THE METROPOLITAN OPERA ERIC AND DOMINIQUE LAFFONT COMPETITION

GRAND FINALS CONCERT

CONDUCTOR
Michele Gamba

HOST AND GUEST ARTIST Latonia Moore

awards presenter Ryan Speedo Green

Metropolitan Opera Orchestra Sunday, April 23, 2023 3:00PM

MARIA MANETTI SHREM GENERAL MANAGER Peter Gelb

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Throughout the 2022-23 season, the Met honors Ukraine and its brave citizens as they fight to defend their country and its cultural heritage.

The Metropolitan Opera

2022-23 SEASON

THE METROPOLITAN OPERA
ERIC AND DOMINIQUE LAFFONT COMPETITION

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"Hai già vinta la causa! ... Vedrò mentr'io sospiro" from Le Nozze di Figaro (Mozart)

David Wolfe, Baritone

"Eccomi in lieta vesta ... Oh! quante volte, oh! quante" from I Capuleti e i Montecchi (Bellini)

Meredith Wohlgemuth, Soprano

"L'Amour! l'amour! ... Ah! lève-toi, soleil!" from Roméo et Juliette (Gounod)

Yuntong Han, Tenor

"Non più andrai" from *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Mozart) **Christian Simmons**, Bass-Baritone

"Il mio tesoro" from *Don Giovanni* (Mozart) **Anthony León**, Tenor

"Cruda, funesta, smania ... La pietade in suo favore" from Lucia di Lammermoor (Donizetti)

Eleomar Cuello, Baritone

"Ah! più non vedrò la Regina ... O don fatale" from *Don Carlo* (Verdi)

Sarah Saturnino, Mezzo-Soprano

"Avete torto ... Firenze è come un albero fiorito" from Gianni Schicchi (Puccini)
Sahel Salam. Tenor

This performance is being broadcast live on Metropolitan Opera Radio on SiriusXM channel 355 and streamed at metopera.org.

Sunday, April 23, 2023, 3:00PM

"Awake, Saturnia, from thy lethargy ... Hence, Iris, hence away" from *Semele* (Handel)

Natalie Lewis, Mezzo-Soprano

"Dis-moi que je suis belle" from *Thaïs* (Massenet) **Teresa Perrotta**, Soprano

Intermission

"Lunge da lei ... De' miei bollenti spiriti" from *La Traviata* (Verdi)

Yuntong Han, Tenor

"Non disperar, chi sà?" from *Giulio Cesare* (Handel) **Meredith Wohlgemuth**, Soprano

"Dal labbro il canto" from Falstaff (Verdi) Anthony León, Tenor

"Captain Ahab? I must speak with you. Sir?" from *Moby-Dick* (Jake Heggie)

David Wolfe, Baritone

"Samson, recherchant ma présence ... Amour! viens aider ma faiblesse" from *Samson et Dalila* (Saint-Saëns)

Sarah Saturnino, Mezzo-Soprano

"Vyes' tabor spit" from *Aleko* (Rachmaninoff) Christian Simmons, Bass-Baritone

"Ella mi fu rapita! ... Parmi veder le lagrime" from *Rigoletto* (Verdi)

Sahel Salam, Tenor

"Ecco il punto, o Vitellia ... Non più di fiori" from La Clemenza di Tito (Mozart)

Teresa Perrotta, Soprano

"Ô sainte médaille ... Avant de quitter ces lieux" from Faust (Gounod)

Eleomar Cuello, Baritone

"Acerba voluttà, dolce tortura" from *Adriana Lecouvreur* (Cilea)

Natalie Lewis, Mezzo-Soprano

GUEST ARTIST

Tatiana's Letter Scene from Eugene Onegin (Tchaikovsky)

Latonia Moore, Soprano

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE GRAND FINALS WINNERS

Before the performance begins, please switch off any cell phones and any other electronic devices.

Yamaha is the Official Piano of the Metropolitan Opera.

Meet the Artists



Eleomar Cuello BARITONE (HAVANA, CUBA) AGE: 28

Eleomar Cuello began his career at the Academia del Teatro Lírico Nacional de Cuba, where his roles included Papageno in *Die* Zauberflöte, Julián in Vega's La Verbena de la Paloma, and Leandro

in Alonso's Las Leandras. Between 2015 and 2020, he was a regular guest at Chile's Teatro Municipal de Santiago and other theaters in the country, where his roles included Guglielmo in Così fan tutte, Haly in L'Italiana in Algeri, Valentin in Faust, Schaunard in La Bohème, the title role of Don Giovanni, Silvio in Pagliacci, Donna Agata Scannagalli in Donizetti's Le Convenienze ed Inconvenienze Teatrali, and Escamillo in Carmen. In recent seasons, he has appeared as Pimienta in Roig's Cecilia Valdés and Don Diego in Penella Moreno's Don Gil de Alcala at Madrid's Teatro de la Zarzuela, Sgt. Belcore in L'Elisir d'Amore with the Gulf Coast Symphony, Angelotti in Tosca and Grégorio in Roméo et Juliette at Opera Naples, Dr. Dulcamara in L'Elisir d'Amore at Vero Beach Opera, and Marco in Gianni Schicchi and Michael Ching's Buoso's Ghost at Florida Grand Opera. Upcoming, he will sing Don Giovanni in Stuttgart and at Vero Beach Opera and Michaele in Il Tabarro and the title role of Gianni Schicchi in Oviedo. Southeast Region.



Yuntong Han
TENOR (SHENYANG, CHINA)
AGE: 28

Having earned bachelor's degrees from New England Conservatory of Music and China's Northwestern Polytechnical University, Yuntong Han is currently pursuing his master's degree at Indiana University's

Jacobs School of Music. At Indiana University, he has appeared as Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*, Ruggero in *La Rondine*, and Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*. He was also a recent singer fellow at the Ravinia Steans Music Institute and sang Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, and Lucano in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* at New England Conservatory of Music. He is also active as a concert and oratorio soloist, performing in Handel's *Messiah*, Haydn's *Die Schöpfung*, and the New England Conservatory Song and Verse art-song series. Central Region.



Anthony León TENOR (RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA) AGE: 26

Anthony León has appeared at the Santa Fe Opera, Carnegie Hall, Paris's Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, Geneva's Victoria Hall, and Metz's Arsenal Concert Hall, among others. During the 2022–23

season, he is a member of the Domingo-Colburn-Stein Young Artist Program at LA Opera, where he has sung Roderigo in *Otello*, Pelléas in *Impressions de Pelléas*, Don Curzio in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, the Male Chorus in *The Rape of Lucretia*, Spoletta in *Tosca*, and Normanno

in Lucia di Lammermoor. Upcoming, he will appear at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence and Salzburg Festival, sing Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* at LA Opera, and can be heard on a recording of Monteverdi's *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria* with the ensemble I Gemelli. Last year, he earned first prize and the Don Plácido Domingo Ferrer Zarzuela Prize at the Operalia competition. Western Region.



Natalie Lewis
MEZZO-SOPRANO (SEVERNA PARK, MARYLAND)
AGE: 24

In recent seasons, Natalie Lewis has appeared as the Third Lady in *Die Zauberflöte*, Marcellina in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and Mistress Quickly in *Falstaff*. She has participated in numerous summer young

artist programs, including at the Aspen Music Festival, Houston Grand Opera's Young Artists' Vocal Academy, Opera Neo, and American Institute for Music Studies in Graz, Austria. She placed first in Houston Grand Opera's Concert of Arias in 2023, as well as in the New England Region NATS competition. She graduated with a bachelor's degree from the University of Massachusetts Amherst and is currently finishing her master's degree at the Juilliard School, where she is a Kovner Fellow. Upcoming performances include Zita in *Gianni Schicchi* and the Princess in *Suor Angelica* at Juilliard Opera, Lucretia in *The Rape of Lucretia* with San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program, and her debut at Carnegie Hall with the Cecilia Chorus of New York. During the 2023–24 season, she will join the opera studio at the Bavarian State Opera, under scholarship with the Opera Foundation. Eastern Region.



Teresa Perrotta soprano (orlando, florida) age: 27

During the 2022–23 season, Teresa Perrotta joined Washington National Opera's Cafritz Young Artist Program, singing the Fifth Maid in *Elektra* and Musetta in *La Bohème*. Additional debuts include Alice

Ford in Falstaff at Maryland Lyric Opera and Anna in Nabucco with Washington Concert Opera, and this summer, she will return to the Glimmerglass Festival as Mimì in La Bohème. Upcoming engagements also include debuts with Berkshire Opera Festival and the Erie Philharmonic and a return to the Santa Fe Opera, where she previously appeared as Helena in A Midsummer Night's Dream and Alice Ford. She made her international debut as Marie Antoinette in John Corigliano's The Ghosts of Versailles at the Royal Opera of Versailles in 2019, and she has participated in workshops for Gregory Spears's The Righteous, Kevin Puts's The Hours, and Tobias Picker's Awakenings. She has been a young artist at the Santa Fe Opera, Glimmerglass Festival, Chautauqua Opera, and Ohio Light Opera. She received her undergraduate degree from the Eastman School of Music and her master's degree and artist diploma from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Great Lakes Region.

Meet the Artists CONTINUED



Sahel Salam TENOR (HOUSTON, TEXAS) AGE: 29

A fourth-year resident artist at Philadelphia's Academy of Vocal Arts and a winner of the Mario Lanza Competition, Sahel Salam has appeared as Ernesto in *Don Pasquale*, Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, and

Fernand in La Favorite, in addition to covering Alfredo in La Traviata. He recently sang Tamino in Die Zauberflöte with San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program. Formerly a Jerwood Young Artist at the Glyndebourne Festival and twice vocal fellow of Music Academy of the West, he is an alumnus of the Royal College of Music in London and the University of Texas at Austin. Upcoming, he will make his company debut as Arturo in Lucia di Lammermoor at Cincinnati Opera and join Washington National Opera as a Cafritz Young Artist. Central Region.



Sarah Saturnino

MEZZO-SOPRANO (GRASS VALLEY, CALIFORNIA)

AGE: 29

Sarah Saturnino is in her first season in LA Opera's Domingo-Colbert-Stein Young Artist Program. At LA Opera, she has sung Lucretia in *The Rape of Lucretia*, Jocabed in Henry Mollicone's *Moses*, and

Emilia in Otello. She is a former young artist at the Santa Fe Opera, where she covered the title role of Carmen, Meg Page in Falstaff, Marcellina in Le Nozze di Figaro, and Hippolyta in A Midsummer Night's Dream. She is also a former resident artist at Shreveport Opera, where she sang Carmen in The Tragedy of Carmen, Marcellina, Maddalena and Giovanna in Rigoletto, and Julia Child in Lee Hoiby's Bon Appétit. She has also sung Vera Boronel in Menotti's The Consul with Baltimore Concert Opera and Maddalena at Painted Sky Opera, Opera San Antonio, and Amarillo Opera. She is an alumna of the Chautauqua Institution and recently made her debut with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra as the Alto Soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and performed in Dayton Opera's Maria Callas Centennial Celebration Concert. She holds a master's degree from Yale University and a bachelor's degree from University of California, Los Angeles. Western Region.



Christian Simmons BASS-BARITONE (WASHINGTON, D.C.) AGE: 28

Christian Simmons is currently a Cafritz Young Artist at Washington National Opera, where this season he covers Ferrando in *Il Trovatore* and Colline in *La Bohème* and appears as the Policeman in Jeanine

Tesori's Blue, Colline in the young-artist performance of La Bohème, and in the American Opera Initiative. Last season, he made his debut with Washington National Opera as Zuniga in the young-artist performance of Carmen. He has also been a featured soloist in Mozart's Requiem with the National Symphony Orchestra and performed in Zaid Jabri's Southern

Crossings at Barnard College and as Colline at Annapolis Opera Company. He has appeared at the Morgan State University Theater, Bel Cantanti Opera Company, Washington Opera Society, Castleton Music Festival, Amalfi Coast Music Festival, Berlin Opera Academy, Bare Opera Company, and Maryland Opera Studio, and his roles have included Figaro in Le Nozze di Figaro, the King in Aida, Sparafucile in Rigoletto, Seneca in L'Incoronazione di Poppea, the Duke of Verona in Roméo et Juliette, Nardo in Mozart's La Finta Giardiniera, and Jabez Stone in Moore's The Devil and Daniel Webster. Rocky Mountain Region.



Meredith Wohlgemuth SOPRANO (WINTER HAVEN, FLORIDA) AGE: 27

Meredith Wohlgemuth recently completed her master's degree at the Juilliard School, and last August, she sang in the U.S. premiere of George Benjamin's Lessons in Love and Violence as part of

Tanglewood's Festival of Contemporary Music. During the 2021–22 season, she made her debut at National Sawdust in Brooklyn, performing in Beth Morrison Projects's 21c Liederabend Op. Senses. Recently, she also made her debut at Carnegie Hall as a Renée Fleming SongStudio Young Artist and performed at the Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts and at New York's Merkin Hall as a Schwab Vocal Rising Star with New York Festival of Song. This year, she will make her Carnegie Hall Stern Auditorium debut with the Cecilia Chorus of New York and will be a Renée Fleming Artist at the Aspen Music Festival, where she will sing Ilia in Idomeneo. Next season, she will join the ensemble at Staatsoper Hannover. Eastern Region.



David Wolfe
BARITONE (SHAMOKIN, PENNSYLVANIA)
AGE: 24

David Wolfe is currently pursuing his master's degree at the Bienen School of Music at Northwestern University. Since attending Northwestern, he has had the opportunity to perform a wide variety of

roles, including in the Midwestern premieres of Jake Heggie's If I Were You and Christopher Cerrone's In a Grove. He also appeared as Schaunard in La Bohème and Papageno in Die Zauberflöte. Last August, he attended the Steans Music Institute at the Ravinia Festival. He received his bachelor's degree from the Eastman School of Music, where he performed in Argento's A Postcard from Morocco and Ullmann's Der Kaiser von Atlantis. He has also been active in community-outreach projects with both the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and Wheeling Symphony Orchestra. In 2021, he created the role of Bunsen in the children's show Dr. Freakquency's Sound Lab. This summer, he will participate in the 2023 Bel Canto Boot Camp and will join Des Moines Metro Opera as a Frank R. Brownell III Apprentice Artist, covering Moralés in Carmen and joining the choruses of Carmen and The Love for Three Oranges. Upper Midwest Region.

Meet the Special Guests



Michele Gamba CONDUCTOR (MILAN, ITALY)

THIS SEASON L'Elisir d'Amore for his debut and the Eric and Dominique Laffont Grand Finals Concert at the Met, Il Trovatore at Washington National Opera, Schubert's Winterreise with baritone Markus Werba at La Scala, Aida in Turin, Il Barbiere di Siviglia at the Savonlinna Opera

Festival, and concerts with the Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra and Orchestra Haydn di Bolzano e Trento.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include *Turandot* at Torre del Lago's Festival Puccini; *Rigoletto*, *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and *Le Nozze di Figaro* at La Scala; *Le Nozze di Figaro* at Staatsoper Berlin and the Israeli Opera; *Linda di Chamounix* in Florence; and *Die Zauberflöte* in Dresden. He has also conducted *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* in Florence and Strasbourg, *Idomeneo* at the Israeli Opera, *La Bohème* and *La Sonnambula* in Stuttgart, *Rigoletto* at the Deutsche Oper Berlin, *L'Elisir d'Amore* in Turin, *La Traviata* in Lisbon, *Macbeth* in Toulouse, *Andrea Chénier* in Bari, and Rossini's *L'Occasione Fa il Ladro* in Venice. He has led concerts with the RAI National Symphony Orchestra, Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, Duisburg Philharmonic, Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, and Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano, and performed as a pianist at Munich's Gasteig, London's Wigmore Hall, and the Philharmonie Berlin.



Latonia Moore SOPRANO (HOUSTON, TEXAS)

THIS SEASON The Eric and Dominique Laffont Grand Finals Concert, Emelda Griffith in Terence Blanchard's *Champion*, Musetta in *La Bohème*, and the title role of *Aida* at the Met; Leonora in *Il Trovatore* at Washington National Opera; Cio-Cio-San in *Madama Butterfly* at

Staatsoper Berlin; and a recital at Opera Philadelphia.

MET APPEARANCES Serena in *Porgy and Bess*, Billie in Blanchard's *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, Aida (debut, 2012), and Cio-Cio-San.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Recent performances include Serena at Dutch National Opera, English National Opera, and in concert at Lucerne Festival; Billie at Lyric Opera of Chicago; Cio-Cio-San at the Dallas Opera; Leonora at the Glimmerglass Festival; the title role of *Tosca* at Austin Opera, Washington National Opera, Opera Australia, New York City Opera, and in Rouen; Mimì in *La Bohème* at Palm Beach Opera; and Desdemona in *Otello* in Bergen. She has also sung Aida in Verona, Buenos Aires, Zurich, and Tokyo; at Covent Garden, English National Opera, Opera Australia, Dubai Opera, LA Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, San Diego Opera, and the Dallas Opera; and in concert in Bergen and at the Ravinia Festival.



Honoring Camille LaBarre

We dedicate today's Laffont Competition Grand Finals Concert to Camille LaBarre in honor of her decades of service to the Metropolitan Opera. First serving as a National Council Auditions District Director in Cleveland, Ohio, Camille became National Chairman of the Competition in 1989, as well as a member of the Metropolitan Opera Board. She later became Chairman of the Met's Patron Program and founded its Young Associates Program. She is an inaugural inductee to the Opera America Hall of Fame.

Camille has spent more than three decades in loving service to young singers through the Laffont Competition, nurturing artists personally and professionally on their ascent to the highest levels of the opera world. Her legacy is reflected in the generations of singers who have benefited from her commitment, her irrepressible enthusiam, and the national prize money that she has secured each year. Camille also inspires passion for opera in every staff member with whom she works, cultivating Met administrators who have developed into some of our industry's great leaders. The Laffont Competition and the Met recognize and honor Camille LaBarre with deep gratitude and appreciation.

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From left: Brady Walsh, Camille LaBarre, Melissa Wegner, and Natalie Burrows

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Yihan Duan

Soprano

Midwest Region

Vartan Gabrielian

Bass-Baritone

Northwest Region

Simona Genga

Mezzo-Soprano Great Lakes Region

Yuntong Han

Tenor

Central Region

Anthony León

Tenor

Western Region

Natalie Lewis

Mezzo-Soprano

Eastern Region

Chuanyuan Liu

Countertenor

Eastern Region

Midori Marsh

Soprano

Upper Midwest Region

Teresa Perrotta

Soprano

Great Lakes Region

Sahel Salam

Tenor

Central Region

Sarah Saturnino

Mezzo-Soprano

Western Region

Hannah Shea

Mezzo-Soprano

Rocky Mountain Region

Camille Sherman

Mezzo-Soprano Northwest Region Christian Simmons

Bass-Baritone

Rocky Mountain Region

Hyungjin Son

Baritone

New England Region

Joseph Tancredi

Tenor

Gulf Coast Region

Meredith Wohlgemuth

Soprano

Eastern Region

David Wolfe

Baritone

Upper Midwest Region

Lucila Zavala

Soprano

Gulf Coast Region

Grand Finals Awards

Today's concert serves as the final round of this season's competition. Those who are selected as national winners are awarded \$20,000 each, and the remaining national finalists receive \$10,000 to further assist in their careers.

The Laffont Competition is grateful to its donors for prizes at the national level and to the Tobin Endowment for the Mrs. Edgar Tobin Award, given to each first-place region winner.

\$20,000 AWARDS

Faith P. Geier Award

Dominique Laffont Award

Fernand Lamesch Award

The Birgit Nilsson Award of the American-Scandinavian Foundation

Alton E. Peters Award

Noreen Zimmerman Award

\$10,000 AWARDS

Ellie Caulkins Award

Pamela Craven Award

Judith Raskin Award

Anne de Richemont Smithers Award

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46