director is at Lyric in 2019|20 as revival director of *Madama Butterfly*. This season she also debuts at Opera Colorado directing *Tosca*. Muller is a frequent presence at Wolf Trap Opera, where she has directed new productions of *The Rape of Lucretia*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Tosca*, and John Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles*. Last season she debuted at LA Opera (*Don Carlo*) and The Minnesota Opera (*La traviata*). She earned critical praise for her 2017 staging of *Das Rheingold* with the New York Philharmonic. As a member of the Metropolitan Opera's directing staff, Muller has staged revivals of *Don Giovanni*, *Cavalleria rusticana*/*Pagliacci*, and *L'elisir d'amore*. She has also directed productions at Houston Grand Opera, the Grand Théâtre de Genève, Opera Queensland (Australia), and The Atlanta Opera.



## KAYLEIGH DECKER | MEZZO-SOPRANO

**Previously at Lyric:** *Dorothee/Cendrillon*, *Cretan Woman/Idomeneo* (both 2018|19).

The mezzo-soprano, a second-year Ryan Opera Center member, hails from Woodstock, Maryland. She is an alumna of the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (where she sang leading roles by Handel, Mozart, Massenet, and Janáček) and the Oberlin Conservatory. Decker participated in Carnegie Hall's 2019 SongStudio, and in 2018 was a Schwab Vocal Rising Star with Caramoor and the New York Festival of Song. She is a former young artist of The Glimmerglass Festival, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, and Utah Festival Opera. She has also participated in the Houston Grand Opera Young Artists Vocal Academy. Among Decker's many honors are first place in the Musicians Club of Women Scholarship Competition, a 2019 Luminarts Fellowship, and a 2019 Sara Tucker Study Grant from the Richard Tucker Music Foundation. She returns to the Lyric stage this season as Kate Pinkerton/*Madama Butterfly*. *Kayleigh Decker is sponsored by The C. G. Pinnell Family.*



## LAUREN DECKER | CONTRALTO

**Previously at Lyric:** Eight roles since 2016|17, most recently *Jade Boucher/Dead Man Walking* (2019|20); *Annina/La traviata* (2018|19).

The contralto, a fourth-year Ryan Opera Center member, was a national semifinalist in the 2018 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. A Wisconsin native and a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Decker has participated in the Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme (U.K.), Dolora Zajick's Institute for Young Dramatic Voices, the American Wagner Project (Washington, D.C.), and the Georg Solti Accademia di Bel Canto (Italy). Concert appearances include the San Francisco Symphony, South Dakota Symphony, Grant Park Music Festival, Apollo Chorus/Elmhurst Symphony, Civic Orchestra of Chicago, and Zimbabwe's Harare International Festival of the Arts. Winner of the 2019 Edith Newfield Scholarship from the Musicians Club of Women of Chicago and the 2018 Lola Fletcher scholarship in voice from the American Opera Society of Chicago, Decker has been featured twice in the Harris Theater's *Beyond the Aria* series. She returns to the Lyric stage later this season to portray Schwertleite/*Die Walküre* in the *Ring* cycle. *Lauren Decker is sponsored by an Anonymous Donor, Susan M. Miller, and the Thierer Family Foundation.*



### MATHILDA EDGE | SOPRANO

**Previously at Lyric:** Berta/*The Barber of Seville* (2019|20).

The first-year Ryan Opera Center soprano, originally from Chandlerville, Illinois, is an alumna of Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music, where she earned her master's degree in vocal performance. Among her many IU roles were *Fiordiligi/Così fan tutte*, *Romilda/Xerxes*, and *Cio-Cio-San/Madama Butterfly*. Edge is a 2019 recipient of a Sara Tucker Study Grant from the Richard Tucker Music Foundation. She has also won or placed in many important competitions, such as the Washington International Competition for Voice, the National Association of Teachers of Singing Artist Award Competition, and the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. Edge has sung with The City Choir of Washington, New Dominion Chorale, the Bel Canto Chorus, and with numerous university choirs in the Midwest. She is a former Merola Opera Program participant and a former Santa Fe Opera apprentice artist. She returns to the Lyric stage later this season as Gerhilde/*Die Walküre*. *Mathilda Edge* is sponsored by **Maurice J. and Patricia Frank**.



### KATHLEEN FELTY | MEZZO-SOPRANO

**Previously at Lyric:** Laura/Luisa Miller (2019|20).

The mezzo-soprano, a native of Lubbock, Texas, and a first-year member of the Ryan Opera Center, is an alumna of Texas Tech University and the A. J. Fletcher Opera Institute. Her roles at Fletcher included *Charlotte/Werther*, *Angelina/La Cenerentola*, *Unulfo/Rodelinda*, *Miss Jessel/The Turn of the Screw*, *Geneviève/Impressions de Pelléas*, *Dinah/Trouble in Tahiti*, the *Composer/Ariadne auf Naxos*, and *Paula/Florencia en el Amazonas*. Felty was an apprentice artist at The Santa Fe Opera in 2018, receiving the Katharine Mayer Award. She made her North Carolina Opera concert debut as *Clotilde/Norma* and her Dayton Opera debut as *Maddalena/Rigoletto*. In 2017, Felty was a participant in the Ravinia-Stearns Music Institute Program for Singers. She is a four-time District Winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and a winner of the Charlotte Opera Guild Vocal Competition (2018) and the Heafner Williams Vocal Competition (2019). She returns to the Lyric stage later this season as *Siegrune/Die Walküre*. *Kathleen Felty* is sponsored by **Heidi Heutel Bohn, Lawrence O. Corry, and Robert C. Marks**.



### ERIC FERRING | TENOR

**Previously at Lyric:** Six roles since 2018|19, most recently the Older Brother/*Dead Man Walking*, *Sergeant/The Barber of Seville* (both 2019|20).

The Iowa-born tenor, a second-year Ryan Opera Center member who earned acclaim at Lyric last season as *Lurcanio/Ariodante*, is an alumnus of Drake University and The Boston Conservatory. A

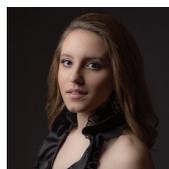
former resident artist at Pittsburgh Opera, he was heard there in numerous roles, among them *Flask/Moby-Dick*, *Nemorino/L'elisir d'amore*, and the Protagonist/*Douglas J. Cuomo's Ashes and Snow* (world premiere). Ferring sang *Tamino/The Magic Flute* at last summer's Verbier Festival and will reprise the role later this season at North Carolina Opera, New Orleans Opera, and The Santa Fe Opera. He is a former participant in The Santa Fe Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, and Wolf Trap Opera young-artist programs. Ferring's many honors include Best Vocal Artist at the American Opera Society, Sara Tucker Study Grant from The Richard Tucker Music Foundation, and a Career Grant from The Sullivan Foundation. He returns to the Lyric stage later this season as *Chaplitsky/The Queen of Spades*. *Eric Ferring* is sponsored by **Richard O. Ryan, Richard W. Shepro and Lindsay E. Roberts, and Cynthia Vahlkamp and Robert Kenyon**.



### CHRISTOPHER KENNEY | BARITONE

**Previously at Lyric:** Four roles since 2018|19, most recently *Motorcycle Cop/Dead Man Walking*, *Fiorello/The Barber of Seville* (both 2019|20).

The baritone, a Minnesota native and a second-year Ryan Opera Center member, was previously a member of Washington National Opera's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program (title role/*The Barber of Seville*, the *Businessman/The Little Prince*, *Pa Zegner/Missy Mazzoli's Proving Up* – world premiere). Additionally, he was a featured soloist in Bernstein's *Songfest* with Leonard Slatkin and the National Symphony Orchestra. Kenney was a 2017 apprentice artist at The Santa Fe Opera. He is a three-time winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council District Auditions and winner of the 2014 Alltech Vocal Scholarship Competition. The baritone is an alumnus of Concordia College, the University of Kentucky, and Philadelphia's Academy of Vocal Arts. He has appeared at the Grant Park Music Festival (*Bob/The Old Maid and the Thief*) and at the Harris Theater's *Beyond the Aria* series. Kenney returns to the Lyric stage later this season as the Registrar/*Madama Butterfly*. *Christopher Kenney* is sponsored by an **Anonymous Donor, Sasha Gerritson and Eugene Jarvis, and Blythe J. McGarvie**.



### EMILY POGORELC | SOPRANO

**Previously at Lyric:** Three roles since 2018|19, most recently *Paralegal/Dead Man Walking* (2019|20); *Trainbearer/Elektra* (2018|19).

The soprano, a Milwaukee native and a second-year Ryan Opera Center member, debuted at Lyric last season as *Noémie/Cendrillon* and is a 2018 graduate of Philadelphia's Curtis Institute of Music. She has also participated in the Britten-Pears Programme (U.K.) and the Aix-en-Provence Festival's Mozart Residency. Pogorelc has been featured at Washington National Opera (*Cunegonde/Candide*); the Glimmerglass Festival (*Romilda/Xerxes, Johanna/Sweeney Todd, Berenice/L'occasione fa il ladro*); New York's Apollo Theater (*Chan Parker/Daniel*

Schnyder's *Charlie Parker's Yardbird*); and Opera Philadelphia (title role/David Hertzberg's *The Rose Elf*). She has also appeared at Carnegie Hall, in the Harris Theater's *Beyond the Aria* series, and with the New Jersey Symphony and Madison Symphony. Pogorelc has won the Ginette Theano Prize for Most Promising Talent at the Glyndebourne Opera Cup competition, first prize in The Carolyn Bailey and Dominick Argento Vocal Competition, and first place in the Classical Singer Magazine Competition. She returns to the Lyric stage later this season as Masha/*The Queen of Spades*. *Emily Pogorelc* is sponsored by **Sally and Michael Feder, Ms. Gay K. Stanek, and Jennifer L. Stone.**



### **ANTHONY REED | BASS**

**Previously at Lyric:** Second Prison Guard/*Dead Man Walking* (2019|20).

The bass, a first-year Ryan Opera Center member, is an alumnus of the Curtis Institute of Music and the Merola Opera Program. He was recently seen at Wolf Trap Opera portraying Friar Laurence/*Romeo and Juliet*. A former Adler Fellow with San Francisco Opera, he has been heard on the company's mainstage as the King of Egypt/*Aida*, the Speaker/*The Magic Flute*, and Dr. Grenvil/*La traviata*. He recently sang Don Basilio/*The Barber of Seville* with Annapolis Opera and Haydn's *Creation* with North Carolina Master Chorale. Additional roles in his repertoire include Sarastro/*The Magic Flute* and Don Magnifico/*La Cenerentola*, among others. He has performed with Grammy Award-winning symphony orchestras and some of the world's most esteemed conductors, among them Nicola Luisotti and Donald Runnicles. Reed returns to the Lyric stage later this season as the Imperial Commissioner/*Madama Butterfly* and Narumov/*The Queen of Spades*. *Anthony Reed* is sponsored by **J. Thomas Hurvis.**



### **RICARDO JOSÉ RIVERA | BARITONE**

**Previously at Lyric:** Baron Douphol/*La traviata*, Schaunard/*La bohème* (both 2018|19).

The Puerto Rican baritone, a second-year Ryan Opera Center member, has portrayed Guglielmo/*Così fan tutte* at the International Vocal Academy of Rome; sung several recitals with the American Masters of Opera Academy in Moscow; and performed as a participant in Tel-Aviv's International Vocal Arts Institute. He has had repeat engagements at the Performing Arts Center of San Juan and at the University of Puerto Rico Theater, including *Don Pasquale*, *Gianni Schicchi*, and Ravel's *Master Peter's Puppet Show* (part of the 2016 Casals Festival). Rivera earned his master's degree at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. He has participated in numerous summer programs, including VOICE Experience in Savannah and the Aspen Music Festival, where he has appeared in Berlioz's *Béatrice et Bénédicte* and Luke Bedford's opera *Seven Angels*. In 2018 he performed in concert with the Collaborative Arts Institute of Chicago (Mahler's

*Des Knaben Wunderhorn*). Rivera returns to the Lyric stage later this season as Yamadori/*Madama Butterfly*. *Ricardo José Rivera* is sponsored by the **Mrs. Myung S. Chung Family, Dr. David H. Whitney and Dr. Juliana Chyu, and Drs. Joan and Russ Zajchuk.**



### **MARIO ROJAS | TENOR**

**Previously at Lyric:** Four roles since 2017|18, most recently Alfredo Germont and Gastone de Letorières/*La traviata* (2018|19).

The Mexican tenor, a third-year Ryan Opera Center member, is an alumnus of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and recipient of the Plácido Domingo scholarship from SIVAM, Mexico's most prominent young-artist program. He has sung Rodolfo/*La bohème* at Mexico City's Palacio de Bellas Artes. Among his many honors are a 2018 William M. Sullivan Foundation Award, third place in the 2018 Dallas Opera Vocal Competition, winner of the 2018 Metropolitan Opera National Council Illinois District Auditions, second place in the East Bay Opera League Competition, the Marta Eggerth Kiepara Award in the Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation International Vocal Completion, third place in the Palm Springs Opera Guild Competition, and the Emerging Singers Award in the Opera Index Vocal Competition. He has been heard at the Harris Theater's *Beyond the Aria* recital series and Kentucky Opera's *Sidecar* cabaret series. Rojas returns to the Lyric stage later this season as the Major-Domo/*The Queen of Spades*. *Mario Rojas* is sponsored by the **Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation.**



### **MADELINE SLETTEDAHL | PIANO**

**Previously at Lyric:** Music staff for three productions since 2017|18, most recently *The Barber of Seville* (2019|20); *Siegfried* (2018|19).

The pianist, a native of Seattle, Washington, is a third-year Ryan Opera Center member. She was invited to study at the 2019 Solti Accademia di Bel Canto and the Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme. Slettedahl is also an alumna of Music Academy of the West (first prize, Marilyn Horne Song Competition). She has made Carnegie Hall appearances at The Song Continues and SongStudio. Slettedahl prepared Menotti's *The Telephone* and *The Medium* at Opera in the Heights and was coach/pianist for Houston Grand Opera's 2017 world-premiere workshop of Ricky Ian Gordon's *A House Without a Christmas Tree*. She is an alumna of Rice University (master's degree, Andre Watts Scholarship, Michael P. Hammond Preparatory Program Olshan Foundation Fellowship Award) and Western Washington University (bachelor's degree, first prize in the WWU Concerto Competition, Music Teachers National Association Young Artist Piano Competition). For this season's *Ring* cycle at Lyric, Slettedahl will serve on the music staff for *Siegfried*. *Madeline Slettedahl* is sponsored by **Nancy Dehmlow, Loretta N. Julian, and Philip G. Lumpkin.**



### DAVID WEIGEL | BASS-BARITONE

**Previously at Lyric:** Four roles since 2018/19, most recently First Prison Guard/*Dead Man Walking* (2019/20); Dr. Grenvil/*La traviata* (2018/19).

The second-year bass-baritone, a native of Asheville, North Carolina, is an alumnus of Furman University (bachelor of music), the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (master of music), the A. J. Fletcher Opera Institute at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts (professional artist certificate), and the University of Michigan (doctor of musical arts – he was also heard there in numerous leading roles). He participated in San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program in 2017 (*Death/Holst's Savitri*) and 2013 (*Collatinus/Britten's The Rape of Lucretia*). Weigel starred in the title role/*The Marriage of Figaro* at the 2019 Aspen Music Festival and has performed with North Carolina Opera, Greensboro Opera, Piedmont Opera, Asheville Lyric Opera, Opera North, and the Brevard Music Center. He has also been heard in an exceptionally varied concert repertoire. Weigel returns to the Lyric stage later this season as the *Bonze/Madama Butterfly* and *Surin/The Queen of Spades*. *David Weigel is sponsored by Lois B. Siegel, Michael and Salme Harju Steinberg, and Mrs. J. W. Van Gorkom.*



### ROBERT HANFORD | VIOLIN

Concertmaster of the Lyric Opera Orchestra since 2004/05.

The American violinist, concertmaster during the summer at the Aspen Music Festival, was previously associate principal second violinist of the Minnesota Orchestra and a member of both the Milwaukee Symphony and Chicago's Grant Park Symphony. He has appeared as soloist on many occasions with the Minnesota Orchestra, the Milwaukee Symphony, and other Midwestern orchestras, including the Chicago Philharmonic. Hanford attended Northwestern University and is currently on the faculty there as a violin instructor. He graduated with first prize from the Orpheus Conservatory in Athens, Greece. For many summers he was concertmaster and violin instructor at Wisconsin's Birch Creek Music Festival. He has also performed and taught at the Apollo, MidAmerica, Milwaukee, and Roycroft chamber music festivals. In addition to his professional career as a violinist, Hanford has studied and performed on the theremin, one of the first electronic instruments. *Robert Hanford is the Mrs. R. Robert Funderburg Concertmaster Endowed Chair.*



### CAROL COOK | VIOLA

Lyric Opera Orchestra member since 2003/04; principal violist since 2013/14.

The Scottish-born violist has performed as soloist with the Chicago Philharmonic, Metamorphosen Chamber Orchestra in Boston, Edinburgh Symphony, Guildhall Symphony, Cambridge Sinfonia, and Edinburgh Players. She has also played the Brahms *Double Concerto* alongside her brother Calum with the Edinburgh Symphony and the Grampian Orchestra. Cook has appeared as guest principal violist with numerous international orchestras, including the Australian Chamber Orchestra, with whom she has toured internationally. She performs regularly with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and has also appeared with the New York Philharmonic and London Symphony Orchestra. Cook is currently a member of Chicago's Rembrandt Chamber Musicians. She has appeared as a chamber musician at summer festivals in Banff, Verbier, Montreal, and La Jolla, as well as with Chambermusic Northwest, the Mimir Festival, and San Antonio's Cactus Pear Festival. Cook holds degrees from The Juilliard School, Oberlin Conservatory, and the Guildhall School.



### CALUM COOK | CELLO

Principal cello of the Lyric Opera Orchestra since 2014/15.

A Scottish native, the cellist studied at the Yehudi Menuhin School and the Royal College of Music. He has appeared as guest principal cello with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Orchestra of Opera North, Scottish Opera, BBC Concert Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, and Orchestra of the Welsh National Opera. For almost a decade he was a member of Kokoro, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra's contemporary music ensemble. In 2014 Cook left his fulltime position in the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra to take up his appointment at Lyric. He also appears regularly with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and as part of the CSO's MusicNOW contemporary music series. He is now a regular member of the Rembrandt Chamber Musicians, and has also performed during the Winter Chamber Music Series of Northwestern University, where he is a faculty member.

**Lyric** LISA MIDDLETON  
Executive Editor

ROGER PINES  
Editor

MAGDA KRANCE  
Associate Editor

Administrative Offices  
20 North Wacker Drive Suite 860  
Chicago, Illinois 60606  
lyricopera.org

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## This concert celebrates the tenure of eight departing Ryan Opera Center artists, who reflect on their experiences at Lyric.

### KAYLEIGH DECKER



Although it has only been a year and a half, my time as a member of the Ryan Opera Center has been one of the most demanding, yet rewarding, periods in my

life. I have been challenged in ways I never expected, and grown into an artist I never imagined. Through many hours of observation and performance opportunities with the world's greatest artists, I have garnered perspective on what it takes to be a singer of integrity in the 21st century. Throughout my time at Lyric, I have learned that there is neither a finished product nor is there an arrival point, and despite its elusiveness, this is what makes live performance so magical. I have learned to trust and embrace this process. While I am a bit anxious about leaving this nurturing environment, I am confident, with the tools I have acquired here, that I can keep my eye on the horizon and keep striving for truth. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

### LAUREN DECKER



I can hardly believe nearly four years have come and gone since I joined the Ryan Opera Center family. To try to quantify all that has happened since Dan

Novak called to invite me to sing at the Final Auditions seems nearly impossible! I've traveled to places I never imagined I'd go, have worked with the most incredibly talented and thoughtful artists – the list could go on for pages. But the lessons that lie beneath that illustrious list of experiences are what I will hold closest to my heart. Lessons of vulnerability in front of 3,000+ people a night. Lessons of grace in busy rehearsal rooms. Lessons of teamwork with the countless people involved in any given rehearsal or show. Lessons of resilience and hard work. I hope to go out in the world and make known everything you've given me all around. Thank you.

### ERIC FERRING



My time in the Ryan Opera Center has been filled with the greatest challenges and largest triumphs of my life. I remember it like it was yesterday: the

Final Auditions in September 2017. I was hoping and praying so hard backstage that I didn't even hear my name called to join the 2018/19 Ensemble. With a hearty push from my dear mentor and friend, Julia Faulkner, I was thrust into the deep end of a pool I wasn't sure I could swim in. From singing small roles, understudying large roles, or in the case of *Ariodante* last season, taking over a principal role for the entire run, I have been given monumental opportunities and inspiration, as well as the gifts of lifelong friends, mentors, and memories. I am unbelievably thankful that the Ryan Opera Center took a chance on this Iowa boy and helped him turn into the man who is not only ready, but excited to enter this scary yet exhilarating career as an opera artist.

### CHRISTOPHER KENNEY



The Ryan Opera Center has been one of the most formative and beneficial experiences in my life as an opera singer. The lessons I've learned and the people I've

met have helped propel me into the highest ranks of the field – and have given me a deep appreciation for detail, dedication, and artistry. Being able to work with master artists like Renée Fleming and Patricia Racette has especially opened for me the unbounded artistic ideas that I have yet to explore. Whether singing on the main stage or elsewhere, like the Harris Theater for *Beyond the Aria*, I have cherished my time in Chicago. I'm truly grateful to have been a part of an institution with such a storied history as Lyric and the Ryan Opera Center.

## EMILY POGORELC



Jaelyn Simpson

When I reflect back on my time at the Ryan Opera Center, I think of the incredible people with whom I have met and worked. To be able to observe

artists such as Alice Coote, Susan Graham, and Nina Stemme craft incredible performances is such a huge gift for a young artist. It also was so rewarding to be able to hone my own artistry with the guidance of guest teachers, such as Patricia Racette and Anne Sofie von Otter, and work on a daily basis with our incredible mentors, Julia Faulkner and Craig Terry. However, looking back, I know I will always cherish most the incredible relationships I have had with my colleagues. I have learned so much from each and every one of them and formed beautiful friendships to last a lifetime. The Ryan Opera Center is not only one of the best training programs in the world – to me, it will forever be my family.

## RICARDO JOSÉ RIVERA



A. Clifton

My time in the Ryan Opera Center has been full of many wonderful experiences that have helped me grow and further my skills as an opera singer and as

an individual. Ever since I was accepted into the program, the life lessons have never stopped. From voice lessons, coachings, and performing, to getting to meet and work with many wonderful and talented artists from very diverse backgrounds, I have experienced so much in these past two years. Not many people are as fortunate to get to know the business in the way the Ryan Opera Center offers, and for that I am deeply grateful. I will never forget what I have learned from the people that guide us in this program about discipline, perseverance, and dedication. I have loved being a member of the Ryan Opera Center family, and I cannot thank all of you enough for taking me in and believing in me and my talent.

## MARIO ROJAS



Todd Rosenberg

Like a kid walking into a candy shop, I entered this building, full of dreams and with no idea how much my life would change after that moment – and

how much I would learn in my time at the Ryan Opera Center and Lyric. To think that as a young artist I had the opportunity to step in and sing Alfredo in *La traviata* on the main stage where Simoneau, Kraus, Gedda, Araiza, Hadley, Sabbatini, Calleja, Polenzani, and Berrugi, to name a few, had sung the role, to this day gives me chills. I have nothing but gratitude for every lesson learned, every performance sang, every role learned, and for letting me enter those historic backstage doors every single day!

## MADELINE SLETTEDAHL



Todd Rosenberg

It is almost impossible to put into words the growth and experience I have gained as a musician over my three years as the pianist for the Ryan Opera Center.

Through my participation in this one-of-a-kind program, I've honed my skills as a vocal coach and gained significant experience working with many conductors as a répétiteur for several opera productions and performances. It's been a privilege to perform frequently with my talented singing colleagues both here in Chicago and abroad, developing both musically and interpersonally in a field that has so much to say about the human experience. I've also developed meaningful relationships with my sponsors and many other supporters of both the Ryan Opera Center and of Lyric. I will never forget this time I've spent in Chicago, and for that, I'm immensely grateful.

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RYAN OPERA CENTER  
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*Assistant  
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**Violin II**

Yin Shen, *Principal*  
John Macfarlane,  
*Assistant Principal*

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Diane Duraffourg-  
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Peter Labella  
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Carol Cook, *Principal*  
Terri Van  
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*Assistant Principal*

Frank W. Babbitt  
Patrick Brennan  
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Amy Hess  
Melissa Trier Kirk

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*Principal*  
Paul Dwyer, *Assistant  
Principal*

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**Bass**

Ian Hallas, *Principal*  
Andrew L. W.  
Anderson  
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**Flute**

Marie Tachouet,  
*Principal*  
Dionne Jackson,  
*Assistant Principal*  
Alyce Johnson

**Piccolo**

Alyce Johnson

**Oboe**

Judith Kulb, *Principal*  
Judith Zunamon  
Lewis,  
*Assistant Principal*  
Anne Bach+

**English Horn**

Judith Zunamon  
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**Clarinet**

Charlene  
Zimmerman,  
*Principal*  
Linda A. Baker,  
*Co-Assistant  
Principal*  
Susan Warner,  
*Co-Assistant  
Principal*

**Bass Clarinet**

Linda A. Baker

**Bassoon**

Preman Tilson,  
*Principal*  
Lewis Kirk, *Assistant  
Principal*  
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**Contrabassoon**

Lewis Kirk

**Horn**

Jonathan Boen,  
*Principal*  
Fritz Foss, *Assistant  
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Robert E. Johnson,  
*Third Horn*  
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**Trumpet**

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*Principal*  
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**Trombone**

Jeremy Moeller,  
*Principal*  
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*Assistant Principal*  
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Andrew Smith,  
*Principal*

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