ZOELLNER ARTS CENTER
LEHIGH UNIVERSITY



2026 - 2027 PLAYBILL



Marc Falato '87 & Mark Wilson

DEAR FRIENDS,

It is my honor to share some exciting news about the future of Zoellner Arts Center.

A longtime collaborator, partner, and Lehigh alumnus has made a meaningful commitment to both our present and our future by endowing the Executive Director position. I am proud to now serve as the **Marc Falato '87 Executive Director of Zoellner Arts Center**. This support for the arts at Lehigh University represents something deeper. It is a belief in this place, in this work, and in what we can continue to build together.

That work continues to grow through purposeful partnerships.

Our collaboration with the Carnegie Hall Weill Music Institute through Well-Being Concerts and the Lullaby Project has allowed us to expand our Arts & Wellness initiatives across campus and the Lehigh Valley. We are building a system in which the arts are not an extra but an essential civic infrastructure of how a community cares for itself.

At the same time, we remain committed to artistic excellence through the world-class artists we bring to our stage. The season opens with a generational voice in Graham Nash, followed by the sharp, observant wit of David Sedaris, and the unmistakable presence of LeAnn Rimes. We welcome Andy Grammer, whose music brings joy and meets audiences exactly where they are, lifting them just a bit higher.

If you ever wanted to run away with the circus, you will have three opportunities to see this art form with Cirque Alfonse, Minty Fresh Circus, and Gravity & Other Myths. The National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine is a remarkable ensemble whose music reminds us that even in turbulent times, there are moments of beauty, reflection, and restoration. Family programming remains central to who we are. This season, Pete the Cat is a highlight of our Family Series as we start a Choose-What-You-Pay model because we believe access to the arts is for all. When you come to Zoellner, you also help us make a difference in supporting 10,000+ K-12 students who attend our School Shows, bringing curriculum to life for children across the Lehigh Valley.

In celebration of America's 250th founding, the Lehigh University Music Department finds all the right notes performing compositions by Sousa, Joplin, Bernstein, and more. The Department of Theatre explores powerful themes of agency, freedom, and reinvention through four contemporary plays. Remember, it is always a good time to visit LUAG, Lehigh University's free public museum, while you are on campus.

When I think about this season, I don't just think about performances. I think about how we bring the world to the Lehigh Valley...how we bring joy to our community...how we connect our beautiful campus to the rest of the Greater Lehigh Valley. You are all welcome to experience the arts with us.

With Gratitude,

Mark Wilson

Marc Falato '87 Executive Director
of Zoellner Arts Center

Arts &
Libraries
LEHIGH UNIVERSITY

Zoellner Arts Center is now closely aligned with the Lehigh University Art Galleries and University Libraries under a new Vice Provost for Arts and Libraries, further elevating the arts and maximizing impact on our community.

THANK YOU

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Victoria E. and Robert E. Zoellner ’54 GP’15

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SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Zoellner Arts Center received funding from Pennsylvania Creative Industries, powered by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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ACADEMY OF VOCAL ARTS

DONIZETTI'S *L'ELISIR D'AMORE*



This production is generously sponsored by
Victoria E. Zoellner

ZOELLNER ARTS CENTER
LEHIGH UNIVERSITY

2026.2027 SEASON

"Zoellner Arts Center received funding from Pennsylvania Creative Industries, powered by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts."

pennsylvania COUNCIL ON THE ARTS

AVA ACADEMY OF VOCAL ARTS

Gaetano Donizetti (1797–1848)

L'elisir d'amore

Steven White, Conductor
Damon Nestor Ploumis (AVA '99), Stage Director

November 7 – 17, 2026
Helen Corning Warden Theater at the Academy of Vocal Arts

Friday, November 20, 2026
Delaware Valley University Life Sciences Building, Doylestown

Tuesday, December 1, 2026
Centennial Hall at the Haverford School, Haverford

This production is generously sponsored by Victoria Zoellner

The Young Professionals performance is generously sponsored by Charlotte H. Watts

Scott Guzielek
President and Artistic Director

Joseph Colaneri
Jeannine B. Cowles Music Director Chair

Cast

Opera in two acts
Libretto by Felice Romani
In order of vocal appearance

Adina	Jasmine Rose
Nemorino	Joshua Berg
Belcore	Geoffrey Schmelzer
Dr. Dulcamara	Raúl Morales Velazco
Giannetta	Katherine Dobbs

Chorus

Sopranos: Daniela Machado, Ashley Ruckman

Mezzos: Katherine Dobbs, Stella FitzGerald, Dawson Franzino, Maiya Williams

Tenors: Brenden Christie, Sergio Mandujano, Ryan Michki

Baritones/Bass-Baritones: Alex Mathews, Jamie Felix-Toll

Director's Note

Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore,* like AVA itself, sits close to my heart and has been fundamental to my development as a singer and stage director. Dulcamara was my first professional role in 1994—a part I went on to perform in 12 productions throughout my career—and I made my professional directing debut here when AVA invited me to direct *Così fan tutti* in 2007. This comic work has always been a touchstone for me, providing the creative impulse that makes opera so worthwhile.

When Scott Guzielek asked me to direct the piece earlier this year, metaphorical fireworks went off in my mind as I imagined a *L'elisir* set in 1876 Philadelphia. It was a time of unbridled optimism, as Americans celebrated the Centennial, the healing of a nation ripped apart just over a decade before by the savage Civil War, and your city, Philadelphia, which played a crucial role in establishing the country at its inception. The hundred-year celebration focused heavily on Philadelphia: City Hall was under construction around Penn Square, which had been a focal point of town life since 1684; the Centennial Exhibition brought the world to town; and even the torch-bearing arm of the Statue of Liberty made its rounds in the city before heading to New York to help fund the monument. It was an exhilarating year for Philadelphia, brimming with all the possibilities the world could imagine.

The characters of the opera fit just as naturally into a bustling 19th-century American city as they do an Italian market town. Nemorino, a laborer, is part of the crew building City Hall. Adina, the girl he adores but who seems out of his league, is a socialite whose head turns rather too quickly toward medieval romance after recounting the tale of Tristan and Isolde to her admirers. Belcore (the "beautiful heart," as his name translates from the Italian) is a swaggering, low-ranking officer who thinks very highly of himself, perhaps a Civil War veteran. Giannetta is a shop girl dreaming of a better life, perhaps an immigrant girl, one of the millions about to pour into the country. Finally, Dulcamara is the lovable charlatan who oozes confidence and promises a bright future. Accoutered as Uncle Sam, he presents to America what Americans have always yearned for: the promise of success and the belief in a better tomorrow. While these characters exist in all cultures and across history, I hope the flavor of our production makes it, to be a bit cheeky, as American as apple pie.

Now, we are celebrating the 250th anniversary of the nation—which bears the somewhat more cumbersome but amusing epithet, the *Semiquincentennial*. The country still has its issues and divisions, yet it remains a place worthy of celebration and gratitude for what it represents: a land that still grants opportunity. So let us put aside our ephemeral divisions tonight and celebrate the joy of a great comic opera that can lift the pall of cynicism we so often feel. That is the true elixir opera provides.

Synopsis

Act I

Harboring an unrequited love for the beautiful and sociable Adina, the earnest young laborer Nemorino hopelessly pines for her, believing her to be entirely out of his reach. Adina captivates the gathered villagers by reading aloud from a romantic tale, recounting how Tristan won the heart of Iseult by drinking a magical love potion.

The tranquil scene is interrupted by the arrival of a military regiment, led by the arrogant and boastful Sergeant Belcore. Swept up in his own bravado, he immediately presents himself to Adina and demands her hand in marriage. Unfazed, Adina coolly declares that she is in no rush to surrender her freedom, though she promises to entertain his proposal.

When left alone with Nemorino, Adina gently dismisses his devotion. She advises him that his time would be far better spent in town, tending to his ailing uncle, rather than pining for a love he cannot have. She playfully suggests he adopt her own carefree philosophy: to change whom he loves with every passing day. Yet, a steadfast Nemorino reminds her that a heart can never truly forget its first love.

Enter Dr. Dulcamara, a flamboyant traveling charlatan peddling miracle cures for every conceivable ailment. Nemorino timidly approaches, asking if the doctor possesses the legendary elixir of love from Adina's story. Seizing the opportunity, the sly Dulcamara claims he does, smoothly offering a bottle of ordinary Bordeaux wine. He cunningly instructs Nemorino that the magic will take a full day to take effect—conveniently ensuring the doctor will be long gone before the ruse is discovered.

Willing to sacrifice everything, Nemorino spends his last coin on the bottle and eagerly drains it. Filled with liquid courage and convinced he will be utterly irresistible by tomorrow, he adopts a facade of cheerful indifference toward Adina. Surprised and stung by his sudden aloofness, Adina retaliates by flirting brazenly with Belcore. When urgent orders arrive demanding the sergeant's immediate return to his garrison, Adina impulsively agrees to marry him that very day. A devastated Nemorino pleads with her to wait just one more day, but she dismisses his pleas and invites the entire village to celebrate her hasty wedding. Panic-stricken, Nemorino desperately seeks the doctor's help.

INTERMISSION

Synopsis

Act II

As the lavish pre-wedding festivities commence, Adina and Dulcamara delight the guests with a spirited duet. Yet, Adina is distracted by Nemorino's absence, secretly resolving not to sign the marriage contract until he arrives. Meanwhile, a frantic Nemorino tracks down Dulcamara, begging for a second draught of the elixir. Penniless, Nemorino is granted a brief reprieve by the doctor to scrounge up the necessary funds.

Belcore is left baffled and frustrated by Adina's sudden delay of their nuptials. When Nemorino crosses his path, desperately seeking quick cash, the sergeant seizes the chance to eliminate his rival, persuading the young man to enlist in the army in exchange for a signing bonus. Armed with new wealth, Nemorino buys more of the supposed elixir. Almost instantly, he finds himself swarmed by admiring local women. Completely unaware that his uncle has just passed away, leaving him a massive fortune, Nemorino attributes his sudden magnetism entirely to the potion. Adina, wracked with guilt over driving Nemorino to enlist, finds her remorse quickly souring into fierce jealousy when she sees him surrounded by the admiring maidens. Dulcamara smugly boasts of his potion's potency and offers to sell a bottle to Adina, but she proudly declines, determined to win back Nemorino's heart through her own genuine charms.

For the first time, Nemorino feels a surge of true hope: he had caught the glimmer of a jealous tear on Adina's cheek when she saw him with the other women. Adina soon returns, gently handing Nemorino his enlistment papers, which she has bought back herself. When he stubbornly maintains his facade of indifference, her resolve breaks, and she finally pours out her heart, confessing her true love for him.

Belcore arrives only to find the reunited lovers in a passionate embrace. Ever the opportunist, he smoothly shifts his attentions to the lovely Giannetta, grandly declaring that thousands of beautiful women await him across the world. The village rejoices, while Dulcamara triumphantly boasts to the awestruck crowd that his miraculous elixir can not only kindle true love but transform impoverished laborers into wealthy millionaires.

ORCHESTRA

Violin I
Luigi Mazzocchi
(Concertmaster)
Joseph Kauffman
Alexandra Cutler-Fetkewicz
Igor Szwec
Yoori Williams
Irina Rostomashvili

Violin II
Elizabeth Kaderabek
Gregory Teperman
Kate Suk
Russell Kotcher
Mary Loftus

Viola
Yoshihiko Nakano
Julia DiGaetani
Scott Wagner

Cello
Vivian Barton Dozor
Lynne Beiler

Bass
Anne Peterson
Stephen Groat
Dimitrios Mattas - *11/12, 11/14*

Flute
Brendan Dooley
Kimberly Trolier

Oboe
Geoffrey Deemer

Clarinet
John Diodati
Allison Herz

Bassoon
Zachary Feingold
Maria Buonviri

French Horn
John David Smith
Ryan Stewart

Trumpet
Brian Kuszyk
Thomas Cook
Eric Schweingruber - *11/14*

Trombone
Brad Ward
Justin Moore - *11/14*

Timpani
Martha Hitchins

Percussion
Dave Tarantino
Miles Salerni - *12/1*

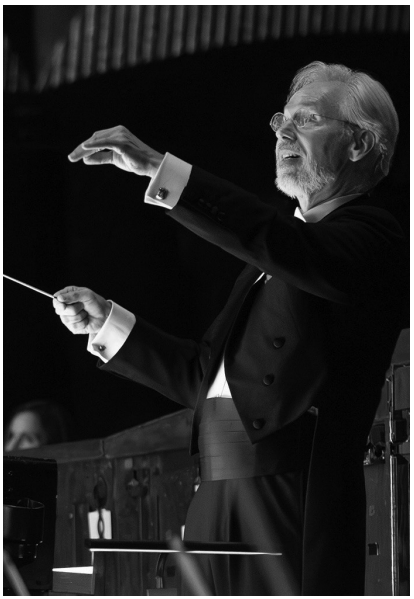
Harp
Elizabeth Steiner

Continuo
Elise Auerbach

American Federation of Musicians, Local 77-274 is the collective bargaining agent for the Academy of Vocal Arts orchestra

Steven White

Conductor



Praised by *Opera News* as a conductor who "squeezes every drop of excitement and pathos from the score," Steven White is one of North America's premier operatic and symphonic conductors. He made his acclaimed Metropolitan Opera debut in 2010, conducting performances of *La traviata* starring Angela Gheorghiu and Thomas Hampson. Since then, he has conducted several Metropolitan Opera performances of *La traviata* with such stars as Plácido Domingo, Natalie Dessay, Dmitri Hvorostovksy, and Matthew Polenzani.

This past season Maestro White returned to the Met to lead seven performances of Julie Taymor's famed production of *The Magic Flute*. He also led highly acclaimed performances of *Eugene Onegin* at Wolf Trap. He conducted *L'elisir d'amore* with the Utah Symphony and Opera, where he previously has led productions of *Thaïs, Tosca* and *La traviata*, and where he conducts *La Cenerentola* this season.

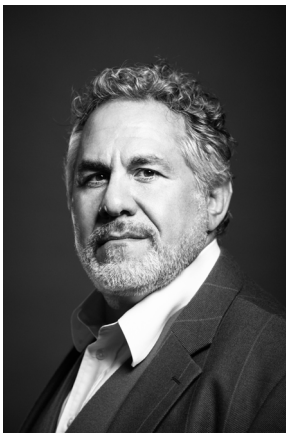
Steven White is the Principal Guest Conductor of Opera Omaha, where this season he will conduct *Ariadne auf Naxos.* Last season he conducted Patricia Racette's production of *Susannah*, in honor of the 100th anniversary of Carlisle Floyd's birth in 1926. Previously in Omaha he led the fabled David Hockney production of *The Rake's Progress*. Other past productions include *Eugene Onegin, La traviata, Le nozze di Figaro, Rigoletto, Così fan tutte, Il barbiere di Siviglia,* and the world-premiere staged production of a brand-new Bärenreiter Urtext edition of Gounod's *Faust*.

This season brings Maestro White to return engagements as an artist-in-residence with some of this country's most prestigious conservatories and artist-training programs. He will lead a production of *L'elisir d'amore* at the Academy of Vocal Arts, where last season he conducted *Falstaff*. Other recent productions at AVA include the 90th Anniversary Gala Concert, *Faust*, and *Anna Bolena* the previous season.

He also returns this season for the fifth year to Brevard Music Center where he will lead *Don Giovanni*. In 2025 he conducted the premiere of Dean Anthony's brilliant new circus-themed production of *The Magic Flute* with the Janiec Opera Company. Previous Brevard productions include *La bohème, La traviata,* and *Il barbiere di Siviglia*.

Damon Nestor Ploumis (AVA '99)

Stage Director



Stage director and bass-baritone Damon Nestor Ploumis has built an international career spanning more than three decades, combining extensive experience as a singing actor and stage director with a sustained commitment to developing emerging professional singers.

His international directing credits include *Aida* for the National Opera of China in Beijing and *Così fan tutte* at the Teatro da Paz in Belém, Brazil. At the Lismore Festival in Ireland, he directed *Così fan tutte* while also performing Don Alfonso. In 2023, he directed *Gianni Schicchi* for Zomeropera Alden Biesen in Belgium, performing the title role himself during its 23-performance run. This production of *L'elisir d'amore* marks his return to the Academy of Vocal Arts, where he previously directed *Così fan tutte* in 2007.

In 2008, Ploumis founded Lyric Opera Studio Weimar, where he is General Director and principal stage director. His productions include *Le nozze di Figaro, Così fan tutte, Die Zauberflöte,* and *Die Fledermaus,* as well as four professional productions presented at Theater Rudolstadt: *La Cenerentola, Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor, Così fan tutte,* and *Don Giovanni*. Under his leadership, the Studio has trained more than 1,800 singers from 84 countries, preparing young artists to enter the German and wider European theater systems.

Ploumis' work as a director is rooted in an extensive career as a singing actor, with engagements at more than 40 opera companies across Europe and North and South America. Particularly known for the bel canto repertoire of Rossini and Donizetti, he has appeared at Zurich Opera, the Greek National Opera, the Royal Swedish Opera, the Finnish National Opera, Teatro Colón, and the Deutsches Nationaltheater Weimar. He has performed Dulcamara in *L'elisir d'amore* in ten productions, including Jonathan Miller's celebrated staging for the Royal Swedish Opera. Other highlights include Don Profondo in Dario Fo's production of *Il viaggio a Reims* at the Finnish National Opera, Taddeo in *L'italiana in Algeri* at Teatro Colón, and his recurring portrayal of Alfred P. Doolittle in *My Fair Lady.*

His professional career began with an ensemble engagement at the Schleswig-Holsteinisches Landestheater in Flensburg, followed by membership in the ensemble of the Deutsches Nationaltheater Weimar. A 1999 graduate of AVA, he continued his operatic training with the Merola Opera Program and the International Opera Studio at Zurich Opera. Completing high-school at Eton College, he went on to his degree in history at Cambridge University and theology at the University of Athens and the École Biblique et Archéologique Française de Jérusalem.

Ploumis is also a trained falconer and plays the German hunting horn in his home city of Weimar.

RESIDENT ARTISTS



Joshua Berg, tenor – 4th Year
Gladstone, New Jersey
Rice University (BM)

Recent Roles
King Arthur in *King Arthur Junior* (Salzburger Festspiele), Fenton in *Falstaff*, Tebaldo in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, Monsieur Taupe in *Capriccio*, Don Basilio in *Le nozze di Figaro* (AVA), Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* (Music Academy of the West), Fritz in *L'amico Fritz* and Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* (AVA), Frederic in *The Pirates of Penzance* (Savannah Voice Festival), Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* (American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz), Hervey in *Anna Bolena* (AVA), Bardolfo in *Falstaff* (Aspen Music Festival), and Soldat in *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* (Rice University).

Awards
The Giargiari Bel Canto Competition (2nd Prize), The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition (Maryland District Winner), YoungArts (National Finalist), Music Academy of the West (Paul Guido and Stephen Blaine Scholarship Award), The Shepherd School of Music (Crownover Endowed Scholarship in Voice).

Upcoming Roles
Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi* (AVA).



Brenden Christie, tenor – 1st Year
Abingdon, Virginia
Masters Voice Studio, Northeast State Community College (Accounting)

Recent Roles
Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* (Chautauqua Opera Conservatory), Alfred in scenes from *Die Fledermaus* (International Lyric Academy, Italy), Laurie in scenes from *Little Women* (International Lyric Academy), and leading roles with the College Light Opera Company, Milligan University, and Jonesborough Repertory Theatre.

Awards
Kingsport Music Club (Scholarship Award).

Upcoming Roles
Tinca and Un Venditore di Canzonette in *Il tabarro*, Gherardo in *Gianni Schicchi*, Ruiz in *Il trovatore*, and a recital performance in *Tapestry: Threads of American Song* (AVA).

RESIDENT ARTISTS



Katherine Dobbs, mezzo-soprano – 3rd Year
Houston, Texas
Rice University (MM), DePauw University (BM)

Recent Roles
Dryad in *Ariadne auf Naxos* and Carmen (cover) in *La Tragédie de Carmen* (Merola Opera Program), Clairon in *Capriccio*, Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro* (AVA), Mother Goose (cover) in *The Rake's Progress* (Des Moines Metro Opera), Beppe in *L'amico Fritz* and Marthe in *Faust* (AVA), Lucretia in *The Rape of Lucretia* and Filipievna in *Eugene Onegin* (Rice University), Ježibaba in *Rusalka* (Luke Housner Summer Opera Workshop), Ottavia in *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, and Mrs. Jones in *Street Scene* (Rice University).

Awards
The Giargiari Bel Canto Competition (3rd Prize), The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition Mid-Atlantic Region (3rd place), Philadelphia District (Encouragement Award), The Gilbert & Sullivan Society of Houston's Career Grant Competition (2nd place), Miller Family Music Education Scholarship (scholarship winner).

Upcoming Roles
Frugola in *Il tabarro,* Ciesca in *Gianni Schicchi,* and Azucena (cover) in *Il trovatore* (AVA).



Jamie Felix-Toll, bass-baritone – 1st Year
Los Angeles, California
Oberlin Conservatory (BM)

Recent Roles
Nick Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Sprecher in *Die Zauberflöte* (Aspen Music Festival), Ignacio in *Lucrezia*, and Masetto (cover) in *Don Giovanni* (Music Academy of the West).

Awards
Schmidt Vocal Arts Undergraduate Competition (Upper Division Winner), YoungArts (Gold Prize, Classical Voice).

Upcoming Roles
Talpa in *Il tabarro*, Betto in *Gianni Schicchi*, and a recital performance in *Tapestry: Threads of American Song* (AVA).

RESIDENT ARTISTS



Stella FitzGerald, mezzo-soprano – 1st Year
Austin, Texas
University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (MM), Boston University (BM)

Recent Roles
Dryade (cover) in *Ariadne Auf Naxos* (Merola Opera Program), Prince Charmant in *Cendrillon* (Cincinnati Conservatory Opera), Lucrezia in *Lucrezia* (Music Academy of the West), and Presendia in *Dark Sisters* (Cincinnati Conservatory).

Awards
Carolyn Bailey Argento Vocal Competition (First Place Winner, Scholarship Division), The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, Indiana District (Winner), The Corbett Opera Scholarship Competition (Italo Tajo/Newburger Memorial Award), Boston University (Ellalou Dimmock Vocal Honors Award).

Upcoming Roles
Frugola in *Il tabarro*, Ciesca in *Gianni Schicchi*, and a recital performance in *Métamorphoses: Three Centuries of French Imagination* (AVA).



Dawson Franzino, mezzo-soprano – 2nd Year
Orlando, Florida
Florida State University (MM & BM)

Recent Roles
Mistress Quickly in *Falstaff*, Romeo in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, Marcellina in *Le nozze di Figaro* (AVA), Carmen in *Carmen* (Ópera de Bolsillo and International Summer Opera Festival of Morelia), Mother in *Hänsel und Gretel*, Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, and Hannah (Older) in *As One* by Laura Kaminsky (Florida State University Opera).

Awards
The Giargiari Bel Canto Competition (1st Prize, Audience Prize), Classical Singer Vocal Competition (Emerging Professional, First Place), Hanna Beaulieu Award (First Place), Premier Opera Virtual Voice Competition (Finalist), Sicily International Voice Competition (Prize Winner), Heartland Sings Competition (Semi-Finalist).

Upcoming Roles
Zita in *Gianni Schicchi* and Azucena in *Il trovatore* (AVA).

RESIDENT ARTISTS



Jacob Hanes, baritone – 3rd Year
Arlington, Texas
DePaul University (MM), Austin College (BA)

Recent Roles
Ford in *Falstaff*, Olivier in *Capriccio*, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, and Wagner (cover) in *Faust* (AVA), W. P. Inman in *Cold Mountain* (Seagle Festival), Prophet in *Dark Sisters* and Frank Maurrant in *Street Scene* (DePaul University), Count Carl-Magnus Malcolm in *A Little Night Music* (Seagle Festival), Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte,* and Mr. Gedge in *Albert Herring* (DePaul University).

Awards
The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, Tulsa District (Encouragement Award), The Dallas Opera Biennial Lone Star Vocal Competition (Finalist).

Upcoming Roles
Giannni Schicchi in *Gianni Schicchi* and Count di Luna (cover) in *Il trovatore* (AVA).



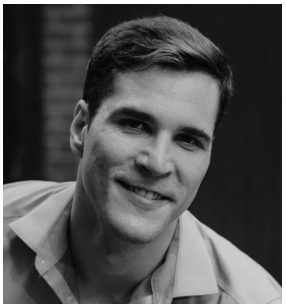
Jason Hwang, baritone – 1st Year
Seoul, South Korea
The Juilliard School (BM)

Recent Roles
Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte* (Hawaii Performing Arts Festival), Spinelloccio in *Gianni Schicchi* (The Juilliard School), Johannes Zegner (cover) in Missy Mazzoli's *Proving Up* (The Juilliard School), Il Marito in *Amelia al Ballo,* and Nick Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

Awards
Aspen Music Festival (Renée Fleming Artist).

Upcoming Roles
Michele in *Il tabarro,* Spinelloccio and Notario in *Gianni Schicchi,* and Count di Luna in *Il trovatore (*AVA).

RESIDENT ARTISTS



Joshua Klein, baritone – 3rd Year
Flower Mound, Texas
University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (BM)

Recent Roles
Major Porta in *Lili Elbe*, Zaretsky (cover) in *Eugene Onegin* (Santa Fe Opera), Count in *Capriccio,* Count Almaviva in *Le nozze di Figaro* (AVA), Don Giovanni in *Don Giovanni* (Music Academy of the West), Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* (AVA), Leporello (cover) in *Don Giovanni* (Santa Fe Opera), Figaro in *The Marriage of Figaro* and Bartolo in *The Marriage of Figaro* (Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music), Zuniga in *Carmen* (Opera North), and Gianni Schicchi in *Gianni Schicchi* (Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music).

Upcoming Roles
Michele in *Il tabarro,* Guccio in *Gianni Schicchi,* and Count di Luna in *Il trovatore* (AVA).



Daniela Machado, soprano – 3rd Year
Weston, Florida
Rice University (MM), Oberlin Conservatory of Music (BM)

Recent Roles
Alice Ford in *Falstaff*, Giulietta in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, Barbarina in *Le nozze di Figaro* (AVA), Caterina in *L'amico Fritz,* and Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* (AVA), Tatyana in *Eugene Onegin* (Rice University), Foreign Princess in *Rusalka* (Luke Housner Summer Opera Workshop), and Anna Maurrant in *Street Scene* (Rice University).

Awards
Loren L. Zachary National Vocal Competition (Grand Prize Winner), The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, Philadelphia District (Encouragement Award), The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition Houston District (Winner).

Upcoming Roles
Giorgetta in *Il tabarro,* Nella in *Gianni Schicchi,* and Leonora in *Il trovatore* (AVA).

RESIDENT ARTISTS



Sergio Mandujano, tenor – 2nd Year
Norwalk, Connecticut
Western Connecticut State University

Recent Roles
Alfredo in *La traviata* (Tri-Cities Opera), Flamand in *Capriccio*, Don Curzio in *Le nozze di Figaro* (AVA), Il Duca in *Rigoletto* and Tamino in *The Magic Flute* (Tri-Cities Opera), Ferrando in *Così fan tutti* and Joe in *The Champion* (Opera Memphis), Don José in *Carmen*, Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi* and Rodolfo in *La bohème* (Seagle Festival), and Nemorino in *L'elisir d'amore* (Western Connecticut State University).

Upcoming Roles
Luigi in *Il tabarro,* and Manrico in *Il trovatore* (AVA).



Alex Mathews, baritone – 3rd Year
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
University of Toronto (Diploma in Operatic Performance), Western University (MM & BM)

Recent Roles
Ford in *Falstaff*, Olivier in *Capriccio*, David in *L'amico Fritz,* and Valentin in *Faust* (AVA), Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (University of Toronto), Il Conte in *Le nozze di Figaro* (Chautauqua Institution), Count Gil in *Il segreto di Susanna* (University of Toronto), Elviro in *Serse* (Chautauqua), Figaro in *Le nozze di Figaro* (Western University and Accademia Europea dell'Opera), Le Dancaïre in *Carmen* (Western University).

Awards
Les Nuits Lyriques de Marmande Competition (Semifinalist), Canadian Opera Company Young Artist Program Competition (Finalist), Atelier lyrique de l'Opéra de Montréal (Finalist).

Upcoming Roles
Michele in *Il tabarro,* and Marco in *Gianni Schicchi* (AVA).

RESIDENT ARTISTS



Cole McIlquham, tenor – 3rd Year
Osseo, Wisconsin
Wichita State University (MM), University of Minnesota Twin Cities (BM)

Recent Roles
Brighella in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Merola Opera Program), Fenton in *Falstaff*, Tebaldo in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, Italian Singer in *Capriccio*, and Don Basilio in *Le nozze di Figaro* (AVA), Tom Rakewell (cover) in *The Rake's Progress* (Des Moines Metro Opera), Federico in *L'amico Fritz* and Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* (AVA), Le Remendado in *Carmen*, La rainette/La théière in *L'enfant et les sortilèges* (Music Academy of the West), Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi* (Southern Methodist University), Parpignol in *La bohème* (Music Academy of the West), Sam Polk in *Susannah* (Wichita Grand Opera), Acis in *Acis and Galatea*, Arthur Dimmesdale in *The Scarlet Letter*, and Podestà in *La finta giardiniera* (Wichita State University).

Awards
Gerda Lissner Art Song Competition (Grant Recipient), Washington International Vocal Competition (Semi-Finalist), Naftzger Concerto Competition (two-time Vocal Winner), Orpheus Vocal Competition (Strauss Award), Meadows Concerto Competition (Winner).

Upcoming Roles
Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi*, and Manrico (cover) in *Il trovatore* (AVA).



Ryan Michki, tenor – 1st Year
Grand Island, New York
Bard Conservatory of Music (BA), Bard College (BA in Historical Studies)

Recent Roles
Ivan (cover) in the *Music Shop,* scenes from *Sarah in Theatre, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead, Anne of Green Gables*, and *A Prayer for Owen Meany* (Chautauqua Opera Company), scenes from *Les pêcheurs de perles, The Bartered Bride,* and *La gazza ladra* (Bard College Opera Workshop), Chorus Fellow (Spoleto Festival), and participant in the Opera Saratoga Summer Festival.

Upcoming Roles
Luigi (cover), Tinca, and Amante in *Il tabarro,* Gherardo in *Gianni Schicchi,* Manrico (cover), and Ruiz in *Il trovatore,* and a recital performance in *Métamorphoses: Three Centuries of French Imagination* (AVA).

RESIDENT ARTISTS



Raúl Morales Velazco, bass – 3rd Year
Veracruz, Mexico
Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla

Recent Roles
Colline in *La bohème* (Lyric Opera of Kansas City), Escamillo in *La Tragédie de Carmen*, Perückenmacher in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Merola Opera Program), Falstaff in *Falstaff*, Lorenzo in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi,* Dr. Bartolo and Antonio in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Hanezo in *L'amico Fritz,* and Méphistophélès in *Faust* (AVA), Manuello in *Anita* and Mother in *Die sieben Todsünden* (Mexico Opera Studio), Bartolo and Antonio in *Le nozze di Figaro*, and Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* (Trentino Music Festival).

Awards
American Institute of Musical Studies Meistersinger Competition (1st Place), The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, Philadelphia District (Winner), The Giargiari Bel Canto Competition (1st Prize), The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, Rocky Mountain Region (Encouragement Award), Concurso Nacional de Canto Carlo Morelli (Premio Bellas Artes).

Upcoming Roles
Simone in *Gianni Schicchi,* and Ferrando in *Il trovatore* (AVA).



Veronica Richer, soprano – 4th Year
Bryan, Ohio
Mannes School of Music (MM), Boston Conservatory (BM)

Recent Roles
Clorinda in *Cenerentola* and Friend 1 of Augusta in *The Ballad of Baby Doe* (Opera North), Alice Ford in *Falstaff*, Countess in *Capriccio*, Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, Marguerite (cover) in *Faust*, Berta in *Il barbiere di Siviglia,* Female Chorus in *The Rape of Lucretia,* and *Anna Bolena* (cover) (AVA), Angelica in *Suor Angelica* (Bay View Music Festival and International Summer Opera Festival of Morelia), and Rusalka in *Rusalka* (Luke Housner Summer Opera Workshop).

Awards
The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, Kansas City District (Winner) and Connecticut District (Encouragement Award).

Upcoming Roles
Giorgetta in *Il tabarro*, Nella in *Gianni Schicchi,* and Leonora in *Il trovatore* (AVA).

RESIDENT ARTISTS



Jasmine Rose, soprano – 2nd Year
Greensboro, North Carolina
Manhattan School of Music (PSC & MM) and Boston Conservatory at Berklee (BM)

Recent Roles
Nannetta in *Falstaff*, Italian Singer in *Capriccio*, Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro* (AVA), Sharon Graham in *Masterclass* (Charleston Opera Theater), High Priestess in *Aida* (Utah Festival Opera), Countess in *Le nozze di Figaro*, and Diana in *Orpheus in the Underworld* (Manhattan School of Music).

Awards
The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, South Carolina District (Encouragement Award), Michael Ballam Vocal Competition (Audience Favorite), The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, Arkansas District (Encouragement Award), the Alan M. and Joan Taub Ades Vocal Competition (Second Prize).

Upcoming Roles
Amante in *Il tabarro*, Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi*, and a recital performance in *Tapestry: Threads of American Song* (AVA).



Ashley Ruckman, soprano – 1st Year
Leawood, Kansas
Indiana University Jacobs School of Music (MM), Wichita State University (BM)

Recent Roles
Countess Ceprano and Gilda (cover) in *Rigoletto* (Indianapolis Opera), Karolina in *Swimming in the Dark* (The Studios of Key West), and the title role in *Suor Angelica* (Indiana University Jacobs School of Music).

Awards
The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, St. Louis District (District Winner), National Society of Arts and Letters Competition, Indiana Chapter (1st Place), Indiana University Jacobs School of Music (Georgina Joshi Fellow).

Upcoming Roles
Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi*, Ines in *Il trovatore,* and a recital performance in *Métamorphoses: Three Centuries of French Imagination* (AVA).

RESIDENT ARTISTS



Geoffrey Schmelzer, baritone – 4th Year
Skokie, Illinois
Northwestern University (MM), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (BM)

Recent Roles
John Cree in *Elizabeth Cree* (Music Academy of the West), Pelléas (cover) in *Pelléas et Mélisande* (Opera Baltimore), Count in *Capriccio*, Count Almaviva in *Le nozze di Figaro* (AVA), Le Baron in Offenbach's *La Vie parisienne* and Georg (cover) in *She Loves Me* (Opera Saratoga), David in *L'amico Fritz* and Valentin in *Faust* (AVA), Mr. Greatorex/George Gissing/Etcher/Witness #6 in *Elizabeth Cree* and Major-General Stanley (cover) in *The Pirates of Penzance* (The Glimmerglass Festival), Fiorello and Figaro (cover) in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and Junius in *The Rape of Lucretia* (AVA), and Grégorio in *Roméo et Juliette* (Central City Opera).

Awards
Giargiari Bel Canto Competition (3rd Prize), The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, St. Louis and Iowa Districts (Encouragement Award), Opera Mississippi Vocal Competition (1st Place Crossover Winner), Northwestern University 2023 Concerto Competition (Winner), Central City Opera (Cady Young Artist Award), Casa Italia Chicago (Muccianti Scholarship Award).

Upcoming Roles
Gianni Schicchi in *Gianni Schicchi* and Count di Luna (cover) in *Il trovatore* (AVA).



Beautiful Sheriff, soprano – 3rd Year
Fort Valley, Georgia
Rice University (MM), Mercer University (BM)

Recent Roles
Nannetta in *Falstaff*, Giulietta in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Caterina in *L'amico Fritz*, and Despina in *Così fan tutte* (AVA), Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* (Seagle Festival), Suor Angelica in *Suor Angelica* (Operativo Houston), Venere in *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (Rice University), and 2nd Woman in *Dido and Aeneas* (Mercer University).

Awards
The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, Gulf Coast Region (Encouragement Award), The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, Houston District (Winner).

Upcoming Roles
Gherardino and Lauretta (cover) in *Gianni Schicchi*, and Ines in *Il trovatore* (AVA).

RESIDENT ARTISTS



Matthew Sink, tenor – 2nd Year
Las Vegas, Nevada
Northwestern University (MM) and University of Nevada, Las Vegas (BA)

Recent Roles
Bacchus in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Merola Opera Program), Dr. Caius in *Falstaff*, Flamand in *Capriccio*, Don Curzio in *Le nozze di Figaro* (AVA), Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* and Don José in *Carmen* (Northwestern University).

Awards
The Giargiari Bel Canto Competition (2nd Prize), Jensen National Vocal Competition (Second Prize), Loren L. Zachary National Vocal Competition (Career Grant Winner), George London Competition (Encouragement Award), Opera Birmingham Vocal Competition (Second Prize), Marcello Giordani Award, Premiere Opera Foundation, Opera Index (Emerging Artist Award).

Upcoming Roles
Luigi in *Il tabarro* and Manrico in *Il trovatore* (AVA).



Nan Wang, bass-baritone – 4th Year
Handan, Hebei, China
Manhattan School of Music (MM), Central Conservatory of Music, China (BM)

Recent Roles
The Bonze in *Madama Butterfly* (The Princeton Festival), Pistola in *Falstaff*, La Roche in *Capriccio*, and Figaro in *Le nozze di Figaro* (AVA), Nick Shadow (cover) in *The Rake's Progress*, (Des Moines Metro Opera), Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte,* Don Bartolo in *Il barbiere di Siviglia,* Junius in *The Rape of Lucretia,* and Lord Rochefort in *Anna Bolena* (AVA), Colline in *La bohème,* Count Capulet (cover) in *Roméo et Juliette* (The Glimmerglass Festival), Harašta in *The Cunning Little Vixen* and Des Grieux in *Le Portrait de Manon* (Manhattan School of Music), Masetto and Leporello (cover) in *Don Giovanni* (Chautauqua Institution), and Bartolo in *Le nozze di Figaro* (Manhattan School of Music).

Awards
Giargiari Bel Canto Competition (2nd Prize), Giulio Gari Foundation Competition (5th Prize), The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, Philadelphia District (Winner), Laffont Competition, New England Region (Encouragement Award), The Stan Sesser Award in Voice at Manhattan School of Music.

Upcoming Roles
Simone in *Gianni Schicchi* and Ferrando in *Il trovatore* (AVA).

RESIDENT ARTISTS



Maiya Williams, mezzo-soprano – 2nd Year
Hutto, Texas
University of North Texas (GACMP & MM), Stephen F. Austin State University (BM)

Recent Roles
Mistress Quickly in *Falstaff*, Marcellina in *Le nozze di Figaro* (AVA), Meg Brockie in *Brigadoon* and Lucinda in *Cold Mountain* (Seagle Festival), Taller Daughter in *Proving Up*, Dorothée in *Cendrillon*, Dido in *Dido and Aeneas,* and Hata in *The Bartered Bride* (University of North Texas).

Awards
George and Nora London Foundation Competition (Encouragement Award), The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, Philadelphia District (Encouragement Award), National Association of Negro Musicians (NANM) National Competition (3rd Place), NANM Southwestern Region Competition (1st Place).

Upcoming Roles
Zita in *Gianni Schicchi* and Azucena in *Il trovatore* (AVA).



Ryan Wornall, bass – 2nd Year
Lenexa, Kansas
University of Kansas (BM)

Recent Roles
Figaro in *Le nozze di Figaro* (Luke A. Housner Summer Opera Workshop), Falstaff in *Falstaff*, Capellio in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi,* Haushofmeister in *Capriccio*, Dr. Bartolo and Antonio in *Le nozze di Figaro* (AVA), Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* (LAH-SOW), Stately String in *The Haberdasher Prince* (Lyric Opera of Kansas City), Leporello in *Don Giovanni* (LAH-SOW), and Il Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* (Opus 76).

Awards
The National Association of Teachers of Singing 2025 Kansas City Chapter (1st place), NATS 2024 Kansas Chapter (1st place), NATS 2023 Kansas City Chapter (1st place), NATS 2022 West Central Regional Competition (1st place), University of Kansas (Carl and Frances Haven Pryor Award).

Upcoming Roles
Talpa in *Il tabarro,* Betto in *Gianni Schicchi*, and Ferrando (cover) in *Il trovatore* (AVA)

PRODUCTION STAFF

Conductor
Steven White

Stage Director
Damon Nester Ploumis (AVA '99)

Producer
Scott Guzielek

Scenic Design
Cameron Anderson

Costume Design
Jojo Siu

Lighting Design
Allen Doak Jr.

Props Curation and Design
AVISTA Custom Theatrical Services, LLC

Hair/Wigs/Makeup
Kelsey Brooks

Chorus Master
Michael Lewis

Rehearsal Pianists
Elise Auerbach and Sarah Thune

Musical Preparation
Luke Housner, Michael Lewis, David Lofton, Richard Raub

Italian Diction Preparation
Ennio Brugnolo

Director of Production
Troy Martin-O'Shia

Production and Stage Manager
Kel Fleming

Assistant Stage Manager
Eileen Deisemann

Costume Shop Supervisor
V Hope

Wardrobe Show Runner
Lucy Horton

Scenic Construction
Infinity Productions

Scenic Installation
Philadelphia Scenic Works

Supertitles Coordinator
Michael Lewis

Supertitles Operator
Sarah Thune

House Manager
Kelly Rial

Box Office
Bill Buddendorf/Kris Sell

Program Design
Benjamin Brotman

PRODUCTION STAFF BIOS

CAMERON ANDERSON, scenic design

Cameron is an internationally acclaimed scenographer and has designed extensively at the world's leading theatre and opera companies. She recently won the Billie Tsien Rome Prize in Design, one of the most prestigious awards an American artist can receive. Recent projects include *The Light in the Piazza* at Opera Theater of Saint Louis, 2026 Nominee for Best Production International Opera Awards, popstar Charlie Puth's North American and international tours, *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *Zemire et Azor* (Berkshire Opera Festival), *Leonora* (Chicago Opera Theater), the world premiere opera *RUR: A Torrent of Light* (Tapestry Opera, Toronto), which won the Best New Opera in North America award (MCANA). Other recent highlights include *West Side Story* (Kilden Performing Arts Center, Norway, Vancouver Opera), and *Simon Boccanegra* (Teatro Colón, Argentina), *Byhalia Mississippi* (The Kennedy Center), *The Niceties* (Manhattan Theatre Club), *Yerma, Becoming Cuba,* and *Sweat* (Huntington Theater), *Fille du régiment, The Consul, Vinkensport, The Merry Widow, and Rocking Horse Winner* (Opera Saratoga), and *Photograph 51* (South Coast Repertory). Other select opera credits include Glimmerglass Festival, San Francisco Opera, Seattle Opera, Central City Opera, Minnesota Opera, Gotham Chamber Opera, and On Site Opera. Select Off-Broadway credits include Roundabout Theatre Company, Playwrights' Horizons, New Georges, LAByrinth Theater Company, Naked Angels, Ars Nova, and Brooklyn Academy of Music. Upcoming projects include *Falstaff* at The Minnesota Opera and *Orlando Paladino* at The Curtis Institute. cameronanderson.net

JOJO SIU, costume design

Jojo Siu is thrilled to be joining AVA as this year's Costume Designer in residence. She is a USA 829 designer and visual artist with over a decade of experience, with work featured nationally and internationally in film, opera, theater, and dance. Her work has been seen at Santa Fe Opera, Opera Chapman's Hall-Musco Conservatory of Music, Soho Rep, East West Players, The Getty Museum, Pasadena Playhouse, New Village Arts, Singapore Repertory, The Latino Theater Company at the Los Angeles Theater Center, Skylight Rep, Shakespeare Orange County, The Chance Theater, and Laguna Playhouse among others. Her featured and associate works include: *La fanciulla del West, Così fan tutti, The Magic Flute, The Language Archive, Good, Woyzeck, These Shining Lives, Macbeth, The Tempest, Midsummer Night's Dream, Eurydice, Joy Luck Club, The King of the Yee's, Bright Star, Into the Woods, Mamma Mia, Head Over Heels, Tarzan, Waiting for Godot, Dracula, Angels in America,* and *Spring Awakening.* She has also designed for several acclaimed national and world premieres, including *This is not a True Story* with Artists at Play and the Latino Theater Company, *Oedipus,* a bilingual collaboration between the Getty Museum and DeafWest, The Whitney Album, produced by Soho Rep, *The Ferryman*, a west coast premiere with New Village Arts, and *The Madres*, a world premiere produced by Skylight Theater. Her work thrives on unspoken and undiscovered stories, and she is excited to inspire and be inspired in her work with AVA's talented artists. Examples of her work can be found at www.jojoshcostumes.com.

ALLEN G. DOAK JR., lighting design

Allen studied architecture as well as scenic and lighting design at Carnegie Mellon University and has worked as a lighting designer and occasional set designer ever since. Recent projects include the lighting and technical design for Lyric Festival's *Cotton,* a multi-media presentation featuring the art of John Dowell with music by Damien Geter and performed by Denyce Graves and Justin Austin. It premiered in Philadelphia before traveling to The Kennedy Center and 92nd Street Y in NYC. Allen is also known for his work in themed entertainment, most notably the design and special effects of the *House in the Hollow* in Newtown, PA. In addition to his long tenure at AVA, Allen is proud to be a member of the house crew at The Mann Center.

KELSEY BROOKS, wigs/hair/makeup

Kelsey is excited to be back at AVA as the resident Wig and Makeup Artist for the 2026-2027 season! Off Broadway: *Suffs* (The Public Theater). Regional: *Beauty and the Beast, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (Makeup Designer -The Walnut Street Theater); *Xanadu* (Wig Designer - The Eagle Theater); *RENT, Rock of Ages, South Pacific* (The Bucks County Playhouse); *Rogers and Hammerstein's Cinderella, Rocky: The Musical* (The Walnut Street Theater); *In The Heights, The Tempest, Sense and Sensibility, Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill* (The Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival). Feature Film: *The Conspiracists* (Amazon); *The Kiss of a Vampire* (Tubi). Cruise Line: *CATS* (Royal Caribbean). Haunted Attraction: Dark Nights at Hershey Park, Fright Factory. Kelsey is a proud Philadelphian (GO BIRDS!), and gives all her love to her partner, Adam, and their two cats, Fiona and Liberace.

PRODUCTION STAFF BIOS

AVISTA CUSTOM THEATRICAL SERVICES, LLC., properties

Avista, owned by Jennifer Burkhart and Amanda Hatch, was founded in 2007. Avista specializes in prop and soft goods construction and maintains a 10,000 square foot rental warehouse in Norristown. Avista's prop master and design work has been seen locally at Opera Philadelphia, Azuka Theatre, Act 2 Playhouse, Drexel, Temple and Rowan Universities, Mauckingbird Theatre, EgoPo Classic Theater, Theatre Exile, Inis Nua Theater, Power Street Theatre, the Curtis Institute, and Kimmel Center Education Department. www.avistacustom.com

TROY A. MARTIN-O'SHIA, director of production

Troy was the Production Coordinator and interim Production Manager for the American Music Theater Festival (The Prince) for four years. Troy was also the Venue Manager for the Philadelphia Arts Bank Theater as well as Adjunct Professor and Production Electrician for the Ira Brind School of Theater Arts at The University of the Arts, where he dedicated 20 years of service. In addition to his role at AVA, Troy is a freelance lighting designer (USA829#613) and a founding member of Hase & Associates, LTD. With over 400 projects to his credit, Troy has designed lighting and managed a diverse range of productions, including theater, opera, dance, film, and industrial events. His architectural lighting designs are prominently featured at Boathouse Row and the Cira Centre at Amtrak 30th Street Station, in Philadelphia. Troy's work has garnered significant recognition, including one Best of Philadelphia award and two nominations for the Philadelphia Barrymore Awards. Additionally, six of his productions have received nominations for Broadway World Awards, winning four times.

KEL FLEMING, production and stage manager

Kel (they/them) is a Philadelphia-based stage manager, director, and writer. Kel returns to AVA for another wonderful year, this time as Production Stage Manager and Assistant Production Manager. They are also a lead artist with sketch comedy group Impulse Control Freaks and work with local company Applied Mechanics as an administrative assistant. Recent credits include: *Talking to Og* (SM, PlayPenn), *Space Opera* (SM, Obvious Agency), *L'amico Fritz* (SM, AVA), *Così fan tutte* (SM, AVA), and *Faust* (SM, AVA). www.kelfleming.com

INFINITY PRODUCTIONS, scenic construction

Infinity Productions, based in Louisville, KY, excels in creating custom fabrications for a diverse range of industries including operas, TV commercials, theater, restaurants, bars, hotels, and the broader hospitality sector. Our mission is to transform imaginative concepts into tangible masterpieces through meticulous craftsmanship and innovative design. We are committed to delivering exceptional quality and fostering collaborative relationships with our clients, ensuring every project is a unique reflection of their vision and our expertise.

PHILADELPHIA SCENIC WORKS, scenic installation

Philadelphia Scenic Works is the nation's first independent, non-profit (501(c)(3) scene shop. We work with arts organizations all over the Greater Philadelphia area to build projects that advance their missions. At the same time, we are investing in building a healthy, sustainable workforce, and innovative resource sharing. In its almost 10-year history, Philadelphia Scenic Works has done over 330 projects for more than 125 organizations!

About the Academy of Vocal Arts

Founded in 1934 by Helen Corning Warden and headquartered in Philadelphia, PA, the Academy of Vocal Arts (AVA) is dedicated to giving voice to opera's future. Regarded by many as the premier post-graduate opera training school in the world, AVA provides four years of tuition-free training. It is dedicated exclusively to the study of voice. The student body is intentionally small, and admission is highly competitive. More than 200 singers from across the globe audition each year for the fewer than eight spots available in each class. The program is limited to fewer than 30 total Resident Artists, who are immersed in a uniquely intensive and highly personalized program where they learn from world-renowned faculty. They receive training in voice, vocal repertoire, acting, stage combat, opera history, and several languages, and each year are presented in fully staged opera productions accompanied by the professional AVA Opera Orchestra. They are cast in leading roles that they will in all likelihood continue to perform for the rest of their careers.

No other opera training program in the world rivals AVA's success in developing individual artists whose extraordinary voices inspire millions on international stages. AVA alumni have received five of the past eight Richard Tucker Awards and five of the eleven Beverly Sills Artist Awards presented by The Metropolitan Opera. Over 90% of AVA alumni since 2000 continue active singing careers. AVA proudly counts among its alumni such distinguished international stars as Stephen Costello, Ellie Dehn, Joyce DiDonato, Joyce El-Khoury, Michael Fabiano, Nancy Fabiola Herrera, Bryan Hymel, Luis Ledesma, Angela Meade, Latonia Moore, James Morris, Stuart Neill, Ailyn Pérez, Ruth Ann Swenson, Taylor Stayton, Richard Troxell, and Corinne Winters, and currently making their mark in the opera world, recent graduates Piotr Buszewski, Dominick Valdés Chenes, Scott Conner, Marina Costa-Jackson, André Courville, Othalie Graham, Alasdair Kent, Zachary Nelson, Musa Ngqungwana, Nicole Piccolomini, Anne Marie Stanley, and Vanessa Vasquez.

In recent years, AVA Resident Artists took Top or First prizes in many competitions, such as the Belvedére Competition, Elizabeth Connell Competition, the Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation, Giulio Gari Foundation International Vocal Competition, and the Loren L. Zachary Society. Since 2000, thirteen AVA Resident Artists have been named National Winners in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

Academy of Vocal Arts 2026/2027 Board of Directors

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**in memoriam*

Academy of Vocal Arts

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FACULTY

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MUSIC STAFF

Vocal Coaches
Michael Lewis
Matthieu Cognet
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Pianists
Elise Auerbach
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Class Instructors
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Charles Conwell, *Instructor in Stage Combat*
Paul Curran, *Instructor in Acting*
Amanda Johnston, *Instructor in German*
Nicole Layseca, *Instructor in French*
Lisa Lovelace, *Instructor in Stage Movement and Dance*
Dr. Josh Miller, *Professional Development Faculty*
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ETIQUETTE

We'd like to preface these rules of etiquette by assuring you that they are for the benefit of those people behind you. This may be their first venture into an opera, and they may welcome some pointers about how they can let you enjoy the music.

Applause: Learning when it is proper to applaud is often tricky. If nobody claps when the piece is over, it probably isn't. If you are not sure, take a cue from those around you. Shouting is generally acceptable only during applause. The word "shouted" is often the Italian word bravo or a variation (brava in the case of a female performer, bravi for a plural number of performers, bravissimo for a truly exceptional performance). The word's original meaning is "skillful" and it has come to mean "well done."

Electronic Devices: Cell phones, watch alarms, pagers, cameras, and other electronic devices should be turned off prior to performances in the concert hall. These devices could cause a disturbance and are a distraction to musicians and other patrons.

Photography and Video: Photography and video by the audience is not allowed during the performances. It is a distraction to musicians and other patrons.

Noise: Even the quietest whispers can be heard in the concert hall and can prove to be a distraction to patrons and musicians alike. Save your comments until intermission or after the concert – it will give you and your friends much more to discuss. Thanks to the wonderful acoustics in today's concert halls, the sound of crumpling cellophane can be heard by everyone. Plan ahead, and pop that hard candy in your mouth before the music starts.

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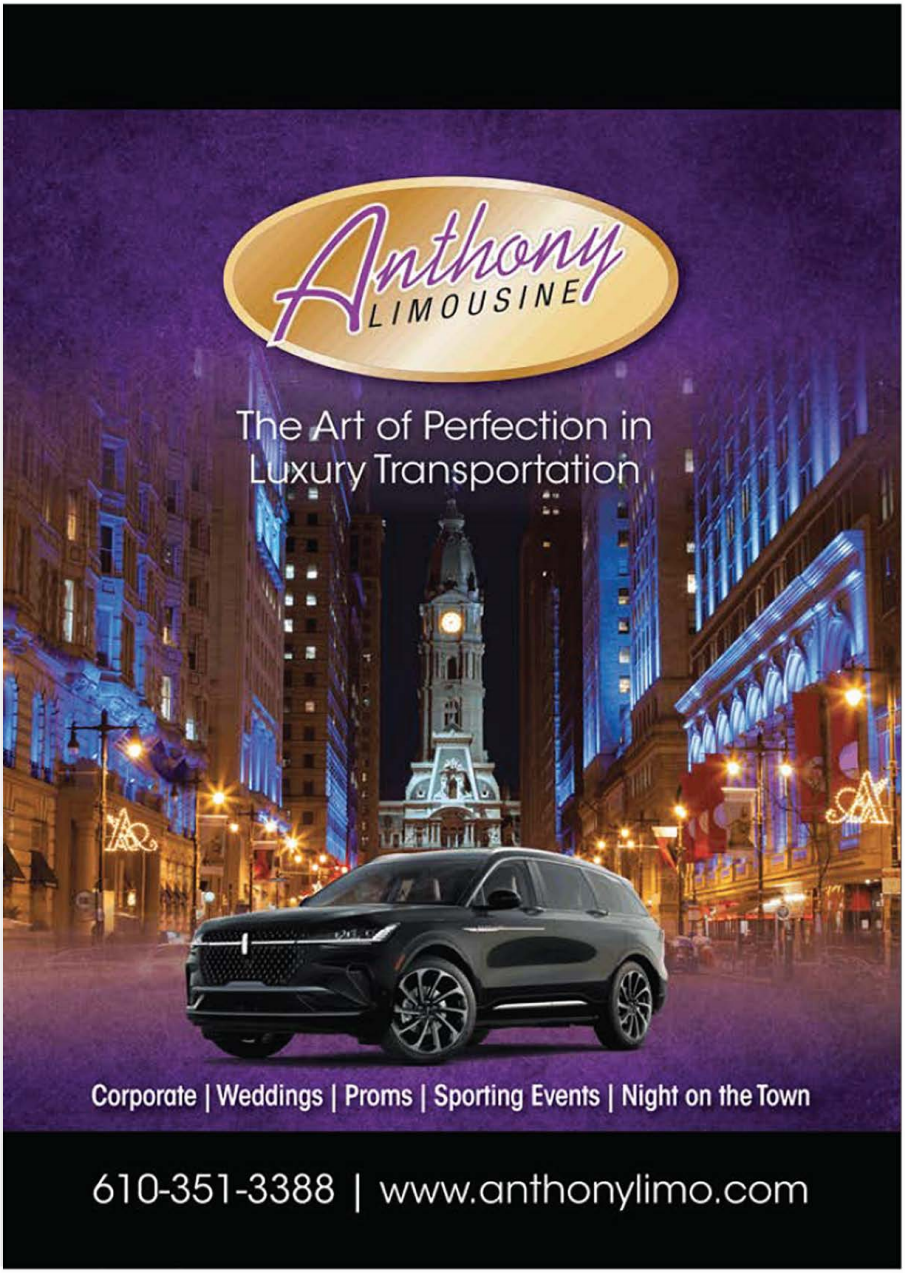
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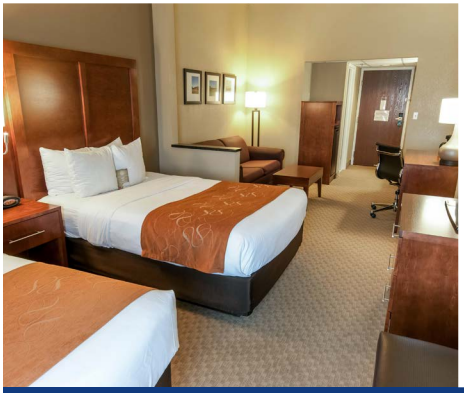
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PHILHARMONIC ..... FRI NOV 13, SAT NOV 14

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