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# *Rising Stars in Concert*

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# Rising Stars in Concert

**Saturday, May 6, 2023, 7:30 p.m.**

Featuring the 2022/23 Ensemble of  
The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center at Lyric Opera of Chicago  
Members of the Lyric Opera Orchestra  
Roberto Kalb, *conductor*  
Crystal Manich, *director*

*Rising Stars in Concert* is generously made possible by  
Lead Sponsor the **Donna Van Eekeren Foundation**  
with additional support from the **Dr. Scholl Foundation,**  
the **Chauncey and Marion D. McCormick Family Foundation,**  
**Patricia A. Kenney & Gregory J. O'Leary, Philip G. Lumpkin,**  
**Dr. Nora Jaskowiak and Mr. Matthew Hinerfeld, and Mary Stowell.**

Listen to the broadcast of *Rising Stars in Concert* on 98.7WFMT and wfmt.com  
on Sunday, May 21, at 5 p.m., generously made possible by the **Donna Van Eekeren Foundation.**

# Program

Gioachino Rossini (1792 – 1868)	<i>Il turco in Italia (The Turk in Italy)</i> Act One: "Non si dà follia maggiore"	LINDSEY REYNOLDS (Fiorilla)
Giacomo Puccini (1858 – 1924)	<i>Gianni Schicchi</i> "Avete torto!...Firenze è come un albero fiorito"	ALEJANDRO LUÉVANOS (Rinuccio)
Richard Strauss (1864 – 1949)	<i>Arabella</i> Act Three: "Das war sehr gut, Mandryka"	KATHRYN HENRY (Arabella) with LAUREANO QUANT (Mandryka)
Jules Massenet (1842 – 1912)	<i>Manon</i> Act Three: "Je suis seul! Seul enfin!... Ah! Fuyez, douce image"	RYAN CAPOZZO (Des Grieux)
Puccini	<i>Edgar</i> Act One: "Questo amor, vergogna mia"	LAUREANO QUANT (Frank) LUTHER H. LEWIS III (Director)
Charles Gounod (1818 – 1893)	<i>Roméo et Juliette (Romeo and Juliet)</i> Act Four: "Dieu! quel frisson court dans mes veines?... Amour, ranime mon courage"	DENIS VÉLEZ (Juliette)
Rossini	<i>Il barbiere di Siviglia (The Barber of Seville)</i> Act One: "O cielo!...All'idea di quel metallo"	LUNGA ERIC HALLAM (Count Almaviva) IAN RUCKER (Figaro)
Antonín Dvořák (1841 – 1904)	<i>Rusalka</i> Act Three: "Miláčku, znáš mne, znáš?"	KATHRYN HENRY (Rusalka) RYAN CAPOZZO (Prince)
Béla Bartók (1881 – 1945)	<i>A kékszakállú herceg vára (Bluebeard's Castle)</i> "Oh, be sok kincs!"	KATHERINE DEYOUNG (Judith) WM. CLAY THOMPSON (Bluebeard)

INTERMISSION

Richard Wagner (1813 – 1883)	<i>Lohengrin</i> Act Three: Prelude	DONALD LEE III (Conductor)
Gaetano Donizetti (1797 – 1848)	<i>L'elisir d'amore (The Elixir of Love)</i> Act One: "Caro elisir!"	ALEJANDRO LUÉVANOS (Nemorino) LINDSEY REYNOLDS (Adina) DONALD LEE III (Conductor)
Ricky Ian Gordon (1956 – )	<i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> Act Three: "Ma, Ma, it's me, Ma... I'll be there"	IAN RUCKER (Tom Joad) with KATHERINE DeYOUNG (Ma Joad)
Gounod	<i>Faust</i> Act Two: "Le veau d'or"	WM. CLAY THOMPSON (Méphistophélès) with FULL ENSEMBLE
Georges Bizet (1838 – 1875)	<i>Les pêcheurs de perles (The Pearl Fishers)</i> Act One: "À cette voix quel trouble agitait tout mon être?...Je crois entendre encore"	LUNGA ERIC HALLAM (Nadir) LUTHER H. LEWIS III (Director)
Ruggero Leoncavallo (1857 – 1919)	<i>Pagliacci (Clowns)</i> Act One: "Nedda! Silvio! A quest'ora"	LAUREANO QUANT (Silvio) DENIS VÉLEZ (Nedda)
Wagner	<i>Tannhäuser</i> Act One: "Geliebter, komm!"	KATHERINE DeYOUNG (Venus) with RYAN CAPOZZO (Tannhäuser)
Sigmund Romberg (1887 – 1951)	<i>The New Moon</i> Act One: Finale, "Wanting You"	DENIS VÉLEZ (Marianne) LUNGA ERIC HALLAM (Robert) with FULL ENSEMBLE

Lighting Designer: **Chris Maravich**

Stage Management: **Peggy Stenger, Alaina Bartkowiak, Amy C. Thompson**, with Ryan Opera Center Stage Manager **Tess Naval**

Musical and Language Preparation: **William C. Billingham, Julia Faulkner, Laurann Gilley, Donald Lee III, Noah Lindquist, Derek Matson, Klára Moldová, Jerad Mosbey, Chris Reynolds, Craig Terry, Viktoria Vizin, Eric Weimer**

Hair, Makeup, and Wardrobe: **Necole Bluhm, Emily Santiago, Wendy McCay**

Projected Titles Translations: **Peter Bloor, Matthew Lata, Derek Matson, Roger Pines, Francis Rizzo, Royal Opera House, Colin Ure**

Cover Photo: **Kyle Flubacker**

"Non si dà follia maggiore" from *Il turco in Italia* is presented by arrangement with Ipsilon Music Press.

Selections from *Arabella*, *Rusalka*, and *Bluebeard's Castle* are presented by arrangement with Boosey & Hawkes, Inc.

"I'll Be There" from *The Grapes of Wrath* is presented by arrangement with Theodore Presser.

"Wanting You" from *The New Moon* is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals.

# Artist profiles



## **ROBERTO KALB | CONDUCTOR**

### **Lyric debut**

The Mexican-born conductor is the newly appointed music director of Detroit Opera. He makes multiple debuts in the 2022/23 Season, including with San Francisco Opera, Compañía Nacional de Ópera at the Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City, San Diego Opera, and Lyric Opera of Kansas City. The 2021/22 Season marked a debut with the Opéra Orchestre National Montpellier, as well as return collaborations with Wolf Trap Opera and the National Symphony Orchestra for *La traviata*, and Opera Theatre of Saint Louis for the world premiere of Tobias Picker's *Awakenings*. In 2019, Kalb concluded his five-season tenure as resident conductor and head of music at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. Additional highlights include productions at the Detroit Opera (formerly Michigan Opera Theatre), Florida Grand Opera, Tulsa Opera, Kentucky Opera, and Opera Maine, as well as performances with the Orquesta Carlos Chávez in Mexico City, and the Orquesta Sinfônica da USP in São Paulo. Previously, Kalb also worked as cover/assistant conductor for the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto. He was a recipient of a 2021 Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Award.



## **CRYSTAL MANICH | DIRECTOR**

### **Lyric debut**

The Latina director's work for stage and screen has been seen across the United States, Argentina, and Australia. She recently won Best First Time Female Filmmaker at the 2021 Toronto International Women Film Festival for her feature film *The Copper Queen*, produced by Arizona Opera in collaboration with Manley Films. Manich was nominated for a 2021 Chicago/Midwest Regional Emmy Award for Daniel Catán's opera *La Hija de Rappaccini*. She directed and co-produced this multi-cam production with Chicago Opera Theater and Valhalla Media live from the Field Museum. This season she will direct several new productions including the world premiere of *Anne Frank* at Indiana University and *Die Walküre* at Opera Santa Barbara, among others. She also collaborates with singer-songwriter Ivywild and has directed the music videos of *Willing to Find Out* and *Longing for You*. Manich was recently awarded a commission for the new musical play *La Llorona* now in development with Theater Latté Da.



## **RYAN CAPOZZO | TENOR**

### **Previously at Lyric:** Remendado/*Carmen* (2022/23).

The tenor, a first-year member of the Ryan Opera Center, received a Master of Musical Arts degree from the Yale School of Music, where he was awarded the Phyllis Curtin Career Entry Prize and was heard with the Yale Opera as Arcadio/Daniel Catán's *Florencia en el Amazonas* and Tamino/*The Magic Flute* (partial role, Spring Opera Showcase). Previously, Capozzo earned Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees from the Purchase College Conservatory of Music. At Purchase Opera, the tenor was featured as Rinuccio/*Gianni Schicchi* (guest artist), Reverend Samuel Parris/Robert Ward's *The Crucible*, Don Ottavio/*Don Giovanni*, Nero/*L'incoronazione di Poppea*, and Lysander/*A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Capozzo's portrayal of Mozart's Tamino has been heard at the Berlin Opera Academy. The Huntington, New York native is a two-time Second Place Regional winner of the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition. *Ryan Capozzo is sponsored by the H. Earl and Miriam U. Hoover Endowment Fund.*



## **KATHERINE DEYOUNG | MEZZO-SOPRANO**

### **Previously at Lyric:** Sybil/*Proximity*, Mercédès/*Carmen*, Giovanna/*Ernani* (all 2022/23), and Second Lady/*The Magic Flute* (2021/22).

The third-year Ryan Opera Center mezzo-soprano is a native of Traverse City, Michigan. As a member of the 2019/20 Detroit Opera Studio, she was heard as the Sandman/*Hansel and Gretel*, the Old Lady/*Candide*, the Mother/*Amahl and the Night Visitors*, and Mae/*The Grapes of Wrath*. In 2018 and 2019, she participated in The Santa Fe Opera's Apprentice Singer program. Competition successes include National Semi-Finalist in the 2020 Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, Finalist and Online Viewers' Choice Award winner in Houston Grand Opera's 31st Eleanor McCollum Competition for Young Singers, and participant in the internationally celebrated Neue Stimmen International Singing Competition in Gütersloh, Germany. Following studies at Michigan State University, DeYoung received a master's degree in voice performance from the University of Houston, where she portrayed Isabella/*L'italiana in Algeri*, Fidalma/*The Secret Marriage*, Gertrude/*Romeo and Juliet*, Elizabeth Proctor/*The Crucible*, and Lady Sneerwell/Robert Nelson's *The School for Scandal* (world premiere). Other performing credits include the title role/*Carmen* with Opera in the Ozarks. In the 2021/22 Season, she performed in *Sunday in the Park* with Lyric's *Rising Stars*. *Katherine DeYoung is sponsored by Lead Sponsors Dr. and Mrs. Mark F. Kozloff and co-sponsors Cynthia Vahlkamp & Robert Kenyon.*



### LUNGA ERIC HALLAM | TENOR

**Previously at Lyric:** *Bootleg Joe/The Factotum* and *First Courtier/Le Comte Ory* (both 2022/23), and *Adult Nathan/Fire Shut Up in My Bones* (2021/22).

In the 2021/22 Season, the third-year Ryan Opera Center tenor performed in *Sunday in the Park with Lyric's Rising Stars*. He hails from Khayelitsha, South Africa, where he founded a nonprofit organization called Phenomenal Opera Voices. At the University of Cape Town College of Music, Hallam received his diploma and postgraduate (with honors) degrees in music training. Recent engagements as a Young Artist at Cape Town Opera include *Tebaldo/I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, *Edgaro/Lucia di Lammermoor*, and *Roberto/Maria Stuarda*, as well as *Ramiro/La Cenerentola* at Cape Town Conservatory. He was featured as part of the 2017 Harare International Festival of the Arts in Zimbabwe. Hallam competed as a semifinalist in the 2019 Neue Stimmen International Singing Competition and the 2019 Voice of South Africa International Singing Competition. Chicago engagements include two appearances at the Harris Theater's *Beyond the Aria* series, one alongside Joyce DiDonato, and his recent debut with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Riccardo Muti in *Un ballo in maschera*. In Lyric's 2020/21 virtual programming, Hallam was featured in *Lawrence Brownlee and Friends: The Next Chapter*, *Creating The Factotum*, *Sole e Amore*, *Magical Music Around the World*, and *Rising Stars in Concert*. Lunga Eric Hallam is sponsored by **Ms. Gay K. Stanek, Richard Shepro & Lindsay Roberts**, and **The Ford, Mages, and Boykins Families**.



### KATHRYN HENRY | SOPRANO

**Previously at Lyric:** *Passenger 1/Proximity* (2022/23).

The soprano is a first-year Ryan Opera Center member. In the summer of 2021, she portrayed Lucy Harker/John Corigliano's *The Lord of Cries* (world premiere) at The Santa Fe Opera. A former Baumgartner Studio Artist at Milwaukee's Florentine Opera, she has appeared there as Barbarina/*The Marriage of Figaro*, Micaëla/*La tragédie de Carmen*, and the title role/Pauline Viardot's *Cendrillon*. As a Toulmin Foundation Scholar at New York's Juilliard School of Music, Henry portrayed Arminda/*La finta giardiniera*. A native of Sheboygan, Wisconsin, the soprano has appeared with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra, and National Symphony Orchestra. She was a participant in Carnegie Hall's 2022 SongStudio with Renée Fleming and Ravinia's 2020 Steans Music Institute, and, in the summer of 2017, she was invited to Japan as a guest singer in the Kyoto International Student Music Festival. Henry was a finalist in the 2015 Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition and the 2018 Eleanor McCollum Competition for Young Singers at Houston Grand Opera, among others. She has won awards from the Luminarts Cultural Foundation, the Musicians Club of Women, and the Opera Index Vocal Competition. Kathryn Henry is sponsored by **Patricia A. Kenney & Gregory J. O'Leary** and **Karen Petitte**.



### DONALD LEE III | CONDUCTOR/PIANIST

**Previously at Lyric:** Music staff for *The Factotum* (2022/23); conducted selections for *The Magic Victrola* (2021/22).

The Virginia native is the inaugural Ryan Opera Center conductor/pianist, a new Ensemble position in 2021/22. While with Lyric, he has conducted selections for *Sunday in the Park with Lyric* (both 2021 and 2022). Recent engagements as a conductor and pianist include Des Moines Metro Opera for *Porgy and Bess* (he returns this summer for *Carmen*) and Opera Theatre of Saint Louis for their New Works Festival and other projects. Lee recently programmed and performed in digital recitals titled *Where Honor is Due* with Salon 21 in Cincinnati and *Adaptations* with Piano by Nature, highlighting music of Black composers alongside canonical works. For the Indictus Project, he recorded for the first time a set of cotillions by Black composer Francis Johnson. Lee achieved success as a solo pianist with Liszt's *Totentanz* (Eastern Music Festival's Young Artist Orchestra). He has participated in the Chautauqua Institution, the Art of the Piano Festival, and the Wintergreen Music Festival. An alumnus of James Madison University and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Lee has served as assistant professor of piano at Kentucky State University. **Donald Lee III is sponsored by Lead Sponsors Dr. Salme Harju Steinberg and Michael Steinberg, and co-sponsors Dr. David H. Whitney & Dr. Juliana Y. Chyu.**



### LUTHER H. LEWIS III | STAGE DIRECTOR

The multidisciplinary artist is the inaugural Ryan Opera Center Stage Director, a new Ensemble position starting in 2022/23. Lewis has worked on Lyric's 2022/23 Season productions of *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Le Comte Ory*, *The Factotum*, and *Proximity*. The Indiana native, who studied at Oberlin Conservatory of Music, the University of Kentucky, and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, has appeared in principal, supporting, and chorus roles in the U.S. and abroad with numerous companies, among them Lyric (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (2012/13), *Porgy and Bess* (2014/15)), and other productions at San Francisco Opera and Opéra de Montréal. In 2018, Lewis presented *Illustrations: A Gallery Concert* in collaboration with Chicago Opera Theater at the Goodman Theatre. He directed and designed scenic elements for children's operas and fully staged musicals with Chicago Opera Theater's *Opera for All* program and for a musical theater development program with After School Matters. Lewis recently served as the Inaugural Crane Directing Fellow with Opera Columbus and as a directing fellow with Opera Saratoga. **Luther H. Lewis III is sponsored by the Robert and Penelope Steiner Family Foundation.**



### ALEJANDRO LUÉVANOS | TENOR

**Previously at Lyric:** Passenger 6/*Proximity*, Lillas Pastia/*Carmen*, A Royal Herald/*Don Carlos*, and Riccardo/*Ernani* (all 2022/23).

The Mexican tenor is a first-year member of the Ryan Opera Center Ensemble. His appearances in Mexico include Don José/*Carmen* (Toluca Philharmonic Orchestra); Borsari/*Rigoletto*, Count Almaviva/*The Barber of Seville*, and scenes from *Il trovatore* (Orquesta Sinfónica del Estado de México); and Rossini's *Stabat Mater* and *Petite Messe Solennelle*, as well as an opera gala with Ramón Vargas (all at Mexico City's Palacio de Bellas Artes). He has appeared as tenor soloist in Bach's Cantata No. 4, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, Brahms's *Liebeslieder Walzer*, Schubert's *Winterreise*, and Luis G. Jordà's *Cantata a la Independencia*. Luévanos was previously a two-year member of the Opera Studio at the Bellas Artes, where he is scheduled to return to appear in Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. A former participant in the International Summer Program in Sankt Goar, Germany, he is also a 2021 and 2022 winner of the Mexico District in the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition. *Alejandro Luévanos is sponsored by an Anonymous Donor.*



### TESS NAVAL | STAGE MANAGER

Naval is the Ryan Opera Center's first Stage Manager, a new Ensemble position. This season she worked on *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Don Carlos*, *The Factotum*, and *Carmen*. Previously a Chicago-based freelance stage manager, she graduated from Boston University with a BFA in stage management. Some recent projects include work with Yale Opera for their Fall Opera Scenes programs (2018, 2019, 2021), including *The Elixir of Love*, *Eugene Onegin*, *The Old Maid and the Thief*, and *Le Rossignol*; *The Pirates of Penzance* and *Peter Pan* with Music Theater Works; *Gather* with Filament Theatre; *Yours Truly* with Albany Park Theater Project; *Cendrillon* with North Park University; the *Jason Bishop Show*; multiple productions at SeaWorld San Antonio; Boston University Opera Institute's productions of *Così fan tutte* and *La tragédie de Carmen*; *Mary Poppins* with the Berkshire Theatre Group; and *Our Class* with the Boston Center for American Performance. Naval has interned at the Pentameters Theatre in London, the Ivoryton Playhouse in Connecticut, the Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, and Berkshire Theatre Group. *Tess Naval is sponsored by Amy & Paul Carbone and Roberta L. & Robert J. Washlow.*



### LAUREANO QUANT | BARITONE

**Previously at Lyric:** Dancaire/*Carmen* and Count of Lerma/*Don Carlos* (both 2022/23).

A first-year member of the Ryan Opera Center Ensemble and a native of Barranquilla, Colombia, the baritone holds a Master of Music degree from the Manhattan School of Music and a Master of Musical Arts degree from Yale University. Highlights of his repertoire include Belcore/*The Elixir of Love*, Guglielmo/*Così fan tutte*, Figaro/Saverio

Mercadante's *I due Figaro*, Maguire/Tobias Picker's *Emmeline*, Zurga/*The Pearl Fishers*, Vittorio and The Boarder/Nino Rota's *I due timidi*, Demetrius/*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and the Captain and Prince Ragotsky/*Candide*. In the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, Quant was awarded Second Place in both the Western Region (2022) and the Southeastern Region (2020). He has also won the Luminarts Cultural Foundation Men's Voice Fellowship (2023), the Online Audience Award in Houston Grand Opera's Concert of Arias (2020), First Prize in the Premio de Canto Ciudad de Bogotá (2018), and Second Prize in the Bogotá Philharmonic Orchestra's National Voice Competition (2016). Quant has participated in prestigious programs such as the Merola Opera Program and SongStudio, the latter led by Renée Fleming at Carnegie Hall. *Laureano Quant is sponsored by Peter Scheuermann.*



### LINDSEY REYNOLDS | SOPRANO

**Previously at Lyric:** Very Loud Girl and Passenger 2/*Proximity*, Alice/*Le Comte Ory*, and Voice from Above/*Don Carlos* (all 2022/23).

The soprano is a first-year Ryan Opera Center Ensemble member. In 2021/22, the New Orleans native portrayed Despina/*Così fan tutte* and Betty/Marc Blitzstein's *Triple-Sec* (a film adaptation) with Curtis Opera Theatre. She was also an Emerging Artist with Opera Philadelphia, where she sang the Page/*Rigoletto*. The soprano's repertoire includes Zerlina/*Don Giovanni*, Adina/*The Elixir of Love*, Giulietta/*I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, Miss Wordsworth/*Albert Herring*, and Monica/*The Medium*. She has appeared in concert with the Curtis Symphony Orchestra under Yannick Nézet-Séguin and with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Stéphane Denève. Reynolds has been awarded first place in many competitions, among them the Musicians Club of Women, Camille Coloratura Awards, James Toland Vocal Arts Competition, Young Patronesses of the Opera/Florida Grand Opera Competition, Hal Leonard Art Song Competition, and National Association of Negro Musicians Competition. She is also the recipient of an Emerging Artist Award from Opera Index, and this summer debuts with the Grant Park Music Festival. *Lindsey Reynolds is sponsored by an Anonymous Donor, Fred & Phoebe Boelfer, and Donna Van Eekeren & Dale Connelly.*



### IAN RUCKER | BARITONE

**Previously at Lyric:** Moralès/*Carmen* and Raimbaud/*Le Comte Ory* (both 2022/23).

The first-year Ryan Opera Center baritone is from Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Rucker holds a master's degree in vocal performance from Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music. His roles there included Count Almaviva/*The Marriage of Figaro* and the title role/*The Barber of Seville*. He has also appeared as Papageno/*The Magic Flute* at Bloomington Chamber Opera. The baritone previously earned his bachelor's degree in vocal performance at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, where he was heard in the title roles/*Don Giovanni* and *Sweeney Todd*, as well as Officer Lockstock/*Urinetown* and Ernst Ludwig/*Cabaret*. Rucker is a former Palm Beach Opera



Apprentice Artist and a former Aspen Summer Music Festival Renée Fleming Artist. He recently received an Encouragement Award in the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition (Wisconsin District) and first place in the James Toland Vocal Arts Competition. *Ian Rucker is sponsored by Pat & Jerry Frank.*



### WM. CLAY THOMPSON | BASS

**Previously at Lyric:** Zuniga/*Carmen* and Second Courtier/*Le Comte Ory* (both 2022/23).

The American bass, a first-year Ryan Opera Center member, is a two-time District winner of the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition and was a Semi-Finalist in the 2020 Fort Worth Opera McCammon Voice Competition. He recently debuted at Arizona Opera (*Zuniga/Carmen*) and the Metropolitan Opera (*Octet Singer/Brett Dean's Hamlet*). Thompson is a former participant in the Santa Fe Opera and Wolf Trap Opera young-artist programs. From 2017 to 2019, he was a Resident Artist at The Minnesota Opera, performing in operas of Mozart, Verdi, Massenet, Puccini, Jake Heggie, Kevin Puts, and Joel Puckett (*The Fix*, a world premiere). Thompson has been featured at the Château de Versailles Spectacles (*Suleyman Pasha/The Ghosts of Versailles*, European debut), The Glimmerglass Festival (*The Cunning Little Vixen*, *Silent Night*, *West Side Story*, *Noye's Fludde*, *The Ghosts of Versailles*, and *La traviata*) and Fort Worth Opera (*Zuniga/Carmen* and Raymond Buck/David T. Little's *JFK*, world premiere), among other companies. This summer he returns to Wolf Trap to sing Méphistophélès in *Faust*. *Wm. Clay Thompson is sponsored by the J. Thomas Hurvis Endowment.*



### DENIS VÉLEZ | SOPRANO

**Previously at Lyric:** Frasquita/*Carmen*, Sandman and Dew Fairy/*Hansel and Gretel*, and Thibault/*Don Carlos* (all 2022/23); Papagena/*The Magic Flute*, Giannetta/*The Elixir of Love*, and Third Apparition/*Macbeth* (all 2021/22).

The third-year soprano, from Puebla, Mexico, was a national winner of the 2020 Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition. Later this season she is engaged at San Francisco Opera for *El último sueño de Frida y Diego*. In Mexico's National Singing Contest Carlo Morelli, her performance earned her the First Prize, the French Opera Award, and the Francisco Araiza Special Award. Most recently, she was named the 2022 Luminarts Fellow in Classical Music, Women's Voice. Vélez's repertoire includes the Countess and Susanna/*The Marriage of Figaro*, Bastienne/*Bastien und Bastienne*, Fiordiligi/*Così fan tutte*, Adina/*The Elixir of Love*, and Mimì/*La bohème*. Prior to her arrival in Chicago, Vélez was a member of the National Opera Chorus at Mexico City's internationally celebrated Palacio de Bellas Artes. The soprano holds a bachelor's degree in operatic singing from Mexico's Superior School of Music. Among her appearances in Chicago is the *Beyond the Aria* series at the Harris Theater, for which she performed alongside Joyce DiDonato in 2021, and returns in the current season. Vélez appeared in Lyric's 2020/21 virtual programs *Pasión Latina*, *Sole e Amore*, *Magical Music Around the World*, and *Rising Stars in Concert*. *Denis Vélez is sponsored by The C.G. Pinnell Family.*

#### Due to outside engagements, the following 2022/23 Ensemble artists are not able to appear tonight:

Tenor **Martin Luther Clark**, sponsored by the **Robert & Isabelle Bass Foundation**, **David & Janet Fox**, and **Richard O. Ryan**, is at Tulsa Opera.

Bass **Ron Dukes**, sponsored by **The Thierer Family Foundation**, is at Opera Philadelphia.

Pianist **Chris Reynolds**, sponsored by **Nancy Dehmlow**, the **Julian Family Foundation**, and **Philip G. Lumpkin**, is at San Francisco Opera.

Lyric

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



Kyle Flubacker

## MARTIN LUTHER CLARK

The Ryan Opera Center has been a dream since I was an undergraduate. When I was offered a contract after my audition, it was the most incredible moment. Throughout my three-year tenure, my mentors presented many high-standard challenges, but the most important one was to become my most authentic self in my artistic expression. With growth from trial and error, self-discovery, and overcoming the fear of being vulnerable, I can confidently say I know who I am as an artist and as a human being. In a world where there is still work to be done and awareness to be known, and as a proud African-American and member of the LGBTQ+ community, I feel seen, heard, and valued by the warm love and acceptance I've experienced at the Ryan Opera Center, and I am deeply grateful.



Cory Weaver

## KATHERINE DEYOUNG

My three years as an Ensemble member in the Ryan Opera Center have been some of the most rewarding times in my life. The support, coaching, and teaching I have received have exponentially increased my abilities and my artistry. The experience of performing on the Lyric Opera of Chicago stage and recording for the WFMT series and digital performance projects has inspired me and allowed me to grow. I am deeply grateful to everyone with whom I have had the opportunity to work—collectively, they have lifted me up and given me the tools to succeed. I am also extremely thankful to all the donors and sponsors who welcomed and supported me throughout my time here. My heart is full of gratitude!



### LUNGA ERIC HALLAM

Coming from a humble background in Cape Town, South Africa, I am very honored to have been a part of the Ryan Opera Center. Moving to a different country was exciting and scary—but I knew that I had to do it, to be a successful international opera singer. My time here has been a dream come true: I've worked with world-renowned artists, and I've shared the stage with some of my role models. Throughout the process, the Ryan Opera Center has guided and nurtured me, and I will be forever grateful. A huge thank you also to all the supporters who make these dreams come to reality. So many doors have opened for me, and I am very excited to take the skills and knowledge I have gained into the next chapter of my career.



### CHRIS REYNOLDS

I arrived at the Ryan Opera Center during a difficult time: a new city, a pandemic, and trying to finish my doctorate, all while navigating the new challenges of working in a major opera house and learning new skills left and right. My time here has been a whirlwind, and one that seems to have gone by in a flash, all the while in the familiar setting of backstage at an opera house, where I've spent so much time in my life. I have felt endlessly supported by my colleagues and mentors to try things out, make mistakes, and learn every step of the way. I leave a better pianist, a better musician, and certainly a better person, having been emboldened by the humanity of those around me during this crazy time in my life.



### DENIS VÉLEZ

Being a member of the Ryan Opera Center has been the best thing that could have happened to me as an emerging artist. In the midst of a year as difficult as 2020, the program made it possible for me to come to Chicago and work in the midst of the pandemic, learning from great mentors as well as recording concerts and recitals. I have since participated in eight Lyric mainstage productions, performing and understudying alongside the best operatic artists in the world. All of these experiences have provided me with many tools that are essential to forge a path as an opera singer. If I could summarize everything in just one sentence, I would say: Being a member of the Ryan Opera Center has changed my life forever. **L**

All photos on this page by Kyle Flubacker

# Orchestra

## MUSIC STAFF

William C. Billingham  
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Keun-A Lee  
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Francesco Milioto  
Lee Mills<sup>+</sup>  
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Zoe Zeniodi

## ORCHESTRA

### Violin I

Robert Hanford, *Concertmaster*,  
*Mrs. R. Robert Funderburg Endowed Chair*  
Alexander Belavsky  
Kathleen Brauer  
Bing Jing Yu  
Laura Miller  
Rika Seko<sup>\*\*</sup>  
Liba Shacht  
Heather Wittels

### Violin II

Yin Shen, *Principal*  
John Macfarlane, *Assistant Principal*  
Diane Duraffourg-Robinson  
Ann Palen  
Irene Radetzky  
John D. Robinson  
David Volfe  
Albert Wang<sup>\*</sup>

### Viola

Carol Cook, *Principal*  
Terri Van Valkinburgh, *Assistant Principal*  
Frank W. Babbitt  
Patrick Brennan  
Amy Hess  
Melissa Trier Kirk

### Cello

Calum Cook, *Principal*  
Paul Dwyer, *Assistant Principal*  
Mark Brandfonbrener  
William H. Cernota  
Walter Preucil

### String Bass

Ian Hallas, *Principal*  
Samuel Shuhan,  
*Assistant Principal*

Andrew L. W. Anderson  
Gregory Sarchet  
Collins R. Trier

### Flute

Marie Tachouet, *Principal*  
Dionne Jackson, *Assistant Principal*  
Rachel Blumenthal<sup>\*\*</sup>  
Alyce Johnson<sup>\*</sup>

### Piccolo

Rachel Blumenthal<sup>\*\*</sup>  
Alyce Johnson<sup>\*</sup>

### Oboe

Paul Lueders<sup>\*\*</sup>,  
*Acting Principal*  
Judith Zunamon Lewis,  
*Acting Assistant Principal*

### English Horn

Judith Zunamon Lewis

### Clarinet

Susan Warner,  
*Acting Principal*  
Danny Mui<sup>\*\*</sup>,  
*Acting Assistant Principal*

### Bass Clarinet

Danny Mui<sup>\*\*</sup>

### Bassoon

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

### Contrabassoon

Lewis Kirk

### Horn

Jonathan Boen, *Principal*  
Fritz Foss, *Assistant Principal/ Utility*  
Robert E. Johnson, *Third Horn*  
Samuel Hamzem  
Neil Kimel

### Trumpet

William Denton, *Principal*  
Rebecca Oliverio,  
*Acting Assistant Principal*

### Trombone

Jeremy Moeller, *Principal*  
Mark Fisher, *Assistant Principal*  
Mark Fry<sup>\*\*</sup>

### Bass Trombone

Mark Fry<sup>\*\*</sup>

### Tuba

Andrew Smith, *Principal*

### Timpani

Edward Harrison, *Principal*

### Percussion

Douglas Waddell,  
*Acting Principal*  
Eric Millstein,  
*Acting Assistant Principal*

### Harp

Lynn Williams, *Principal*

### Librarian

John Rosenkrans<sup>\*</sup>, *Principal*  
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Kate Carter, *violin*  
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Christine Chon, *violin*  
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Ashley Hunter, *flute*  
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Liam Boisset, *oboe*  
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Sergey Gutorov, *clarinet*  
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Joseph Connor, *saxophones*  
Nicholas Ritter, *bassoon*  
Brian Goodwin, *horn*  
Renée Vogen, *horn*  
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\* On leave, 2022/23 Season

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