BERKSHIRE OPERA FESTIVAL
2022 SUMMER SEASON

High on the Ramparts
A Spotlight on Music of Black Composers

Mozart’s Don Giovanni

Jake Heggie & Gene Scheer’s Three Decembers
Dear Friends,

I’m so pleased to welcome you to Berkshire Opera Festival’s seventh season of performances. And what a season it is!

Building on the success of last summer’s inaugural second-stage production, we offer another American opera to kick off our season – Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer’s *Three Decembers*. You’ll surely be enthralled by this intimate drama that tests how strong familial bonds really are. I’m delighted to welcome back Adriana Zabala (the Composer in 2017’s *Ariadne auf Naxos*), who is joined in this production by Monica Dewey and Theo Hoffman in their BOF debuts. Steering the ship will be conductor Christopher James Ray and director Beth Greenberg.

Our free concert series continues with “High on the Ramparts,” a program spotlighting music by Black composers whose incredible works have been so often neglected through the years. This concert features soprano Kearstin Piper Brown alongside tenor Joshua Blue, who also stars in our mainstage opera.

And that mainstage opera is, of course, Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*. This was the very first Mozart opera I fell in love with many years ago, and now that I’m older and (hopefully) wiser, I stand even more in awe of its genius. Our internationally-acclaimed cast – including André Courville, Christian Zaremba, Laura Wilde, and Megan Moore – brings this incredible opera to life. As always, they’re joined by the superlative musicians of the Berkshire Opera Festival Orchestra and Chorus.

I know you’ll enjoy this season at BOF, and I offer you my continued gratitude!

Brian Garman
Artistic Director and Co-Founder
Hello Everyone,

I would like to extend my warmest and most heartfelt welcome to our 2022 Festival, our seventh season. I am thrilled to be back directing our mainstage production, one of the greatest and most challenging operatic works for a director, Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*.

On behalf of this season’s production teams, for both *Don Giovanni* and *Three Decembers* – that is, the directors, designers, artisans, stage managers, and technical personnel – I want to say that we are proud, as always, to bring productions of the highest quality to the Berkshires and surrounding communities.

I want to thank you for your continued support of Berkshire Opera Festival. As we all know, there is nothing better than witnessing live opera and the unamplified human voice.

May you all have a wonderful summer, full of live theater and music.

Jonathon Loy

Director of Production and Co-Founder

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August 26, 29 & September 1
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SECOND STAGE
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July 21 & 23
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SUMMER 2022

THE APPROACH
by Mark O’Rowe
May 6 – 29

AN ILIAD
by Lisa Peterson and Denis O’Hare
June 3 – July 3

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by William Shakespeare
July 2 – August 14

PLAYS IN PROCESS
a Series of Developing Works
July 9 – August 7

A WALK IN THE WOODS
by Lee Blessing
July 15 – September 4

HYMN
by Lolita Chakrabarti
July 22 – August 28

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by William Shakespeare
August 19 – September 18

GOLDEN LEAF
RAGTIME BLUES
by Charles Smith
September 23 – October 30

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BOF’s production of Three Decembers is supported in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts

Music by Jake Heggie
Libretto by Gene Scheer

Based on an original play by Terrence McNally
Commissioned by the Houston Grand Opera

Thursday, July 21 at 7:30pm
Saturday, July 23 at 1:00pm

Performed in residence and co-presented by:
Pavilion Theater, PS21/Performances Spaces for the 21st Century
Chatham, NY

Opera in three parts
Sung in English

The performance will not have an intermission.
Total performance time is approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes.

Premiere: February 9, 2008, Houston Grand Opera
Conductor — Christopher James Ray  
Director — Beth Greenberg  
Scenic Designer — Janie E. Howland  
Costume Designer — Brooke Stanton  
Lighting Designer — Alex Jainchill  
Hair and Make-Up Designer — Beckie Kravetz  
Musical Preparation — Noah Palmer  
English Diction Coach — Lynn Baker  
Stage Manager — Cindy Knight

Cast  
(in order of vocal appearance)

Charlie  
Theo Hoffman

Beatrice  
Monica Dewey

Madeline Mitchell, their mother  
Adriana Zabala

Synopsis

The action takes place during the month of December in the years 1986, 1996, and 2006.

Part I: 1986

Siblings Charlie and Beatrice (Bea) read their mother’s annual Christmas letter while talking on the phone. They share laughs and unapologetic sarcasm over their mother’s writing style, attempting to gloss over their strained relationship with her. Charlie is in San Francisco and Bea is in Hartford, while their famous mother, Madeline (Maddy) Mitchell, is working in the Caribbean for the holiday. Maddy writes about Christmas with their father before they were born. Bea admits that she hardly remembers their dad, since they were both very young when he died, but they miss him nonetheless. Maddy announces that she will be starring in her first Broadway musical, which Charlie refuses to attend. Maddy ends the letter with goodbyes, but she wrongly addresses Charlie’s partner as Curt. Charlie becomes increasingly upset, having hoped that after five years with Burt, his mother at least would have remembered his name (“Curt.” She called him “Curt”). Bea admits that she envies the love Charlie and Burt share.

On stage, Maddy sings “Daybreak,” the final number from her new Broadway show.
A well-dressed Bea joins Maddy in her dressing room after a performance of the new musical. Bea praises Maddy’s performance as she instinctively helps her mother with her post-show dressing room routine. Bea is very concerned for Charlie and Burt as AIDS is causing Burt’s health to deteriorate rapidly. She accuses Maddy of being an absent parent, unsupportive of her children. Defending herself, Maddy claims she was only away from her children because she had to provide for the family as a single mother.

Bea visits Charlie in San Francisco. Burt is not doing well, and Charlie is coming to terms with Burt’s impending death. The siblings reminisce on their childhood, what they remember about their father, and what they may have invented over time (Duet: What do you remember about Dad?)

**Part II: 1996**

Charlie is alone in his apartment, surrounded by packed and sealed boxes, flipping through his journal and disclosing that Burt died recently at Christmastime (Each day I write you four little lines). Maddy eventually came to visit shortly before Burt died. Maddy’s voice is heard, singing the lullaby Charlie’s father used to sing to him, and which she sang to Burt when she visited.

Maddy has been nominated again for a Tony Award. Bea and Charlie plan to join their mother for the award ceremony. All three in their respective locations sing the father’s lullaby, encouraging themselves to let go of their fears and frustrations.

Alone in Maddy’s apartment on the night of the Tony Awards, Bea stands in front of a full-length mirror, trying on her mother’s clothes as she sips from a glass of wine (She’s late). Bea is slowly unraveling in her insecurities, her mother’s criticism and neglect, her unfaithful husband, and her drinking habits. Charlie rushes in with shopping bags, noticing that Bea is upset, but she denies it. He attempts to raise her spirits with impersonations of their mother. Maddy enters, preparing her acceptance speech. She plans to acknowledge Charlie and Burt’s relationship and how no one is immune to tragedy. Charlie and Bea are unimpressed. Maddy accuses Bea of being drunk and acting just like her father, revealing the grim truth that their father was an alcoholic who could not hold a job. The children believed their father had been killed in a car accident, but Maddy finally shares that his death was a suicide. Charlie and Bea are devastated. Their argument is interrupted because Maddy must get ready for the award ceremony. Bea and Charlie, shattered by the news of their father, refuse to go with Maddy.

**Part III: 2006**

Maddy has died quietly in her sleep, after writing her latest Christmas letter. Bea and Charlie speak at her memorial service held in a Broadway theater. They offer a loving tribute to both their parents’ souls. The service concludes with the last lines from Maddy’s final Christmas letter: “All in all, isn’t life simply grand? I’m so awfully glad I showed up for it.”

*Synopsis courtesy of Opera Birmingham*
Composer's Note
by Jake Heggie

“All in all, isn’t life simply grand? I’m so awfully glad I showed up for it.”
—Madeline Mitchell in *Three Decembers*

Shortly after the premiere of *Dead Man Walking* in 2000, the opera’s librettist, the great American playwright Terrence McNally, mentioned a short script he’d written for an AIDS benefit in 1999. He gave me a copy of *Some Christmas Letters (and a Couple of Phone Calls)* and from the first words, the story sang to me. It felt true, honest, emotionally big, and exactly what I was looking for as a chamber opera. I started sketching musical ideas in the margins and knew I wanted to compose it for the great, inspiring American mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade. She and I have a rich history of collaborating, and by then I’d already written many songs for her as well as a major role in *Dead Man Walking*. She was on board right away. A brief but powerful fourteen pages long, the script is about the stormy, emotional lives of a famous stage actress named Madeline Mitchell and her two adult children, Bea and Charlie. The script was created for an AIDS benefit at Carnegie Hall in New York and was performed one time only by the astonishing cast of Julie Harris (Madeline), Cherry Jones (Bea) and Victor Garber (Charlie). Told through letters and phone calls, the story follows these characters through two decades of their lives. It is a play about identity and family, discovering the truth of who we are and who our parents are. Hovering over it all is the difficult, tense history of the AIDS crisis in America. Houston Grand Opera and San Francisco Opera co-commissioned the piece as a chamber opera that could be done in different size venues with three singers and 11 instrumentalists all on stage together. I first read the script in 2001, but due to several detours it wasn’t until 2007 that librettist Gene Scheer and I were finally able to get going. It was our first opera collaboration. Taking this 14-page script and turning it into a viable opera was a big leap requiring imagination, invention and vision, all of which Gene has in spades. He enlarged the story and gave it dramatic conflicts and actions not found in the original script; he also invented the big family secret at its core. After considering several titles for the opera, we settled on *Three Decembers*. With Gene’s clear libretto, I was able to compose the opera in about six months. The flavor of musical theater heard throughout is due to the dominance of Madeline Mitchell, the famous Broadway star who is also the matriarch of this family. Though Bea and Charlie each have their own musical personalities, Madeline’s influence and gravitational pull is inevitable. The premiere of *Three Decembers* took place at Houston Grand Opera’s Cullen Theater on February 29, 2008 with Frederica von Stade (Madeline), soprano Kristin Clayton (Bea) and baritone Keith Phares (Charlie). The cast reunited later that year for a production by San Francisco Opera at UC Berkeley. Following that production, we made a few essential rewrites and ten years later, *Three Decembers* has received nearly two dozen international productions with several more on the horizon.
HIGH ON THE RAMPARTS
A Spotlight on Music of Black Composers

Wednesday, August 10 at 7:30pm
Ellen Crane Memorial Room, Berkshire Museum
Pittsfield, MA

Kearstin Piper Brown, soprano
Joshua Blue, tenor
Travis Bloom, piano

This concert is made possible in part through the generous support of the Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Hartford, as advised by Elysa & Peter Graber-Lipperman, and Adams Community Bank.
Love, Let the Wind Cry … How I Adore Thee
Undine Smith Moore (1904-1989)
Ms. Brown

“Son amour, sa constance extrême” from L’amant anonyme
Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges (1745-1799)
Léontine: Ms. Brown

(Checkin’ on the) Freedom Train
Sammy Heyward (1904-1982)
Mr. Blue

Solace
Scott Joplin (1868-1917)
Mr. Bloom

“My dear, what brings you here?” from Troubled Island
William Grant Still (1895-1978)
Claire: Ms. Brown
Vuval: Mr. Blue

Three Dream Portraits
Minstrel Man • Dream Variation • I, Too
Margaret Bonds (1913-1972)
Ms. Brown

Hold Fast to Dreams
Florence Price (1887-1953)
“Toccata” from Cantata
John Carter (1932-1981)
Mr. Blue

From Moments in Sonder
Tears • Greyday • The Lesson • Sounds Like Pearls
B.E. Boykin (b. 1989)
Ms. Brown

“Miranda … I hear your voice so clearly” from Blake
H. Leslie Adams (b. 1932)
Miranda: Ms. Brown
Blake: Mr. Blue

“Earl should have been home by sunset” from X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X
Anthony Davis (b. 1951)
Louise: Ms. Brown

Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child
Give Me Jesus
Walk Together Children
Mr. Blue
Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte

Based on a libretto by Giovanni Bertati

Saturday, August 20 at 1:00pm
Tuesday, August 23 at 7:30pm
Friday, August 26 at 7:30pm

Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center
Great Barrington, MA

Opera in two acts

Sung in Italian with projected English translations

There will be one 25-minute intermission.
Total performance time is approximately 3 hours and 10 minutes.

Premiere: October 29, 1787, Estates Theatre, Prague

Friday evening’s performance is dedicated to the memory of Nancy Vale.
Conductor — Brian Garman
Director — Jonathon Loy
Scenic Designer — Stephen Dobay
Costume Designer — Charles Caine
Lighting Designer — Alex Jainchill
Hair and Make-Up Designer — Beckie Kravetz
Choreographer — Stephen Agisilaou
Chorus Master and Assistant Conductor — Geoffrey Larson
Musical Preparation — Djordje Nesic, Travis Bloom
Stage Manager — Cindy Knight

Cast
(in order of vocal appearance)

Leporello, Don Giovanni’s servant
Christian Zaremba

Donna Anna, the Commendatore’s daughter
Laura Wilde

Don Giovanni, a licentious young nobleman
André Courville

The Commendatore
John Cheek

Don Ottavio, engaged to Donna Anna
Joshua Blue

Donna Elvira, a lady from Burgos, abandoned by Don Giovanni
Megan Moore

Zerlina, a peasant girl
Natalia Santaliz

Masetto, engaged to Zerlina
Brian James Myer

Chorus of peasants, servants, and demons
Synopsis

The action takes place in Seville.

Act I

One night, the servant Leporello is complaining about his master’s ingratitude toward him (Notte e giorno faticar). The nobleman in question, Don Giovanni, has broken into the Commendatore’s house in order to take advantage of his daughter, Donna Anna. When she calls for help and tries to prevent the masked Giovanni from escaping, the Commendatore intervenes, but Giovanni kills him and disappears with Leporello. Anna returns with her fiancé, Don Ottavio, but they are too late. She laments the death of her father and makes Ottavio swear to avenge him (Duet: Fuggi, crudele, fuggi!).

Leporello scolds Giovanni for his behavior, but is interrupted by the entrance of a woman distractedly searching for the man who deceived her (Ah chi mi dice mai). Giovanni tries to console her, but to his surprise, she turns out to be Donna Elvira, whom he earlier seduced and abandoned. Giovanni slips away, leaving Leporello to explain his actions to Elvira. Leporello takes this opportunity to reveal Giovanni’s true nature to Elvira by listing all of his sexual conquests (Madamina, il catalogo è questo). Elvira is furious and demands vengeance.
Later, peasants are celebrating the marriage of Zerlina and Masetto (Chorus: *Giovinette che fate all’amore*). Giovanni decides to seduce the young bride. Leporello has joined him and gets the groom and the guests out of the way by inviting them to a banquet. Masetto reluctantly agrees to leave (*Ho capito, signor sì*). Giovanni invites Zerlina to his mansion, promising to marry her (Duet: *Là ci darem la mano*). Just when she is ready to accept, Elvira appears. She exposes Giovanni’s lies and takes Zerlina away (*Ah fuggi il traditor*). Giovanni now meets Anna and Ottavio. Anna does not recognize him, and is requesting his help in finding her father’s murderer when Elvira appears and begins her accusations again (Quartet: *Non ti fidar, o misera*). Giovanni claims Elvira is crazy and quickly takes her away. Only now does Anna recognize his voice, and identifies him as the man who killed her father. She tells the full story of her assault to Ottavio, and again demands that he exact vengeance (*Or sai chi l’onore*). Ottavio wonders how to restore her peace of mind (*Dalla sua pace*). Giovanni meets up with Leporello and tells him how Zerlina and Elvira thwarted his plans. He orders Leporello to continue with the festivities so he can make new romantic conquests (*Fin ch’han dal vino*). Zerlina is trying to assuage Masetto’s jealousy outside of Giovanni’s mansion (*Batti, batti, o bel Masetto*). Masetto hides in an attempt to observe Giovanni (Finale: *Presto presto pria ch’ei venga*) but he is soon discovered, and Giovanni invites the couple to return to the party. Anna, Elvira, and Ottavio now appear wearing masks and praying for vengeance. Leporello does not recognize them, and invites them inside to the ball.

During the dancing, Leporello distracts Masetto while Giovanni abducts Zerlina. Hearing her cries, the masked guests rush to her aid and reveal their identity. Caught red-handed, Giovanni tries to lay the blame on Leporello, but no one is convinced and he runs off.

**Act II**

Feeling that life with Giovanni has become too dangerous, Leporello announces that he wants to leave his master’s service (Duet: *Eh via buffone*), but his mind is changed by an offer of more money. Giovanni outlines his plan to seduce Elvira’s maid – the two men will exchange clothing and Giovanni will lure his former mistress out of her house by promising to repent. Elvira, now believing she is back in favor with her former lover, goes off with the disguised Leporello, leaving the way open for Giovanni (Trio: *Ah taci, ingiusto core*). He begins a serenade (*Deh vieni alla finestra*), but is soon interrupted by Masetto and a group of armed peasants. Disguising his voice as Leporello’s, Giovanni sends the peasants off in the wrong direction (*Metà di voi qua vadano*), and beats Masetto once they are alone. After this, Zerlina appears and comforts her fiancé (*Vedrai, carino*).
Meanwhile, Elvira and Leporello (still in disguise) encounter Anna and Ottavio. Leporello tries to escape, but is prevented from doing so by the arrival of Zerlina and Masetto (Sextet: *Sola sola in buio loco*). They all believe they have finally captured Giovanni, but again Elvira tries to save him. In mortal danger, Leporello throws off his disguise and finally succeeds in running away. Convinced of Giovanni’s guilt, Ottavio decides to go to the authorities. Zerlina has succeeded in recapturing Leporello, whom she ties to a chair and threatens to torture (Duet: *Per queste tue manine*). He escapes once more when she goes to look for Masetto. Masetto tells Zerlina of further bad conduct on Giovanni’s part, and they leave to tell Ottavio. Elvira, however, still finds herself torn between conflicting feelings for Giovanni (*Mi tradì, quell’alma ingrata*).

Leporello and Giovanni meet in a cemetery to change into their own clothes. They tell each other of their adventures when a voice from beyond the grave commands them to leave the dead in peace. Seeking to find the source of the voice, Giovanni discovers the Commendatore’s tomb, adorned with his statue and an inscription declaring that the dead man awaits vengeance. He mockingly orders the terrified Leporello to invite the statue to dinner (Duet: *O statua gentilissima*). With a nod of the head, the statue accepts.

Ottavio offers to marry Anna the very next day. She asks him to wait until more time has passed since her father’s death, and defends herself when he accuses her of being cruel (*Non mi dir, bell’idol mio*).

Giovanni prepares to eat dinner at his mansion, served by Leporello (Finale: *Già la mensa è preparata*). Elvira bursts in, begging him one last time to change his ways. She tries to leave when he refuses, but then utters a terrified scream. Leporello runs to find out what frightened her, but he too cries out in horror. He informs his master that the statue of the Commendatore has arrived for dinner. Giovanni opens the door for his guest, who in turn demands Giovanni’s immediate repentance. Giovanni steadfastly refuses and is dragged down into hell. Anna, Elvira, Ottavio, Zerlina, and Masetto enter, still in search of Giovanni (Epilogue: *Ah dove è il perfido*). After listening to Leporello’s account of the evening’s events, Anna asks Ottavio to respect a year of mourning before they celebrate their wedding. Elvira decides to spend the rest of her life in a convent, Zerlina and Masetto will go home to dinner, and Leporello will head off to the tavern to search for a new master. Together, they all declare the moral of the story – “Such is the end of the evildoer; a sinner always receives the death he deserves.”
Program Notes
by Annie Patrick

Don Giovanni, Opera's Ultimate Seducer

Historically, the legend of a seducer and blasphemer who meets a supernatural death had its origins in the European middle ages. Later, in the seventeenth century, the Don Giovanni/Don Juan saga appeared in Spain: Tirso de Molina’s *El Burlador de Seville y Convidado de Piedra* or *The Prankster of Seville and His Stone Guest* is considered the common ancestor of the many stories and dramas that followed.

The story also made its way into ballet and opera. Gluck’s ballet *Don Juan*, was performed in Vienna in 1761, followed by Righini’s opera *Il Convitato di Pietra ossia Il Dissoluto* in both Vienna and Prague in 1777, and it is quite probable that Mozart and his librettist Lorenzo da Ponte had seen these works.

The success of their first collaboration, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, in Vienna in 1786, followed by Prague, the capital of Bohemia, prompted the theater manager and impresario Pasquale Bondini to commission another opera from this talented duo. Consequently, *Don Giovanni* had its world premiere at the Estates Theatre in Prague on October 29, 1787.

Coincidentally, it appears that da Ponte was friendly with Giovanni Casanova, whose name, along with Don Juan, has become synonymous with libertine. Casanova was known to be in Prague shortly before the premiere of *Don Giovanni* and it is possible that da Ponte drew on this source for inspiration when writing Leporello’s Catalogue Aria: It’s an interesting supposition.

Ironically, in spite of Don Giovanni’s amorous reputation and conquests that include six hundred and forty women in Italy, two hundred and thirty one in Germany, and already one thousand and three in Spain (enumerated in the Catalogue Aria by his servant Leporello to Donna Elvira), he doesn’t actually ‘score’ during the whole opera!

The opera is based on tension between class and sex, and the characters surrounding the Don are well fleshed-out, both musically and dramatically: With his servant Leporello he connives and schemes with buffo patter; the Commendatore/Statue interaction portrays heroic or seria elements; he woos Donna Anna with courtly flattery; Zerlina with rustic charm; he mocks, then evades Donna Elvira, and tries to seduce her maid whilst disguised as Leporello.
Class distinctions are made particularly clear in the iconography of the dances in the ballroom scene finale of Act One when Donna Anna, Don Ottavio, and Donna Elvira dance a stately minuet whilst Don Giovanni (furthering his seduction) leads Zerlina in a rural contredanse and Leporello distracts Masetto, her fiancé, by forcing him to be an unwilling partner in a crude German stomp.

Sensuality, conviviality, and pace are essential dramatic elements in the Don’s frenetic lifestyle. He is mercurial by nature, and can be courtly and debonair as well as diabolical and demonic. He treats his servant Leporello familiarly one moment and brutally the next. He breaks oaths when they become inconvenient, ignores warnings, and is not afraid of hell and damnation.

Was the opera a dark comedy, or ‘light hearted drama’ as da Ponte, the librettist’s subtitle drama giocoso implies? Fundamentally, it is a combination of comic, tragic, and demonic elements encapsulating the Don’s amorous adventures. This draws us, the audience, into the charismatic and seductive world of Mozart’s music. Without doubt his eponymous (anti)hero is opera’s ultimate seducer.

*Courtesy of West Australian Opera*
Biographies

During the 2021-22 season, British-American tenor **Joshua Blue** (Don Ottavio, Don Giovanni) makes multiple role and house debuts, including at the Metropolitan Opera as Peter in Porgy and Bess; Los Angeles Opera as the Evangelist in St. Matthew Passion; Opera Philadelphia as the Duke in Rigoletto; Virginia Opera as Loge in Das Rheingold; and a return to Opera Theatre of Saint Louis as Tamino in Die Zauberflöte. Performances this season include St. Matthew Passion with the Orchestra of St. Luke’s, Messiah with Oratorio Society of New York, and Bonds’s The Ballad of the Brown King: A Christmas Cantata. Mr. Blue also debuts with the Philadelphia Orchestra in Messiah and the Los Angeles Philharmonic in Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9. Next season, he returns to Opera Philadelphia to make his role debut as Rodolfo in La Bohème. He has performed with the National Symphony Orchestra, Washington National Opera, Seiji Ozawa Matsumoto Festival, Cleveland Chamber Orchestra, Wolf Trap Opera, and Austin Opera, working with conductors Gianandrea Noseda, Eun Sun Kim, James Conlon, James Gaffigan, Bernard Labadie, Corrado Rovaris, and Leonard Slatkin, among others. Mr. Blue appears on the recording of Moravec’s Sanctuary Road with New York Festival of Song, which was nominated for a Grammy Award.

Mr. Blue’s engagement is co-sponsored by Margaret Deutsch and William Loutrel.

**Kearstin Piper Brown** (“High on the Ramparts” artist), praised for her “thrilling singing” (Opera Now), is quickly becoming one of the most sought-after lyric sopranos in the US. In February 2022, she resumed performances of the lead role of Esther in Gordon’s Intimate Apparel with Lincoln Center Theater. Subsequently, she sang Musetta in La Bohème with New Orleans Opera, and the world premiere of Zaid Jabil’s Southern Crossings at the Gerald Lynch Theater in New York City. Performances in 2021 included Bess in Porgy and Bess with New Orleans Opera, recitals with Finger Lakes Opera, and Knight’s No Cowards in Our Band and Bonds’s The Ballad of the Brown King, both with Syracuse Opera. She also debuted with Dallas Symphony Orchestra and Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. Earlier, Ms. Brown previewed Esther in Intimate Apparel with Lincoln Center Theater as part of the joint LCT and Metropolitan Opera New Works Program, and made her debut as Clara in Heggie’s It’s a Wonderful Life with San Francisco Opera, where she also covered Dame Shirley in Adams’s Girls of the Golden West. Ms. Brown has performed her signature role of Bess with numerous companies, most recently Utah Festival Opera, Opera Kazar, Skylight Music Theatre, Dayton Opera, Virginia Opera, and the Belarusian Philharmonic Orchestra Minsk.

**Bass-baritone John Cheek** (The Commendatore, Don Giovanni) made his debut with the Metropolitan Opera in 1977 and has since appeared in more than 370 performances there, including the title role in Le Nozze di Figaro both at Lincoln Center and on tour in Japan. He also made his Tanglewood debut the same year, singing Haydn’s Lord Nelson Mass conducted by Leonard Bernstein. At New York City Opera, he sang three title roles in one season – Mefistofele, Verdi’s Attila, and the world premiere of Reise’s Rasputin. In Europe, he sang with Paris Opera, Finnish National Opera, Opera de Nice, the Monnaie Opera in Brussels, the Bregenzer Festspiele, the Berlin Philharmonic, BBC Symphony, Southwest German Radio Symphony, Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra, the London Promenade Concerts, the Salzburg Festival, and the Stockholm Royal Philharmonic.
As a recitalist, he appeared at the Kennedy Center, in four recitals in New York City at the 92nd Street Y, and at the Ravinia Festival with James Levine at the piano. As an oratorio and concert singer, he has performed with every major symphony orchestra in North America. In 2016, he returned to the Cincinnati May Festival for his 16th season, performing in Mozart’s Mass in C Minor and Verdi’s Otello.

Mr. Cheek’s engagement is sponsored by Barbara McCullough.

Praised by Opera News for his “splendid, lush bass-baritone,” André Courville (Don Giovanni) is quickly establishing himself as one of America’s foremost young singers. This season marked his return to Maggio Musicale Fiorentino for Madama Butterfly, his debut in Moscow with Vivaldi’s L’Olimpiade, and a return to Cincinnati Opera for La Bohème. Highlights of previous seasons include debuts at Opéra de Bordeaux in Il Barbiere di Siviglia, Arizona Opera as the title role in Le Nozze di Figaro, Zurich Opera in Maria Stuarda, and in Rouen in Simon Boccanegra. He made his Italian debut in Spontini’s Fernando Cortez at the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino and his European debut at Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe as Mozart’s Figaro. He also performed Masetto in Don Giovanni with Dallas Opera, the Marquis in La Traviata with Santa Fe Opera, and returned to the Philadelphia Orchestra as the Jailer in Tosca led by Yannick Nézet-Séguin. In concert, he has appeared at Carnegie Hall the past three seasons since his debut with Opera Orchestra of New York. Other recent performances include the title role in Mendelssohn’s Elijah with the Columbus Symphony, the bass solos in Mozart’s Great Mass in C Minor at the Spoleto Festival USA, and Bach’s Cantata 150 with the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Mr. Courville’s engagement is sponsored by Thomas Fynan, MD.

Soprano Monica Dewey (Beatrice, Three Decembers) hails from Atlanta, Georgia. She started her career with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis in 2017 as Servilia in La Clemenza di Tito. Since then, she has made several notable house debuts, including San Francisco Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, and Oper Köln, while performing additional recitals at Opera America and the Kerrytown Concert House. Upcoming engagements include returns to Opera Theatre of Saint Louis for their New Works, Bold Voices Lab and to the International Meistersinger Akademie in Neumarkt, Germany. For the 2021–22 season, she joins the roster of the Metropolitan Opera in their productions of Ariadne auf Naxos and Brett Dean’s Hamlet. Ms. Dewey has received top prizes from the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions (National Semi-Finalist), the Hilde Zadek International Voice Competition, and the Sullivan Foundation. Additional grants have been awarded by the George London Foundation, the Gerda Lissner Foundation, the American Prize, and the Georgina Joshi Foundation. She is an alumna of the Chautauqua Voice Institute and the Michigan Opera Theatre Studio. Other notable roles include Susanna in Le Nozze di Figaro with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Gilda in Rigoletto with the Sacramento Philharmonic, and Cunegonde in Candide with Michigan Opera Theatre.

Ms. Dewey’s engagement is sponsored by Theresa Cerezola.
Originally from El Paso, TX, Katie Harding (Dancer, Don Giovanni) has trained in jazz, musical theater, contemporary, ballet, tap, and lyrical dance for nearly 20 years. While attending the University of Texas at El Paso, she regularly performed in musicals at the UTEP Dinner Theater including A Chorus Line (Val), Rock of Ages (Candi), West Side Story (Graziella), and Footloose (Ensemble). She holds both a BA in Communication Studies and a BFA in Dance Performance with an emphasis in contemporary dance. During her time at UTEP, she also contributed to the shows Firebird (Ensemble) and Carnaval de Danzas (Playwright and Featured Performer), and conducted a solo performance entitled The House that Martha Built. Ms. Harding has interned with both the American Dance Festival and Jacob’s Pillow, and currently works as the development associate at Community Access to the Arts in Great Barrington. She teaches at the Cantarella School of Dance in Pittsfield, and choreographs and performs with Dancers of the Berkshires.

A recipient of the Sara Tucker Study Grant from the Richard Tucker Music Foundation, baritone Theo Hoffman’s (Charlie, Three December) 2021-22 season includes a number of exciting company debuts. He appears with the Israeli Opera as Papageno in Barrie Kosky’s production of Die Zauberflöte, and as Count Almaviva in a new David Pountney production of Le Nozze di Figaro. He also makes his Seattle Opera debut as Schaunard in La Bohème. Mr. Hoffman additionally appears as Frédéric in Delibes’s Lakmé with Washington Concert Opera, with the Pacific Symphony for Messiah, and as Pierrot in Smyth’s Fête Galante with the Bard Music Festival. In future seasons, he makes his Opernhaus Zürich debut as Momus in Rameau’s Platée. Originally scheduled to make his company and role debut in the 2020-21 season as Figaro in Il Barbiere di Siviglia with Atlanta Opera, he instead joined their highly-acclaimed Molly Blank Big Tent Series, singing Escamillo in Carmen. He made his first public appearance on the Metropolitan Opera stage as a Grand Finalist in the 2016 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions after winning in the Eastern Region. Mr. Hoffman is a 2015 third-prize winner in the Gerda Lissner Foundation’s International Vocal Competition, and the recipient of a Richard Gaddes Career Grant from Opera Theatre of Saint Louis.

Mr. Hoffman’s engagement is sponsored by Elysa and Peter Graber-Lipperman.

During the 2021-22 season, mezzo-soprano Megan Moore (Donna Elvira, Don Giovanni) recorded Handel’s La Lucretia and Il Delirio Amoroso with The English Concert led by Harry Bicket, made her Metropolitan Opera debut in Dean’s Hamlet under Nicholas Carter, premiered a piece by Jessica Meyer with violist Jordan Bak, performed Claire in Bernstein’s On the Town with Opera Naples, and covered Dorabella in Così fan tutte with San Diego Opera. In recital, she took the stage in New York, Washington, DC, and Alabama. Ms. Moore made a special appearance with the Borromeo String Quartet in Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall to sing arias from Handel’s Hercules and Alcina. She recently made her Santa Fe Opera debut creating the role of Ino in the world premiere of Corigliano’s The Lord of Cries. Ms. Moore has collaborated with conductors Ramón Tebar, Gary Thor Wedow, and Nimrod David Pfeiffer, along with stage directors James Darrah, Stephen Wadsworth, and David Paul. Recent awards include first prize in the Copenhagen Lied Duo Competition and the top award from the George London Foundation Competition. A native of Cincinnati, Ms. Moore received her training at Miami University, Eastman School of Music, Internationale Meistersinger Akademie, and The Juilliard School.

Ms. Moore’s engagement is sponsored by Ilene and Lester Bliwise.
Baritone **Brian James Myer** (Masetto, *Don Giovanni*) has been praised as a stage animal of “both voice and character to make him stand out in the crowd.” In spring 2021, Mr. Myer joined Atlanta Opera, covering Mr. Peachum in *The Threepenny Opera* and singing El Dancairo in *Carmen*, and returned to New York City Opera as Alberto in their workshop of Gordon and Korie’s *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis*. In 2022, he reprised the role in the piece’s world premiere, joined the roster of the Metropolitan Opera covering Marcellus/Player 4 in Dean’s *Hamlet*, was seen as the title character in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* with Opera Delaware and Baltimore Concert Opera, and joined the Bard Symphony Orchestra as Second Nazarene in *Salome*. This summer, Mr. Myer joins Bar Harbor Music Festival as Schaunard in *La Bohème*. This fall, he will return to Opera Orlando as Papageno in their production of *Die Zauberflöte*. Other recent engagements include Mercutio in *Roméo et Juliette* with Knoxville Opera, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* with Syracuse Opera, and Carlos in New York City Opera’s world premiere of Bell and Campbell’s *Stonewall*.

Puerto Rican soprano **Natalia Santaliz** (Zerlina, *Don Giovanni*) joins the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis as a Gerdine Young Artist, where she covers the role of Papagena in *Die Zauberflöte* and sings in *Carmen* and Wallace’s *Harvey Milk*; debuts with Opera San José to cover Belinda in *Dido and Aeneas* and Maria in *West Side Story*; and performs with the Orquesta Sinfónica de Puerto Rico as soprano soloist in the Fauré *Requiem* in the 2021-22 season. In the previous season, Ms. Santaliz sang Nella and covered Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi* conducted by Kent Nagano at the Festival Napa Valley. She has sung Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Mařenka in *The Bartered Bride*, and Camila in Navarro’s *Frenési*, and been a guest artist with Ópera de Puerto Rico, New World Symphony, Teatro de la Ópera, Fundación Puertorriqueña de Zarzuela y Opereta, Teatro Bertita y Guillermo L. Martínez, Conservatorio de Música de Puerto Rico, and Teatro Lírico del Oeste. She was a member of the Martina Arroyo Foundation’s “Prelude to Performance” program and participated in the Sherrill Milnes Voice Studio as part of the Savannah Voice Festival in Georgia. Ms. Santaliz is a graduate of the Conservatorio de Música de Puerto Rico and Mannes School of Music.

**Edoardo Torresin** (Dancer, *Don Giovanni*) is originally from Varese, Italy. He graduated from the Liceo Coreutico of Reggio Emilia, Professione Danza Parma, and I.S.T.D. Classical Ballet and Modern Theatre in 2019. He performed with the young company Balletto di Parma in works by Gammino and Parker, and took part in international workshops and dance competitions. Mr. Torresin obtained a Certificate of Excellence with Honors at the Peridance Center’s Certificate Program, where he graduated with a scholarship in 2021. In New York City, he performed in works by Annie Rigney, Igal Perry, Assaf Salhov, Tomislav Nevistic, and Cameron Terry with Shades Dance Theatre, and Ho-Shia Aaron Thao with Hudson Ballet Theatre. Mr. Torresin dedicates his performances with Berkshire Opera Festival to his family in Italy.

A 2019 Richard Tucker Foundation career grant recipient, American soprano **Laura Wilde** (Donna Anna, *Don Giovanni*) has been praised by *Opera News* for having “a ravishingly beautiful sound, [and] a fine sense of style and character.” In the 2020-21 season, Ms. Wilde made her role debut as Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* in a film produced by Seattle Opera. The previous season, she appeared at Staatsoper Stuttgart as Agathe in *Der Freischütz*, and returned to Arizona Opera as Mamah Cheney in the world premiere of Hagen’s
Shining Brow. Cancellations due to the COVID-19 pandemic included the full Ring Cycle at Lyric Opera of Chicago, her Metropolitan Opera debut as Der Hüter der Schwelle des Tempels in Strauss’s Die Frau ohne Schatten, and Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 with the Memphis Symphony. Highlights of recent seasons include the title role in Jenůfa at both Santa Fe Opera and English National Opera; Fiordiligi in Così fan tutte at Staatstheater Stuttgart; the title role in Janáček’s Káťa Kabanová at Scottish Opera; Freia in Das Rheingold, as well as Ortlinde and the cover of Sieglinde in Die Walküre, in David Pountney’s new Ring Cycle conducted by Sir Andrew Davis at Lyric Opera of Chicago; and Gretel at the Edinburgh Festival.

Ms. Wilde’s engagement is sponsored by John K. O’Brien and Jamie Lehrer.

Mezzo-soprano Adriana Zabala (Madeline Mitchell, Three Decembers) enjoys a vibrant and unique career that includes opera, song repertoire, new works, concert, and oratorio. In the last few seasons, Ms. Zabala has been seen with Seattle Opera, Florentine Opera, Minnesota Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Arizona Opera, Opera Saratoga, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, the Jacksonville Symphony, the Virginia Symphony, the Madison Symphony, the New York Festival of Song, and at the Caramoor International Music Festival, among others. In 2021, Ms. Zabala was the recipient of the Distinguished Vocal Artist award from The American Prize, which recognizes sustained excellence throughout a vocalist’s career. Recent seasons have spotlighted her talent for contemporary music, featuring her as Mary Johnson in Spears’s Fellow Travelers at Madison Opera and Minnesota Opera, and as Abilene’s Mother in Prestini’s Edward Tulane (postponed due to COVID-19), also at Minnesota Opera. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Ms. Zabala starred as Susan B. Anthony in the filmed premiere of Steven Mark Kohn’s The Trial of Susan B. Anthony, for which Mr. Kohn won The American Prize in Composition. The premiere was co-produced by ADA Artist Management, Berkshire Opera Festival, Minnesota Opera, Austin Opera, Opera Colorado, and San Diego Opera.

Ms. Zabala’s engagement is sponsored by Ken and Susan Kramer.

French-American bass Christian Zaremba (Leporello, Don Giovanni), hailed by The Washington Post for “stealing the evening,” is equally at home under the bright lights of opera as on the concert stage. This season, he makes his role debut as the title character in Le Nozze di Figaro with Austin Opera and his company debut with L’Opéra de Montréal as Sarastro in Die Zauberflöte. In Europe, he sings Sarastro with the Théâtre du Capitole de Toulouse, and in concert, performs Verdi’s Messa da Requiem with the Sacramento Choral Society and Orchestra. During the 2019-20 season, Mr. Zaremba appeared in Barrie Kosky’s production of Handel’s Agrippina at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, before returning to the Metropolitan Opera as Lesbo in Sir David McVicar’s acclaimed production of the same opera. He also returned to Lyric Opera of Kansas City as Colline in La Bohème and, in concert, performed Mussorgsky’s “Songs and Dances of Death” with the Greenwich Village Orchestra in New York City. Career highlights include performances at the Metropolitan Opera in productions of Tosca and Gianni Schicchi, Austin Opera as the French General in Puts’s Silent Night, Lyric Opera of Kansas City as Nourabad in Bizet’s Les Pêcheurs des Perles, and Opera Theatre of Saint Louis as Sparafucile in Rigoletto.

Mr. Zaremba’s engagement is sponsored by Noreen Doyle.
Maestro Brian Garman (Conductor, *Don Giovanni*) 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.

Beth Greenberg (Stage Director, *Three Decembers*) is renowned for her work with New York City Opera, where she directed *Turandot, Les Contes d’Hoffmann, Der Rosenkavalier, Tosca,* Strauss’s *Intermezzo, La Traviata,* and *La Bohème.* Across New York’s harbor, on the historic ship Mary A. Whalen, she directed an internationally-acclaimed production of *Il Tabarro.* Known for her success developing new operas, she has worked with composers Gordon Beeferman, Tom Cipullo, Anthony Davis, Jake Heggie, Lori Laitman, Nkeiru Okoye, Rachel J. Peters, Huang Ruo, and Stella Sung. Recent premieres include three of Lori Laitman’s operas (*Uncovered, The Scarlet Letter,* and *The Three Feathers*) with librettos by Leah Lax, David Mason, and Dana Gioia; Okoye’s *Harriet Tubman,* and Sung/Hilbert’s *The Red Silk Thread.* Upcoming engagements include a Santa Fe Opera debut with the world premiere of Chandler Carter’s *This Little Light of Mine: The Story of Fannie Lou Hamer.* Ms. Greenberg’s productions have been seen worldwide, including *Carmen* in Tokyo and *Tosca* in Lima, Peru. She has directed for Odyssey Opera, Opera Colorado, Fort Worth Opera, Kentucky Opera, Crested Butte Music Festival, Utah Festival Opera, Pittsburgh Opera Center, the Phoenix Voice Fest, and Syracuse Opera. A Fulbright award brought her to Germany, where she apprenticed with Götz Friedrich at Berlin’s Deutsche Oper. She is a graduate of the University of Michigan and Brooklyn College.

Jonathon Loy (Stage Director, *Don Giovanni*), Monterey, MA based, is the Director of Production and Co-Founder of Berkshire Opera Festival. Mr. Loy is also a Guest and Staff Stage Director at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City. This coming season will be his 13th with that company, and he will direct the new production revival of Verdi’s *Don Carlos* and assist on new productions of Cherubini’s *Medea* and Giordano’s * Fedora,* along with the revival of *Falstaff.* An active stage director, Mr. Loy has directed revivals of *Tosca, Carmen, Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Faust* at the Met, *Don Giovanni* for Opera Las Vegas, and *Hänsel und Gretel* adapted by Perry Lorenzo for the Seattle Opera Young Artist Program. He also staged new productions of *Don Pasquale, Rigoletto, Ariadne auf Naxos* and *Madama Butterfly* for Berkshire Opera Festival. Mr. Loy is the former General Director of Center City Opera Theater in Philadelphia (2003-07), where he was the first person to produce fully-staged opera in the Perelman Theater at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. For Center City Opera Theater, he directed three new operas – Cummings’s *The Golden Gate,* Weisman’s *Fade,* and Myers’s *The Hunger Art,* as well as *La Traviata, La Bohème, Rigoletto,* and more.
Christopher James Ray (Conductor, *Three Decembers*) has a diverse background in both traditional and contemporary operatic works. He is currently Resident Conductor at Opera San José and an assistant with the San Francisco Symphony. In 2017, he joined the music staff of the renowned Bayreuth Festival, where he worked on productions of *Der fliegende Holländer*, *Lohengrin*, *Götterdämmerung*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, and *Parsifal*. Mo. Ray made his professional conducting debut leading a double bill of *Gianni Schicchi* and *Pagliacci* with Mississippi Opera in 2014. Later that year, he conducted performances of *Così fan tutte*, *Suor Angelica*, and *Gianni Schicchi* with Opera in the Ozarks. Additional credits include *Aclema*, Copland’s *The Tender Land*, Muhly’s *Dark Sisters*, Glass’s *In the Penal Colony*, and Britten’s *The Beggar’s Opera*. As assistant conductor, he has worked with the Salzburg State Theater for Wuorinen’s *Brokeback Mountain*; North Carolina Opera for *La Bohème*, *Così fan tutte*, and *Le Nozze di Figaro*; Sarasota Opera for *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Don Carlos*; Opera on the James for *Carmen*; Opera on the Avalon for *Die Zauberflöte*; Syracuse Opera for *Die Fledermaus*; and the Memphis and Portland (ME) Symphonies. A protégé of American composer Carlisle Floyd, Mo. Ray is a sought-after interpreter of Floyd’s works.

Stephen Agisilaou (Choreographer, *Don Giovanni*) is an Australian-born choreographer currently residing and working in New York City. He graduated with his Diploma II in Performing Arts, along with ballet training under the instruction of the legendary Gelsey Kirkland. As a creator of movement, Mr. Agisilaou choreographed the Melbourne premiere of the Tony Award-winning *Spring Awakening*, *Blood Brothers*, and the revival of the Green Room Award-winning musical *Prodigal*. His choreography has been seen internationally in productions of *Good Morning Hong Kong*, *Black Diva Power*, and *The Pajama Game*. He was employed by Opera Australia to assist in casting the Broadway revival of *South Pacific*. Additionally, he was engaged as co-director and choreographer of artist Anthony Breslin’s immersive experience, *TRYBE: An Opera In Paint* and as choreographer of *Don Pasquale* for Berkshire Opera Festival in 2019. Throughout his career, Mr. Agisilaou has received honors and awards from the Institute of Classical Dance, Short & Sweet Dance Festival, and WIND International Film Festival. He recently completed directing his latest film, “The Anniversary,” which premiered in March 2022 at the Palm Springs Art Museum, and is Artistic Director and Curator for the Palm Springs Dance Project.

Lynn Baker (English Diction Coach, *Three Decembers*) is a vocal coach, English diction specialist, and collaborative pianist. She is the vocal coach 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 the Metropolitan Opera, Lincoln Center Theater, 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.
Travis Bloom (Musical Preparation, Don Giovanni) is a sought-after vocal coach and collaborative pianist in New York City. He recently was on the music staff for the highly-anticipated return of Gordon and Nottage’s Intimate Apparel at Lincoln Center. He serves as an artistic staff member at the Manhattan School of Music, collaborating for both the opera and voice departments. For the past three summers, he has worked as a faculty coach with the Chautauqua Institute Voice Program under the direction of Marlena Malas. During his time at Chautauqua, he worked closely with composers Ricky Ian Gordon and Ben Moore, presenting recitals of their music. He has also accompanied master classes with Renée Fleming, Susan Graham, Craig Rutenberg, Thomas Hampson, Isabel Leonard, and Anthony Roth Costanzo. Since moving to NYC in 2016, Mr. Bloom has been a staff pianist for the Bronx Opera Company and the International Vocal Arts Institute under the direction of Joan Dornemann and Paul Nadler. Since 2018, he has worked with the Metropolitan Opera Guild as a pianist for their master class series. This summer, Mr. Bloom joined the music staff of Opera Saratoga, serving as the principal coach/pianist for their production of Il Barbiere di Siviglia.

Charles R. Caine (Costume Designer, Don Giovanni) 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, Don Giovanni), 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, where he has designed Falstaff, Don Pasquale, Rigoletto, Ariadne auf Naxos, and Madame Butterfly. His other opera credits include Hänsel und Gretel directed by Jonathon Loy (Opera Fairbanks), Vaughan Williams’s Sir John in Love, Verdi’s Un Giorno di Regno, Mascagni’s Zanetto and L’Amico Fritz, Wolf-Ferrari’s Il Segreto di Susanna, Walton’s The Bear, Sullivan’s The Zoo (Odyssey Opera), L’elsisir d’amore, L’Italiana in Algeri, Don Pasquale, Donizetti’s Il Campanello, Nicolai’s Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor, Flotow’s Martha (Boston Midsummer Opera), Die Entführung aus dem Serail, Pagliacci (Opera Columbus), Handel’s Agrippina (New England Conservatory), and The Play of Daniel (The Cloisters).
Janie E. Howland (Scenic Designer, *Three Decembers*) has recent design credits that include the New Works Festival (New Rep), *Head Over Heels* (Umbrella Stage Company), *Book Of Will* and *Be Here Now* (Lyric Stage), *Richard III* (Bridgewater State University), *Charlie Brown* (Prescott Park Arts Festival), *Baskerville* (Gloucester Stage), and *Firebird* (Abilities Dance Boston). Other venues include NYC Dance Alliance, Lynn Redgrave Theatre (NY), Tennessee Williams Festival (Provincetown), Harvard University, Actors’ Shakespeare Project, Moonbox Productions, Odyssey Opera, Weston Playhouse (VT), Boston Children’s Theatre, North Shore Music Theatre, Central Square Theatre, Speakeasy Stage Company, Ohio Star Theatre, A.R.T. Institute, Boston Conservatory, Company One, Stoneham Theatre, Seacoast Rep, Merrimack Repertory Theatre, and New Jersey Shakespeare Festival (NJ). She is a four-time Elliot Norton Award winner, a four-time IRNE Award winner, and an adjunct faculty member at Emerson College and Wellesley College. She is a Stage Source Board member and founder of the Prop Co-Op.

Alex Jainchill (Lighting Designer) has credits that include *Richard III* (Shakespeare in the Park/Public Theatre), *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X* (Detroit Opera), *Long Day’s Journey Into Night* (Audible/Minetta Lane), *Gun and Powder* (World Premiere, Signature Theatre DC), *Falstaff* (Berkshire Opera Festival), *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), and *Uni/Son* (World Premiere, Oregon Shakespeare Festival). He was the associate lighting designer for the Broadway productions of *Significant Other* (Booth) and *Old Times* (American Airlines), as well as for the world premiere of *Dear Evan Hansen*. Recent installations include *Watershed Moment* at the Lyndhurst Mansion in Tarrytown, NY, and *Liminality* with Museum of Future Experiences in Brooklyn.

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 Plácido 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. Her work will be on display this summer in a group show at Ferrin Contemporary in North Adams, and in an outdoor exhibition in her hometown of Cummington, MA.

Geoffrey Larson (Chorus Master, *Don Giovanni*) 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.

Djordje Stevan Nesic’s (Musical Preparation, Don Giovanni) performances have been described as artful, assertive, sensitive, and quietly virtuosic, and his career is highlighted by recital, concerto, chamber, and collaborative performances, both in the US and internationally. He endeavors to promote music addressing contemporary, social justice, and human rights issues. Recent engagements include Carnegie Hall, Kolarac Hall in Belgrade, Prototype Festival in NYC, KotorArt Festival in Montenegro, Serbian Cultural Center in Paris, and Caixa Cultural in Brasilia. With a group of his students from Carnegie Mellon University, he presented four concerts in Belgrade, including the staged premiere of the opera Svadba by Ana Sokolovic. Recent recordings include Blitzstein’s The Cradle Will Rock on Bridge Records, Gordon’s Ellen West on Bright Shiny Things, and Opera America Songbook. He has performed at other venues including Lincoln Center, the United Nations General Assembly Hall, the Mann Performing Arts Center in Philadelphia, FUJI TV in Japan, the Aspen Music Festival, the Tanglewood Festival, Glimmerglass Opera, Houston Grand Opera, the Greenwich Music Festival, and the Phoenicia Voice Festival. He is a citizen of both the USA and Serbia. Formerly a faculty member at Carnegie Mellon University, he currently teaches at Manhattan School of Music and SUNY Purchase Music Conservatory.

Conductor and pianist Noah Palmer (Musical Preparation, Three Decembers) is one of the Capital Region’s most in-demand collaborators. As choral director at Skidmore College in spring 2021, he led the college’s two choral ensembles through innovative virtual performances during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, he joined the music staff of Berkshire Opera Festival as rehearsal pianist and principal coach for their production of Cipullo’s Glory Denied, and was the pianist for their “Mid-Winter Mozart” recital earlier this year. He is assistant director and accompanist for Albany Pro Musica, the Capital Region’s leading choral ensemble, and assistant conducer of the Broad Street Chorale and Orchestra in Kinderhook, NY. He also directs, in collaboration with soprano Sylvia Stoner, the Skidmore College Opera Workshop. As a choral conductor, he has led the Battenkill Chorale, the Northern Berkshire Chorale, the Sage Singers, and the Vermont Symphony Orchestra Chorus, among other groups.

Brooke Stanton (Costume Designer, Three Decembers) is a costumer who has worked in theater, film, and television. During her five years with George Lucas’s ILM, she built creatures for the Star Wars Special Edition Trilogy and The Phantom Menace. She has toured internationally and nationally designing for Peter Sellars. Other clients include Disney, Columbia Pictures, CBS, American Repertory Theatre, American Conservatory Theatre, Aspen Music Festival, Santa Fe Opera, Boston Symphony Youth Orchestra, Commonwealth Shakespeare, S.F. Shakespeare, New England Conservatory, and Odyssey Opera. She studied costume design at New York University and textiles at California College of the Arts.
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Tyler Bourque

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**Diego Vásquez

SOPRANO & ALTO SAXOPHONE
**Chris Hemingway

BASSOON
Zachary Feingold, Principal
Paul Clark and Carol Parrish Chair

HORNS
Eva Conti, Principal
William Hughes

TRUMPET
Eric Berlin, Principal

TROMBONE
Brian Diehl, Principal

TIMPANI
Deane Prouty, Principal
Richard and Carol Seltzer Chair

PERCUSSION
**Joseph Tompkins, Acting Principal

PIANO
**Noah Palmer
**Lynn Baker

KEYBOARD CONTINUO
Brian Garman

PERSONNEL MANAGER
*Deane Prouty

All musicians are performing in Don Giovanni unless otherwise indicated.

* indicates Don Giovanni & Three Decembers
** indicates Three Decembers only
Berkshire Opera Festival Chorus

**SOPRANOS**
Kalia Kellogg  
Teryn Kuzma  
Schauntice Shepard

**ALTOS**
Rachel Abrams  
Marija Bosnar  
Lisa Woods

**TENORS**
Leo Goodman  
Thomas Gruenthal  
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Brian Hailes  
Jermaine Woodard Jr.

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Some Messages From Our Donors

*Congratulations, Berkshire Opera Festival, on providing all opera lovers with another exciting season.* —Terry Cerezola

*To everyone who makes the magic happen, mille grazie!*  
—Elysa and Peter Graber-Lipperman

*Congratulations to the BOF family for another fabulous season, despite the challenges of a global pandemic!* —Ed and Lina Plantilla
On June 5, 2022, approximately 100 friends and supporters of Berkshire Opera Festival gathered at the Berkshire Museum for Supper in Seville, a season kickoff and fundraiser in support of BOF’s 2022 season. BOF would like to thank everyone who supported and attended this special celebration, including the following sponsors, vendors, and in-kind supporters.

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Dear Friends,

Heading into BOF’s 2022 season, I can’t help but reflect on our return to live performance last summer. The lobby was brimming with kinetic energy and exclamations of joy as audiences exited the theater. It was a visceral reminder of two of BOF’s core beliefs: that there truly is no substitute for experiencing the power of the live, unamplified human voice in a theater; and that opera has the inherent, transformative ability to greatly enhance one’s quality of life.

As we continue emerging from the pandemic, BOF’s Board, Staff, and Artists are looking to the future with optimism and a commitment to keep expanding BOF’s mission and programming. So far this year, we have added two new Board members (welcome Peter and Yong!), restructured BOF’s administration to better support our artists, donors, and operations, and added a pre-season concert to the calendar.

Though there is much to celebrate, there is still much work to be done to ensure there will always be a place for world-class, locally-produced opera here in the Berkshires. Please consider making a 100% tax-deductible contribution to Berkshire Opera Festival before our fiscal year ends on September 30! All gifts are greatly appreciated and will help raise the $75,000 needed to meet this season’s budget and fundraising goal. We can do it, but only with YOUR help!

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

Abigail Rollins
Executive Director
Berkshire Opera Festival’s Family of Supporters

Berkshire Opera Festival acknowledges our most sincere appreciation to the individuals below who generously provide the financial resources that help to sustain BOF and allow us to perform at the highest artistic level. In gratitude for this generosity, Berkshire Opera Festival offers benefits for its donors. Please consider making a gift. For more information, please contact us at 413-213-6622 or Donations@BerkshireOperaFestival.org.

*Includes or reflects gifts in support of BOF’s 2021 season.

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Travis Bloom, Musical Preparation (Don Giovanni)
Stephen Agisilaou, Choreographer (Don Giovanni)
Noah Palmer, Musical Preparation (Three Decembers)
Lynn Baker, English Diction Coach (Three Decembers)
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