


HUMPERDINCK

*Lyric*

# HANSEL AND GRETEL



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Administrative Offices  
20 North Wacker Drive, Suite 860  
Chicago, Illinois 60606  
[lyricopera.org](http://lyricopera.org)

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Lyric

# On the cover

**As the biography** on page 26 of this program amply demonstrates, John Macfarlane is one of the most accomplished set and costume designers practicing today, his work having appeared not only in the major opera houses of the world, but also at a wide range of theater and dance companies. His visionary *Macbeth* at Lyric last season is just one example of his recent triumphs. Macfarlane also enjoys a successful career as a painter and printmaker, and the painting on the cover encapsulates his exceptional talent. Reproduced at enormous scale, it serves as a drop curtain for this *Hansel and Gretel* production. Does the image hold the promise of domestic comfort? “This is very much the idea of a plate and knife and fork ready for food—but white and empty,” Macfarlane says. “The lack of anything on the plate conveys starvation.” Indeed, hunger is a main driving force of the opera, the impulse that sets the characters in motion and places them in peril. For the artist, though, the imagery has proven fruitful. “It inspired a long sequence of plate and cutlery paintings in oil,” he says, “which still continues to develop today.”

John Macfarlane. *Front Curtain* (Act I drop curtain for *Hansel and Gretel*), 1998.  
Gouache on paper. Private collection.



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PICTURED: HONORED GUEST LAURENT DROUHIN OF MAISON JOSEPH DROUHIN, 2023 WINE AUCTION CO-CHAIRS SUZANNE W. MULSHINE, NANCY S. SEARLE, ERICA L. SANDNER, AND EILEEN MURPHY. PHOTO BY: JACLYN SIMPSON

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**Anthony Freud**  
*General Director,  
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**Enrique Mazzola**  
*Music Director*

*Lyric*

# Welcome to your Lyric

# From the Chair and the General Director

Dear Lyric Family,

Happy New Year and welcome back to Lyric. We hope your holidays were filled with laughter and joy and you are ready to embrace all that 2023 will bring.

We are excited to be opening the second half of this irresistible opera season with the much-anticipated return of this production of Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*. This dark and whimsical production has been acclaimed by critics and audiences alike and we're sure you'll fall under its spell, too.

We're also delighted to welcome our former music director, Sir Andrew Davis, back to the podium for these performances. His immensely distinguished three decade relationship with Lyric has encompassed hundreds of performances and scores of operatic titles, and it is a lovely treat to have him back with us.

When this universally celebrated production debuted at Lyric 20 years ago, it took Chicago by storm. It did the same in 2012, and popular demand brings it back for you now. This riveting and inventive view of the Brothers Grimm's fairy tale does full justice to Humperdinck's glorious score with a cast that includes some of the opera world's most sought-after artists.

*Hansel and Gretel* was my first opera at age four, and, between scoops of banana ice cream, I was hooked. If this is your first visit to Lyric or your 400th, Sylvia and I know you'll be captivated by what's to come.

Welcome to Lyric. We are so glad you are here.

Sincerely,



*Sylvia Neil*

**SYLVIA NEIL**  
Chair



*Anthony Freud Obe*

**ANTHONY FREUD OBE**  
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# Let's hear it!



Singers invited to the Ryan Opera Center *Final Auditions* have a special opportunity to share their artistry on one of the most famous opera house stages in the world.

By David Zivan

Ron Dukes, who recently made his Lyric debut in *Ernani*, successfully auditioned for a second year at the 2022 *Final Auditions* accompanied by Laurann Gilley.

**The *Final Auditions* for Ensemble singer positions** in The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center take place every year, but their recurring nature does nothing to diminish the intensity of the occasion. Over the course of six hours, one by one, emerging opera talents from around the globe take Lyric Opera of Chicago's Ken Pigott stage, hoping the outcome will be an invitation to join one of the finest artist-development programs in the world.

A variety of factors is at play: which current Ensemble members will be returning for another year (they have to re-audition for their spot, as well) and what roles could be assigned in the upcoming season, for example, but as the program's Director of Vocal Studies Julia Faulkner says, "What we're really looking for is extraordinary talent that needs to be nurtured." The specific number that the program will take on, she says, "is not predetermined. We generally aim for 12 singers in the Ensemble, which would include two of each voice type—soprano, mezzo-soprano, tenor, baritone, bass—plus two additional artists. But where we land is guided by the talent and the potential we hear and see."

The current 2022/23 Ensemble amply demonstrates the results of that approach: there is just one mezzo-soprano, and four tenors—an unusual mix that came about because at last season's auditions two tenors wowed the judging panel.

The focus on talent is not the only exceptional aspect of the *Final Auditions*: No matter where they're coming from, each participant's trip to Chicago is provided by the Ryan Opera Center, including travel and lodging, thanks to generous sponsors and American Airlines, Lyric's Official Airline. Typically the singers (and also candidates for the new positions of conductor/pianist, stage director, and stage manager, whose audition process is different and takes place separately) fly in for a three- or four-day stay, during which they meet and work with Ryan Opera Center staff and receive coaching sessions to prepare for their audition. With 15 or 20 candidates arriving to audition in any given year, the expenses are considerable.

Covering the auditioning artists' costs is simply the right thing to do, says Lyric General Director, President

& CEO Anthony Freud. “I’ve sat on many competition juries over the years, and some of them not only do not cover the travel and lodging expenses of the singers who enter, but even in certain cases singers have to pay to enter,” Freud notes. “And that, to me, is completely wrong. If competitors aren’t fully reimbursed, how can we talk about inclusivity? It’s incredibly important that a commitment to inclusivity includes affordability.”

**Inclusivity and access are key components** of the audition process from the very start, says Ryan Opera Center Director Dan Novak. It begins with promotional efforts. Every January, in a wide variety of traditional ways, the Ryan Opera Center announces that singer applications may be submitted. Numerous websites and publications publicize the opportunity, but Lyric supplements its efforts with an eye toward the company’s broader efforts in Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA).

“We want the process to be as absolutely open and accessible as possible,” Novak says. “Applying for the Ryan Opera Center is free of charge, and we send marketing materials to universities and schools where there are historically diverse student bodies. In the group of Historically Black Colleges and Universities, for instance, there are 23 music programs to which we send the audition announcement, encouraging their students to apply.”

Ongoing improvements in technology have made video-recorded submissions far more useful than in the past—which, in turn, has expanded the pool of applicants to a global scale. In any given year, the Ryan Opera Center will review somewhere between 400 and 500 videos. “We listen to all applicants and determine who advances to a preliminary live audition,” Novak says. “That narrows the number down to somewhere between 150 to 200 singers, whom we hear in New York City and in Chicago over the course of the spring and summer.”

As large-scale as all that might sound, it actually represents only one facet of how the Ryan Opera Center finds talent. Everyone in Lyric’s artistic leadership is listening and keeping an eye out for stars on the rise, wherever their work takes them—to universities, performances, and festivals all over the world. That’s the less formal part of the company’s outreach efforts, which Novak refers to simply as “recruitment.”

“It’s a year-long and ongoing process,” Faulkner notes. “Over the past summer, I heard about 90 different singers—not just heard, but worked with for an hour. I was in Santa Fe, I was in San Francisco, I was in England.”

It’s much the same for Craig Terry, the Ryan Opera Center’s Music Director. “I curated a big concert in Santa Barbara over the summer, with about 25 really gifted singers,” he says. “There was one very young



Kyle Flubacker

Lyric’s Music Director Enrique Mazzola serves as a judge for the *Final Auditions* and works with Ensemble members throughout the year.





Kyle Hubacker

Director of Vocal Studies Julia Faulkner, center, celebrates with new 2023/24 Ensemble mezzo-sopranos Lucy Baker, left, and Sophia Maekawa, right.

singer there who had a real spark and was able to deliver something that wowed everyone. So we invited her to the *Finals*. Giving her the chance to walk through the door and see what she can do right now was a huge opportunity.”

**This past September, 15 singers** made the pilgrimage for what Freud recently referred to as “the annual excitement.” Indeed, the actual day-of performances are thrilling to watch, an experience that first became available to an audience nine years ago, thanks to a sponsorship by the Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation. This year’s Lead Sponsor was Philip G. Lumpkin. “A number of subscribers, donors, patron groups, ticket buyers, and students attend, many for the entire six hours—a

major commitment of time,” Novak says. “It’s a much nicer experience for the singers to have an audience who support them with their applause and energy. And it’s a wonderful opportunity for the Lyric family to learn more about the Ryan Opera Center.”

More than 500 listeners attended the most recent event. In the house also, of course, was the judging panel—Faulkner, Freud, Novak, and Terry, joined by Lyric’s Music Director Enrique Mazzola, Chief Artistic Administration Officer Matthew Ozawa, Vice President, Artistic Planning Andreas Melinat, and Director of Artistic Programs Cory Lippiello. The conversations, coaching sessions, and interviews that take place with Finalists over the previous several days matter a






Kyle Flubocker

The first portrait of the 2023/24 Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center Ensemble, with Lyric Opera leadership, taken at the conclusion of the *Final Auditions*.

great deal, but the final selections are made based on performances by one voice, singing with one piano, on one of the grandest stages anywhere in the world.

Even for a place that is routinely home to extraordinary exhibitions of human talent, the Ryan Opera Center *Final Auditions* make for a special day. The volume of time and energy invested leading up to it, not just from the talented emerging artists but also from the pianists who play the auditions and many other staff at Lyric, can hardly be calculated. Each singer performs their arias, then waits until everyone has had their turn. The judges confer throughout the day, then finish with an intense final session. Once decisions are made, the singers learn the results, and those selected sign their contracts, right on the spot.

This season's auditions resulted in the selection of two mezzo-sopranos, one tenor, and one bass-baritone, who will join the 2023/24 Ensemble's returning eight singers. Those who aren't selected leave with an indelible experience under their belts, and it's not uncommon for them to return at a future date.

"Watching the talent on the stage, the possibilities are endless. And it's always tremendous fun. It makes our blood pressure go up, but it also opens our hearts," says Terry. "Because that's what this career is, what the job is—what is, for all of us, the reason that we're here doing what we do. We want to find artists who can deliver when the pressure is on—who have the ability to connect. Singers who can stand in front of the audience and light it up." 

When this universally cherished production debuted here 20 years ago, it captivated Chicago audiences. It did the same in 2012, and this season it returns again by popular demand. This rivetingly modern, astonishingly inventive view of the Brothers Grimm fairytale features an eye-popping production that does full justice to Humperdinck's glorious score. You'll be rooting for Hansel and Gretel at every moment in their battle against the witch in the massive, industrial-strength kitchen, and you'll be moved by the "Dream Ballet." From the exquisite "Evening Prayer" to the uproarious "Witch's Ride," this ever-fresh, whimsical masterpiece is packed with musical gems that make it a wonderful introduction to opera for audiences of all ages.



Elizabeth DeShong and Maria Kanyova in *Hansel and Gretel* at Lyric Opera of Chicago in 2012/13.

Dan Rest

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# Hansel and Gretel



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# Hansel and Gretel

Sung in German with English titles

Music by **Engelbert Humperdinck**

Libretto by **Adelheid Wette**, after the story by the Brothers Grimm

## CHARACTERS IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE

Gretel  
Hansel  
Mother  
Father  
Sandman  
Dew Fairy  
The Witch

**Heidi Stober**  
**Samantha Hankey<sup>+</sup>**  
**Alexandra LoBianco**  
**Alfred Walker<sup>+</sup>**  
**Denis Vélez<sup>+</sup>**  
**Denis Vélez<sup>+</sup>**  
**Jill Grove**

Conductor  
Original Director  
Revival Director  
Set and Costume Designer  
Lighting  
Children's Chorus Master  
Original Choreographer  
Wigmaster &  
Makeup Designer  
Assistant Director  
Stage Manager  
Musical Preparation

**Sir Andrew Davis**  
**Richard Jones**  
**Eric Einhorn**  
**John Macfarlane**  
**Jennifer Tipton**  
**Josephine Lee**  
**Linda Dobell**  
**Sarah Hatten**

**Jordan Lee Braun**  
**Katrina Bachus**  
**William C. Billingham**  
**Francesco Miloto**  
**Eric Weimer**

Uniting Voices Chicago

## Actors

**Anthony Baldasare, Jon Beal, Harry Belden,**  
**Miles Borchard, Clint Campbell, Chuck Coyl,**  
**Paulina Dudzik, David von Ehrlicher, JJ Gatesman,**  
**David Goodloe<sup>+</sup>, Myles Harris, Kirk Osgood,**  
**Michael Saubert, Jr., Philip Soulides,**  
**Skylar Sprague, Lucy Zukaitis**

First performed by Deutsches Nationaltheater and Staatskapelle Weimar, Weimar, Germany on December 23, 1893.  
First performed by Lyric Opera of Chicago on December 8, 2001.

<sup>+</sup> Lyric debut

• Member, The Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center



Elizabeth DeShong and Maria Kanyova in *Hansel and Gretel* at Lyric Opera of Chicago in 2012/13.



# Synopsis

**TIME | Once upon a ...**

**PLACE | A forest near the Ilsenstein, a sinister rock that in German folklore was said to be the home of witches.**

## ACT I

In the broom-maker's house

Hansel complains he is hungry. Gretel shows him some milk that a neighbor has given for the family's supper. The children dance. Their mother returns and wants to know why they have got so little work done. She accidentally spills the milk and chases the children out into the woods to pick strawberries. Their father returns home drunk. He brings out the food he has bought, then asks where the children have gone. The mother tells him that she has sent them into the woods. He tells her about the Witch and that the children are in danger. They go out into the woods to look for them.

## ACT II

In the woods

Hansel picks strawberries. Hansel and Gretel hear a cuckoo singing and eat the strawberries. Soon they have eaten every one. In the sudden silence of the wood, Hansel admits to Gretel that he has lost the way. The children grow frightened. The Sandman comes to bring them sleep, sprinkling sand over their eyes. The children say their evening prayer. In a dream, they see 14 angels.

## INTERMISSION

## ACT III

The gingerbread house

The Dew Fairy comes to waken the children. Gretel wakes Hansel, and they see the gingerbread house. They do not notice the Witch. The Witch decides to fatten Hansel up. The oven is hot. Gretel breaks the Witch's spell and sets Hansel free. When the Witch asks her to look in the oven, she pretends she doesn't know how—the Witch must show her. When the Witch peers into the oven, the children shove her inside and shut the door. The oven explodes. The gingerbread children come back to life. The mother and father find the children, and all express gratitude for their salvation.

*Reprinted courtesy Welsh National Opera*

## PRODUCTION SPONSOR



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Lyric Opera of Chicago thanks its Official Airline, American Airlines.

## APPROXIMATE TIMINGS

Acts 1 and 2	1 hour 10 minutes
Intermission	25 minutes
Act 3	45 minutes
Total	2 hours 20 minutes



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# Artist profiles



## **SAMANTHA HANKEY | HANSEL** **Lyric debut**

The mezzo-soprano opened her 2022/23 Season as Federico García Lorca in Golijov's *Ainadamar* at Scottish Opera and later this season reprises the role of Dorabella in *Così fan tutte* at Palm Beach Opera, before making her role and house debut as Mélisande in *Pelléas et Mélisande* at Santa Fe Opera. This year, Hankey will make her solo recital debut at Carnegie Hall, in a program of Zemlinsky, Strauss, and Ravel. In 2021/22 she made house and role debuts at the Gran Teatre del Liceu Barcelona as Der Komponist in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Dorabella at San Diego Opera, and Ruggiero in Glyndebourne Festival's new production of *Alcina*. She made her role debut as Prince Charmant in *Cendrillon* at the Metropolitan Opera and her house debut in the same role at the Opéra national de Paris, before returning to Munich's Bayerische Staatsoper as Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro* and Octavian in *Der Rosenkavalier*, in the new production by Barrie Kosky. From 2019 to 2021, Hankey held a Fest contract at the Bayerische Staatsoper where she appeared as Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel*, Wellgunde in *Das Rheingold*, Zweite Dame in *Die Zauberflöte*, and as Carmen in Marina Abramović's new production of *7 Deaths of Maria Callas* at the Opernfestspiele. Other recent significant house debuts include Opernhaus Zürich, Den Norske Opera, The Dallas Opera, and Grand Théâtre de Genève. On the concert stage, Hankey has performed the title role in Handel's *Agrippina* in concert with Il Pomo d'Oro in Turku, Finland, appeared at Bard Festival in Lili Boulanger's *Faust et Hélène*, and sang at Carnegie Hall in Handel's *Messiah*.



## **HEIDI STOBER | GRETEL** **Previously at Lyric:** Dalinda/Ariodante (2018/19) and Valencienne/The Merry Widow (2015/16).

Since her acclaimed debut as Pamina/*Die Zauberflöte* at Deutsche Oper Berlin in 2008, the soprano has cultivated a long-standing relationship with the company, with recent roles including her debut as Eva/*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Gretel/*Hansel and Gretel*, Donna Elvira/*Don Giovanni*, Micaëla/*Carmen*, Marguerite/*Faust*, and Oscar/*Un ballo in maschera*. At Semperoper Dresden her roles include Fiordiligi/*Così fan tutte*, title role/*Alcina*, Micaëla/*Carmen*, and Adina/*L'elisir d'amore*, and she has also appeared as Adina for the Wiener Staatsoper. Stober made her Metropolitan Opera debut in the 2011/12 Season as Gretel, returning to the company in recent years as Gretel, Pamina, Oscar, and most recently Despina/*Così fan tutte*. She appears regularly at San Francisco Opera where roles include Norina, Gretel, Magnolia/*Showboat*, Oscar, Johanna/*Sweeney Todd*, Nannetta/*Falstaff*, Atalanta/*Xerxes*,

and Susanna/*Le nozze di Figaro*. For Houston Grand Opera, her roles include Cleopatra/*Giulio Cesare*, Susanna, Musetta/*La bohème*, Atalanta, Drusilla/*L'incoronazione di Poppea*, Norina/*Don Pasquale*, and most recently Micaëla. This season's highlights include her role debut as Blanche/*Dialogues of the Carmelites* for San Francisco Opera, Despina for Hamburgische Staatsoper, Susanna for Semperoper Dresden, and Donna Elvira at Japan's Hyogo Performing Arts Center. Future plans include a return to the Metropolitan Opera and her debut at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.



## **JILL GROVE | THE WITCH**

**Previously at Lyric:** 14 appearances since 2003/04, most recently *Governess/The Queen of Spades* (2019/20) and *Marthe/Faust* (2017/18).

This season, the American mezzo-soprano makes her Portland Opera debut as Ježibaba/*Rusalka* and joins Opera Omaha as Principessa/*Suor Angelica*. Last season, she performed with Arizona Opera as Madame Armfeldt/*A Little Night Music* and also returned to the Metropolitan Opera for *Elektra* and *The Rake's Progress*. She recently joined the Metropolitan Opera as *Governess/The Queen of Spades*, Minnesota Opera for *Klytaemnestra/Elektra*, San Francisco Opera for the Fortune Teller/*Arabella* and Mamma Lucia/*Cavalleria Rusticana*, Canadian Opera Company as 1st Maid/*Elektra*, and the Calgary Philharmonic for performances of Verdi's *Requiem*. A frequent guest at Lyric, she previously sang performances of Filipyevna/*Eugene Onegin* (2016/17), Margret/*Wozzeck* (2015/16), Ježibaba/*Rusalka* (2013/14), Klytaemnestra/*Elektra* (2012/13), and Witch/*Hansel and Gretel* (2012/13) among others. Grove's numerous performances at the Metropolitan Opera include Erda/*Siegfried* and *Das Rheingold*, Magdalene/*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Madelon/*Andrea Chénier*, Pantalís/*Mefistofele*, Emilia/*Otello*, Mary/*Die fliegende Holländer*, Auntie/*Peter Grimes*, die Muschel/*Die ägyptische Helena*, and Cornelia/*Giulio Cesare*. Other recent performances include Ježibaba/*Rusalka* with Des Moines Metro Opera; Klytaemnestra/*Elektra* with Detroit Opera; Auntie/*Peter Grimes* with Canadian Opera Company; Ježibaba/*Rusalka* and First Maid/*Elektra* with Houston Grand Opera; Buryja/*Jenůfa*, Madelon/*Andrea Chénier* and Jenny Reefer/Thomson's *The Mother of Us All* at San Francisco Opera; Dame Quickly/*Falstaff*, die Muschel/*Die ägyptische Helena*, Florence Pike/*Albert Herring*, Ursule/*Béatrice et Bénédicte*, and Antonia's Mother/*Les contes d'Hoffmann* with Santa Fe Opera; Erda/*Siegfried*, Nutrice/*L'incoronazione di Poppea*, and Zita/*Gianni Schicchi* at Los Angeles Opera; Baba the Turk/*The Rake's Progress* with Pittsburgh Opera and Utah Opera; Amneris/*Aida* with Canadian Opera Company and New Orleans Opera; Ulrica/*Un ballo in maschera* with San Diego Opera; and the Sorceress/*Dido and Aeneas* with Philharmonia Baroque.


**ALEXANDRA LOBIANCO | MOTHER**

**Previously at Lyric:** Chrysothemis and Fourth Maid/*Elektra* (2018/19) and *Helmwige/Die Walküre* (2017/18).

The American soprano's recent performances include Brünnhilde in *Die Walküre* (Seattle Opera), *Aida* (Seattle Opera, Opera Colorado), title role/*Ariadne auf Naxos* (Austin Opera), *Tosca* (Portland Opera, Seattle Opera, North Carolina Opera, Opera Grand Rapids, Minnesota Opera), *Turandot* (Palm Beach Opera, Maryland Lyric Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera), and *Leonore/Fidelio* (Vienna State Opera, North Carolina Opera). She debuted at Munich's Bavarian State Opera as Gerhilde/*Die Walküre*, and has portrayed Helmwige in that work for a tour of Japan with the Vienna State Opera. Other major performances include the title role/*La fanciulla del West* (Des Moines), *Amelia/Un ballo in maschera* (Miami), *Miss Jessel/The Turn of the Screw* (Dallas), Marianne Leitmetzerin/*Der Rosenkavalier* (Metropolitan Opera), Donna Anna/*Don Giovanni* (Seattle), and Magda Sorel/*The Consul* (Santa Barbara).


**ALFRED WALKER | FATHER**

**Lyric debut**

This season, the bass-baritone returns to San Francisco Opera as Enobarbus in the world premiere of John Adams's *Antony and Cleopatra*, joins the Metropolitan Opera as Masetto in *Don Giovanni*, and sings Rachmaninoff's *The Bells* with the LA Philharmonic under Gustavo Dudamel. Last season, he joined San Francisco Opera as Scarpia in *Tosca*, returned to the Metropolitan Opera for further performances of Crown in *Porgy and Bess*, and joined Washington National Opera as Mthll in *It All Falls Down* which is a part of *Written In Stone*, a tetralogy of one-act operas. He also sang Nalikantha in *Lakmé* with Washington Concert Opera, and sang Tom in *Un ballo in maschera* with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. He recently joined Detroit Opera as Alfio in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, San Francisco Opera for Father in *Hansel and Gretel*, and Boston Lyric Opera for Oroveso in *Norma*. Walker recently sang the title role in *Der fliegende Holländer* at Theater Basel and returned to the company for his first performances of both Amfortas in *Parsifal* and Amonasro in *Aida*. Other recent performances include Titirel in *Parsifal* and the Speaker in *The Magic Flute* with the Metropolitan Opera; the Ruler in *Das Wunder der Heliane* with Bard Summerscape; Orest in *Elektra* with San Francisco Opera; Amonasro in *Aida* and Porgy in *Porgy and Bess* with Seattle Opera; Méphistophélès in *Faust* with Portland Opera; Kurwenal in *Tristan und Isolde* at Angers Nantes Opera and Opéra de Dijon; and his first performances of Wotan in *Das Rheingold* with North Carolina Opera.


**DENIS VÉLEZ | SANDMAN/DEW FAIRY**

**Previously at Lyric:** Thibault/*Don Carlos* (2022/23) and Papagena/*The Magic Flute* (2021/22).

The soprano, a third-year Ryan Opera Center member from Puebla, Mexico, sang in *Sunday in the Park with Lyric* this summer. This season at Lyric, Vélez will also appear in *Carmen*. She was a national winner of the Metropolitan Opera's 2020 Eric and Dominique Laffont Competition. In Mexico's most important platform for rising talent, the National Singing Contest Carlo Morelli, her performance earned her the First Prize, the French Opera award, and the Francisco Araiza Special Award. In Spring 2021, she sang in the Harris Theater's *Beyond the Aria* series alongside Joyce DiDonato, and previously appeared in Lyric's 2020/21 virtual programs *Pasión Latina*, *Sole e Amore*, *Magical Music Around the World*, and *Rising Stars in Concert*. Denis Vélez is sponsored by **The C.G. Pinnell Family**.


**UNITING VOICES CHICAGO**

**Previously at Lyric:** 14 productions since 2000/01, most recently *Tosca* (2021/22) and *The Queen of Spades* (2019/20).

Uniting Voices Chicago (Josephine Lee, president and artistic director), formerly Chicago Children's Choir, is the nation's preeminent youth choral organization, serving 5,200 students across the city of Chicago. Founded in Hyde Park in direct response to the Civil Rights Movement in 1956, UVC has grown from one choir into a vast network of in-school and after-school programs driven by one mission: to inspire and change lives through music. UVC has impacted the lives of more than 50,000 diverse youth throughout its 62-year history. Since its founding, UVC has focused on building programs that reflect the racial and economic diversity of Chicago. Eighty percent of youth served are from low-moderate income homes, with over 4,000 students annually participating completely free of charge. All singers in UVC programs receive some level of subsidy. High school seniors enrolled in UVC have a 100% graduation and college acceptance rate, becoming global ambassadors who carry on UVC's core values in a wide array of professional fields.


**SIR ANDREW DAVIS | CONDUCTOR**

One of the world's most acclaimed conductors, Sir Andrew Davis served as music director of Lyric Opera of Chicago from 2000 through the 2020/21 Season. Since his debut engagement at Lyric in the 1987/88 Season, he has conducted nearly 700 opera performances here, plus numerous special concerts, including the majority of Lyric's free concerts in Millennium Park. The vast repertoire he has led at Lyric encompasses operas by Berg, Berlioz,

Bizet, Britten, Dvořák, Gilbert and Sullivan, Gounod, Janáček, Lehár, López, Massenet, Mozart, Mussorgsky, Poulenc, Puccini, Rossini, Strauss, Tchaikovsky, Verdi, Wagner, and Weinberg. His special performance of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 last season marked the first time the work was performed on the Lyric stage.

During the 2019/20 Season, Sir Andrew conducted *The Barber of Seville* and *The Queen of Spades* at Lyric. Other recent highlights include appearances with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra (numerous works including most prominently Massenet's *Thaïs*), Washington's National Symphony Orchestra (Handel's *Messiah* in Sir Andrew's own orchestration), and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (Tippett and Beethoven). Sir Andrew returns to the Toronto Symphony Orchestra this spring for the world premiere of Emilie LeBel's *the sediments* and works of Strauss and Beethoven.

From 2013 to 2019 Maestro Davis served as principal conductor of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. Since December 2019 he has continued his artistic role there as conductor laureate. Among his major achievements in the 2018/19 Season were performances of *Idomeneo*, a new production of *Siegfried*, and the company premiere of *Cendrillon* at Lyric; Duruflé's *Requiem* with Royal Liverpool Philharmonic; *Götterdämmerung* at the Edinburgh International Festival; and Elgar's *The Music Makers* at the BBC Proms.

Maestro Davis's career spans nearly five decades, during which he has been the artistic leader at several of the world's most distinguished opera and symphonic institutions, including the BBC Symphony Orchestra (conductor laureate; chief conductor, 1989-2000); Glyndebourne Festival Opera (music director, 1988-2000); and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra (conductor laureate; principal conductor, 1975-1988), where he served as interim artistic director 2018 through 2020. In addition, he holds the honorary title of conductor emeritus at the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra.

Sir Andrew has led performances at many of the world's most important opera houses, among them the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, London's Royal Opera House, the Bayreuth Festival, and the major companies of Munich, Paris, San Francisco, and Santa Fe. In addition to those ensembles, he has appeared with virtually every other internationally prominent orchestra, including the Berlin Philharmonic, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, and all the major British orchestras.

In 1992, Maestro Davis was made a Commander of the British Empire, and in 1999 he was designated a Knight Bachelor in the New Year Honours List.



### **RICHARD JONES | ORIGINAL DIRECTOR**

**Previously at Lyric:** Five productions since 2000/01, most recently *The Queen of Spades* (2019/20) and *Ariodante* and *La bohème* (both 2018/19).

The British director debuted at London's Royal Opera House directing the acclaimed 1994 *Ring* cycle. He has returned for eight productions, most recently *Katya Kabanova*. Among his 11 opera productions this season are *L'enfant et les sortilèges* (Paris), *Ariodante* (Valencia), and *Jephtha* (Berlin). Other major productions have included *Hansel and Gretel* (Welsh National

Opera, Metropolitan Opera); *The Trojans* (English National Opera); *Falstaff*, *Macbeth*, and *Flight* (Glyndebourne); *Pelléas et Mélisande* and *Lohengrin* (Munich); *Peter Grimes* (La Scala); and *La bohème* (Bregenz). Jones's work in theater includes *The Hairy Ape* (Old Vic and New York—nominated for six Drama Desk Awards); *The Trial*, *Public Enemy*, *The Government Inspector*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, and *The Good Soul of Szechuan* (all for the Young Vic); and productions for the Royal Shakespeare Company, National Theatre, London's West End, and Broadway. A Tony nominee, Jones is the winner of five Olivier Awards. He was appointed a Commander of the British Empire in 2015.



### **ERIC EINHORN | REVIVAL DIRECTOR**

**Previously at Lyric:** *I puritani* (2017/18) and *Hansel and Gretel* (2012/13).

Einhorn is the co-founding General & Artistic Director of On Site Opera, the country's only opera company dedicated to site-specific productions. He has created partnerships with venues and institutions throughout New York City that range from community gardens, historic homes, and restaurants, to the American Museum of Natural History and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Among the numerous productions he has created for On Site are *Rhoda and the Fossil Hunt* (world premiere), *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, *Morning Star*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *Murasaki's Moon* (world premiere), and *La finta giardiniera*. For Lyric Unlimited in 2014/15, he directed and co-adapted *The Property*, and in 2018/19 he directed *Rhoda and the Fossil Hunt for Opera in the Neighborhoods*. Elsewhere, Einhorn has directed at many of the country's leading opera houses, including the Metropolitan Opera (*Hansel and Gretel*, *La cenerentola*, *Rigoletto*), Glimmerglass Festival (*Così fan tutte*), Pittsburgh Opera (*Xerxes*, *Dialogues des Carmélites*, *Don Pasquale*), Fort Worth Opera (*Giulio Cesare*), Wolf Trap Opera (*Alcina*, *Così fan tutte*), Florentine Opera (*Turandot*), Austin Opera (*Der fliegende Holländer*, *Dialogues des Carmélites*), Utah Opera (*Fidelio*), and Detroit Opera (*Brundibár*). He has also created new productions of *Tosca*, *Turandot*, and Orff's *Carmina Burana* for the Pacific Symphony.



### **JOHN MACFARLANE | SET AND COSTUME DESIGNER**

**Previously at Lyric:** Five productions since 2001/02, most recently *Macbeth* (2021/22) and *The Queen of Spades* (2019/20).

Among the Scottish designer's extensive opera credits are *Tosca* (Metropolitan Opera), *Benvenuto Cellini* (Geneva), *Hansel and Gretel* (Welsh National Opera, Metropolitan Opera), *The Queen of Spades* (WNO), *War and Peace* and *La clemenza di Tito* (Paris), *Agrippina* (Brussels), *Boris Godunov* (Amsterdam), *Euryanthe* (Glyndebourne), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Cologne), *Les Troyens* (English National Opera), *Don Giovanni* (Brussels, San Francisco), *Idomeneo* (Vienna), and *Maria Stuarda* (Metropolitan Opera). At Lyric, Macfarlane also designed *Elektra* (2018/19, 2012/13) and *Rusalka*

(2013/14). He made his Royal Ballet debut in 1985 with *Giselle*. He has since returned regularly to the Royal Opera House, designing Glen Tetley's *La Ronde* and Liam Scarlett's *Asphodel Meadows*, *Sweet Violets*, *The Age of Anxiety*, *Frankenstein*, and *Swan Lake* for the Royal Ballet and *Peter Grimes*, *The Magic Flute*, *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *Gianni Schicchi*, and *L'heure espagnole* for the Royal Opera. His many other ballet designs include *The Nutcracker*, *Le Baiser de la fée*, and *Cinderella* for Birmingham Royal Ballet. In 2019, he was made Designer Laureate of Benois de la Danse. Macfarlane's painting and printmaking are widely exhibited across the UK and Europe. He was created a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in 2006 and in 2021 was awarded Outstanding Creative Contribution by the Critics Circle at the National Dance Awards.



### JENNIFER TIPTON | LIGHTING

**Previously at Lyric:** Eight productions since 1988/89, most recently *The Queen of Spades* (2019/20) and *Elektra* (2018/19, 2012/13).

The American lighting designer is well known for her work in theater, dance, and opera. Her recent opera credits include Ricky Ian Gordon's *Intimate Apparel*, with libretto by Lynne Nottage, at Lincoln Center. Other recent credits include Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu (*La clemenza di Tito*), the Metropolitan Opera (*Maria Stuarda*), and Seville's Teatro de la Maestranza (*La traviata*). She designed lighting at Lyric for *Il trovatore* (2018/19, 2014/15, 2006/07), and for *Romeo and Juliet* (La Scala), David Lang's *The Louse Or* (LA Opera), *The Magic Flute* (Tokyo's New National Theatre), *The Age of Anxiety* (Royal Ballet), and Harold Pinter's *The Room* (Wooster Group). Her recent work in theater includes *To Kill a Mockingbird* for London and on tour, Beckett's *First Love* for ZOOM, and all of Richard Nelson's *Rhinebeck Panorama* plays. She is a past recipient of the Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize, the Jerome Robbins Prize, and the Mayor's Award for Arts and Culture in New York City. In 2008 she was made a United States Artists "Gracie" Fellow and a MacArthur Fellow. In December 2019 she was named the 2019/20 Cage Cunningham Fellow by the Baryshnikov Arts Center. *Jennifer Tipton is supported by The Mary-Louise and James S. Aagard Lighting Director Endowed Chair.*



### JOSEPHINE LEE | CHILDREN'S CHORUS MASTER

**Previously at Lyric:** 14 productions since 2000/01, most recently *Tosca* (2021/22) and *The Queen of Spades* (2019/20).

As the president and artistic director of Uniting Voices Chicago (UVC, formerly the Chicago Children's Choir), Josephine Lee has revolutionized youth music education, infusing their experience with cutting-edge performances of diverse repertoire, ongoing partnerships with leading cultural institutions such as Lyric, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and Ravinia Festival, and extensive national and international tours. For her work on the documentary *Songs on the Road to Freedom* (2008), Lee was honored with an Emmy Award. Among Lee's recent projects are two world premiere theatrical pieces (*Long Way Home* with

the Q Brothers Collective and *Sita Ram* with David Kersnar of Lookingglass Theatre), several collaborations with Chance the Rapper (including 2016's Grammy Award-winning project, *Coloring Book*), and an original piano and cello composition, *Ascension*, with choreographer Frank Chaves for Ballet Chicago in 2017. Lee earned a Grammy Award nomination as a soloist in the world premiere of Ted Hearn's *Place* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music Next Wave Festival (2018). In 2019, she conducted Lisa Fischer and members of the National Philharmonic at Strathmore. Lee founded Vocality in 2015, a festival chorus comprising young vocal artists from a wide array of communities in the city of Chicago. Among her current projects is a new theatrical work by David Kersnar, J. Nicole Brooks, and UVC composer-in-residence Mitchell Owens III.



### LINDA DOBELL | ORIGINAL CHOREOGRAPHER

**Previously at Lyric:** *The Queen of Spades* (2019/20) and *Hansel and Gretel* (2012/13, 2001/02).

The late British actress/choreographer began her career in her teens, performing in the original *Rocky Horror Show*. Onstage she was seen with many major companies, including Theatre Royal Stratford East, the National Theatre, the Young Vic, and the Royal Court Theatre. She made her Royal Opera debut in 1993 with *The Magic Flute*, returning for *Eugene Onegin* and Richard Jones's production of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. Other productions with Jones included *The Queen of Spades* (Welsh National Opera, Oslo, Brussels, Houston), *Lulu* and *From Morning to Midnight* (English National Opera), *Wozzeck* (WNO, Berlin), *Hansel and Gretel* (WNO, Metropolitan Opera, Munich), *Macbeth* and *Falstaff* (Glyndebourne), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Royal Shakespeare Company), and *Tales from the Vienna Woods* (National Theatre). Among other major choreography credits were *Alice in Wonderland* (Royal Shakespeare Company) and *Così fan tutte*, *Peter Grimes*, and *The Magic Flute* (Scottish Opera).



### SARAH HATTEN | WIGMASTER & MAKEUP DESIGNER

Lyric's wigmaster and makeup designer has worked in a wide repertoire at Des Moines Metro Opera, Detroit Opera (formerly Michigan Opera Theatre), Columbus Opera, Toledo Opera, the Cabrillo Music Festival, and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. She has also worked at The Glimmerglass Festival and the major opera companies of Los Angeles, Omaha, Cleveland, Sarasota, and Central City, as well as Wisconsin's American Players Theatre and, in Los Angeles, the Pantages Theatre and the Geffen Playhouse. *Sarah Hatten is supported by the Mariys A. Beider Wigmaster and Makeup Designer Endowed Chair.* 



# Orchestra & Chorus

## MUSIC STAFF

William C. Billingham  
Susan Miller Hult  
Keun-A Lee  
Noah Lindquist  
Francesco Milioto  
Lee Mills<sup>+</sup>  
Jerad Mosbey  
Chris Reynolds  
Michelle Rofrano  
Brett Rowe  
Stefano Sarzani  
Madeline Slettedahl  
Eric Weimer  
Zoe Zeniodi

## ORCHESTRA

### Violin I

Robert Hanford, *Concertmaster*  
Heather Wittels, *Acting Assistant Concertmaster*  
Alexander Belavsky  
Kathleen Brauer  
Bing Jing Yu  
Laura Miller  
Rika Seko<sup>\*\*</sup>  
Liba Shacht

### Violin II

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

### Viola

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

### Cello

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

### String Bass

Ian Hallas, *Principal*  
Samuel Shuhan, *Assistant Principal*  
Andrew L. W. Anderson  
Gregory Sarchet  
Collins R. Trier

### Flute

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

### Piccolo

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

### Oboe

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

### English Horn

Judith Zunamon Lewis

### Clarinet

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

### Bass Clarinet

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

### Bassoon

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

### Contrabassoon

Lewis Kirk

### Horn

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

### Trumpet

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

### Trombone

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

### Bass Trombone

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

### Tuba

Andrew Smith, *Principal*

### Timpani

Edward Harrison, *Principal*

### Percussion

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

### Harp

Lynn Williams, *Principal*

### Librarian

John Rosenkrans<sup>\*</sup>, *Principal*  
Crozet Duplantier<sup>\*\*</sup>, *Acting Principal*

### Stage Band Contractor

Christine Janicki

## EXTRA MUSICIANS

Eleanor Bartsch, *violin*  
Cristina Buciu, *violin*  
Jennifer Cappelli, *violin*  
Injoo Choi, *violin*  
Renée-Paule Gauthier, *violin*  
Sheila Hanford, *violin*  
Karyn Macfarlane, *violin*  
Rebecca Swan, *viola*  
Paula Kosower, *cello*  
Mara McClain, *cello*  
Joseph Beverly, *clarinet/bass clarinet*  
JJ Koh, *clarinet*  
Rich Janicki, *percussion*  
Michael Kozakis, *percussion*  
Joseph LaPalomanto, *percussion*

\* On leave, 2022/23 Season

\*\* Season Substitute

\* Solti Foundation U.S. Opera Residency

The Lyric Opera Orchestra string sections utilize revolving seating. Players behind the front desk change seats systematically and are listed alphabetically in the roster above.



**CHORUS MASTER**

Michael Black,  
*Chorus Master,*  
*The Howard A. Stotler*  
*Endowed Chair*

**REGULAR CHORUS****Soprano**

Elisa Billey Becker  
 Sharon Garvey Cohen  
 Cathleen Dunn  
 Desirée Hassler  
 Rachael Holzhausen  
 Laureen Janeczek-Wysocki  
 Kimberly McCord  
 Heidi Spoor  
 Stephani Springer  
 Sherry Watkins  
 Tara Wheeler

**Mezzo-Soprano**

Marianna Kulikova  
 Colleen Lovinello  
 Yvette Smith  
 Marie Sokolova  
 Emma Sorenson  
 Maia Surace  
 Corinne Wallace-Crane  
 Pamela Williams  
 Michelle K. Wrighte

**Tenor**

Geoffrey Agpalo  
 Timothy Bradley  
 Hoss Brock  
 William M. Combs  
 John J. Concepcion  
 Kenneth Donovan  
 Joseph A. Fosselman  
 Cullen Gandy  
 Cameo T. Humes  
 Tyler Samuel Lee  
 Thomas L. Potter

**Bass**

David DuBois  
 Christopher Filipowicz  
 Robert Morrissey  
 Kenneth Nichols  
 Rafael W. Porto  
 Craig Springer  
 Vince Wallace  
 Nicholas Ward  
 Ronald Watkins  
 Nikolas Wenzel  
 Max Wier  
 Jonathan Wilson

**CORE SUPPLEMENTARY CHORUS****Soprano**

Joelle Lamarre  
 Emily Mwila  
 Carla Janzen

**Mezzo-Soprano**

Christina G. Adams  
 Cara Collins

**Tenor**

Jared V. Esguerra  
 Joe Shadday

**Bass**

David Govertsen  
 Nicolai Janitzky

**SUPPLEMENTARY CHORUS****Soprano**

Elise Hurwitz  
 Katelyn Lee  
 Rosalind Lee  
 Leah Rockweit  
 Diana Stoic

**Mezzo-Soprano**

Leah Dexter  
 Christine Ebeling  
 Elizabeth Frey  
 Sarah Ponder  
 Emily Price  
 Marissa Simmons

**Tenor**

Matthew Daniel  
 Klaus Georg  
 Darell Haynes  
 Jianghai Ho  
 Ernest C. Jackson Jr  
 Nathan Oakes  
 Steven Michael Patrick  
 Edward Washington

**Bass**

Evan Bravos  
 Matthew Carroll  
 Michael Cavalieri  
 Dimitri German  
 Kirk Greiner  
 Stephen Hobe  
 Brian Hupp  
 Dorian McCall  
 De'Ron McDaniel  
 Wilbur Pauley  
 Douglas Peters  
 William Powell III  
 Ian R. Prichard  
 William Roberts III  
 Sean Stanton

**CHILDREN'S CHORUS****Members of Uniting Voices****Chicago (formerly Chicago Children's Choir)**

Liam Brandfonbrener  
 Amalie Brennan  
 Scarlett Burnett  
 Aya Burns  
 Penelope Charboneau  
 Veronica DeLew  
 Annie DeMarea  
 Kate Dolan  
 Marina Suarez Espinosa  
 Lila Finegold  
 Mercedes Gong  
 Lucy Hawk  
 Andrea Hernandez  
 Amelia Holly  
 Camille Kejo  
 Lola Klauminzer  
 Charlotte Miller  
 Lucia Jane Miranda  
 Frances Mulcahey  
 Zoe Nott  
 Lincoln Reed  
 Lou Roberts  
 Anthony Rosario  
 Emilia Schuele-Bermeo  
 Naava Stein  
 Elise Thomas  
 Es Troccoli  
 Isla van der Bijl  
 Ciara Walker  
 Anne Zweidinger

Josephine Lee

*President*

Elisabeth Baker

*Conductor*

Jackie Johnson

*Citywide Program Director*

# Another world

Humperdinck deployed all the Wagnerian tricks to create an enduring fairy tale.

By Andrew Porter

Elizabeth DeShong (Hansel) and Maria Kanyova (Gretel) with Jill Grove as the Witch in *Hansel and Gretel* at Lyric Opera of Chicago in 2012/13.

In May of 1890, Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana* had its premiere in Rome. Two years later, Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci* followed in Milan. Separately, or in double harness, these two pieces swept the opera houses of the world. Inflamed passions, violence, and verismo filled the lyric stage.

And then, two days before Christmas 1893, there appeared an alternative: Engelbert Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*. As the influential music critic of the time, Eduard Hanslick, put it: "To the brutal miniatures, already becoming tiresome, the strongest possible contrast is—a children's fairy tale. On the one side we have criminals, suicides, betrayed lovers and couples; on the other, a little brother and sister whose only pain is hunger and whose greatest pleasure is a candy bar—no passion, no love story, no love intrigue. It is another world—and a better one."

Ironically, as Hanslick realized, this innocent tale was composed by a musician under the spell of the arch-sorcerer Richard Wagner, who, Hanslick believed, had poisoned the pure founts of lyric art. A thorough command of Wagner's technical apparatus underlies *Hansel and Gretel*. "The restless modulation...the polyphonic texture of the accompaniment...the refined orchestral effects—this is Richard Wagner to the core," wrote Hanslick. Humperdinck, a brilliant, prizewinning young musician of 25, met Wagner in Naples in 1879. Wagner invited him to Bayreuth to help in the preparation of *Parsifal*, and a few measures of that score have been ascribed to Humperdinck. (The transformation scene took slightly longer to stage than there was music for; the assistant devised some extra measures, and Wagner approved of them.) In 1880 he wrote an orchestral piece, *Humoreske*, which had a certain success. But he was not a prolific composer. After Bayreuth, he held various teaching posts, including two years as a professor of theory at the Barcelona Conservatory, and in 1890 Cosima Wagner engaged him to complete the musical education of her son Siegfried. That same year, Humperdinck's sister, Adelheid

Wette, asked him to compose some songs for a domestic entertainment she had written for her children to perform.

With mock-Wagnerian pomposity this little drawing-room play was presented as "A Nursery Dedicatory Festival Drama." (*Parsifal* had been a "Bühnenweihfestspiel"; *Hansel* was a "Kinderstuben-Weihfestspiel.") Now Humperdinck was looking for an opera libretto, and it occurred to him that his sister's play could be expanded to provide one. Thus *Hansel and Gretel* came into being. Fairy tales, as everyone knows, can be allegories of real life. *The Magic Flute* is a fairy tale, and so

is *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. (*The Ring*, for that matter, has episodes in common with *Puss-in-Boots* and *The Sleeping Beauty*.) The Grimm fairy tale on which *Hansel and Gretel* is based starts in a starkly realistic vein: "Times were hard. Work was scarce and food prices were high." So, in order to have two mouths less to feed, *Hansel and Gretel* are taken out into the woods and abandoned there.

The gentle Adelheid Wette was shocked at such callous behavior and tried to soften it. In her version the mother comes home after a tiring and profitless day. The children have been larking, not working. When, in a scuffle, the milk jug is broken and the only nourishment in the

house is spilt, she drives them out into the forest to gather strawberries in a sudden, understandable burst of temper and despair. In its own way, this first scene is also very realistic, and there is more than a hint that the father, even though (or because!) his day has been profitable, has been drinking on the way home. Poverty, hunger, cares that have turned a mother's love to harshness—all is set for a domestic tragedy. But then *Hansel and Gretel* becomes an epic. Food may be a recurrent preoccupation—for the parents, for the children, for the greedy old child-eating Witch—but the theme is the outwitting of an ogress by two resourceful and spirited children. The Witch who has transformed her earlier little victims into gingerbread

Heaven has  
played no part ...  
in the  
awakening of  
the spellbound  
children. They  
are saved by  
their own wits.





Dan Rest

Elizabeth DeShong (Hansel) and Maria Kanyova (Gretel) in *Hansel and Gretel* at Lyric Opera of Chicago in 2012/13.

is a homely descendant of the enchantress Circe in *The Odyssey*, who turned Ulysses's companions into swine, and of the enchantress Alcina in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, who turned her admirers into savage beasts. Many morals can be drawn from *Hansel and Gretel*—but not, perhaps, the one that is sung out, maestoso, in its closing pages: “When in need or dark despair, God will surely hear our prayer.” The broad chorale makes a superb and moving musical close to the work—but heaven has played no part in the rescue of Hansel and Gretel or the awakening of the spellbound children. They are saved by their own wits.

In fact, heaven's role is distinctly ambiguous. At the close of the forest scene, the pious tots sing their evening prayer before settling down to sleep. Fourteen angels appear to keep watch over them, and Humperdinck clothes the Dream Pantomime in music of shining, ethereal beauty. But when day dawns, the angel sentries are gone. They were as a dream. The children are left to face the menace of the Witch. *Hansel and Gretel* is a Wagnerian music drama with nursery subject matter. When the milk jug is broken, the orchestral climax could accompany the shattering of Wotan's spear. The Witch's Ride is a *Ride of the Valkyries*, but with broomsticks for

mounts, instead of magic horses. The shining Dream Pantomime owes something to *Lohengrin*, and perhaps more to *Parsifal*. The finale, the awakening of the children, is in effect an apotheosis and redemption. There have been people disturbed by, and critical of, the application of Wagner's elaborate methods to so slight a tale. But most people have loved *Hansel and Gretel*—loved it as children, and loved it perhaps even more as adults.

And they do so for two reasons. First, because they can still share in the realities of its emotions. (The forest terrors that scare Gretel, in the second scene, are kin to those that scare Mime in the *Ring*; anyone who has been alone in a forest at night must know them.)

And second, because the music is so captivatingly beautiful. Humperdinck uses the same size orchestra as Wagner in *Die Meistersinger*, but there is no heaviness in his handling of it—only richness, warmth, delicacy, and (to quote the critic Robin Legge) “once or twice, as in the twilight woodland scene with the cuckoo, a poetry more enchanting than anything of the kind ever achieved by Wagner.”

Andrew Porter was a prominent British music critic and scholar. **L**

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# Director's note

## Eric Einhorn talks about bringing hunger and temptation to life on stage

by Roger Pines



**How would you define original director Richard Jones's vision for this piece?** It's a meditation on both the lack and the overabundance of food, and how people handle both of those situations. It's certainly a dark telling of the story and very much in line with the Grimm Brothers. It has their same undercurrent of darkness, which has lightened a bit in the time since the story was written. Richard deals with the narrative as reality, rather than as a fairytale—but the production still does take us to the psychological root of the fairy tale, on a dark journey through the woods and out again.

**The stage definitely recalls England post World War II, doesn't it?**

Yes, it certainly evokes that time of deprivation. But it's presented by Richard and the designer, John Macfarlane, in a non-literal way, making it easily identifiable and immediate for audiences. A universal visual world.

**Hunger really is the operative idea here.** And the opening scene is so much about that. The two children, alone and hungry, are seen in crisis. It's the umpteenth day that they've been left with little or nothing to eat, and that really kicks off everything. It drives these kids to the events of the opera.

**The adult singers playing the children move more convincingly than in any other version I've seen.**

Richard was adamant about creating very specific physical characterizations of the kids. It's a late child/early adolescent movement, with that awkwardness and self-discovery. Because of their hunger and also because of certain distinct character traits, the kids behave in particular ways. In Richard's concept, Hansel is a very obsessive child, with repetitive gestures and actions with props and doors in the first scene. The character is rooted in this physicality and carries it through the show.

**What about Gretel?** She's a pre-adolescent witch. During rehearsals for the Met revival, Richard spoke quite a bit about Gretel having powers that she doesn't know what to do with yet. When she finds herself in the Witch's kitchen and witnesses the spells, she immediately takes to them. In this production, the Witch is defeated in a power shift; she's leaving the world, but in her place is Gretel. It's a bit *Lord of the Flies*—you give children power and what happens? Are we innately good or innately bad? It's a subtle point, but like so much of what Richard does in this production, it gives the performer a real anchor.

**Can we talk about the different images of plates, which are so important?** The theme of the show being hunger, there are repetitive images of plates on painted drops: full, empty, broken, and bloody. Their primary task is to mask scene changes, but they're also a way to track the hunger narrative.



**What can you tell our audience about the different sets?**

All three are versions of the same thing—a room with a sink, a table, and an oven or stove. Here again, this is to drive home the idea of hunger. These kids are in the same situation wherever they go. They are on a journey. But that journey is rooted in their quest for food.

**In the forest scene, this production gives us a very original idea of both the Sandman and the Dew Fairy.**

The Sandman is a simple and very old man. He lives in the woods—the kind of guy who just walks his dog through the woods and sells sleep to people who need it. Actually, he's exhausted and can't get any sleep himself. But this is his job! And the Dew Fairy is the young mother that Hansel and Gretel always wanted—your perfect “Donna Reed mom.”

**And speaking of television personalities—was it intentional to make the Witch a nightmarish version of Julia Child?**

Yes, completely intentional. Richard also wanted to play the duality of the Witch—both the sweet lady next door and the villainesse who can turn on a dime. I like to think of her as a pressure cooker, with that intense darkness always bubbling beneath the surface. Sometimes she accidentally lets it out, when she gets a little too excited by the prospect of eating these children. You see her look turn from sweet to disgusting and evil, but then she stifles it because she can't expose that side of herself and still get what she wants.

**She also operates out of a spectacular industrial strength kitchen!**

The stage looks like a child's birthday party gone crazy, with piles of food, cone shaped paper party hats, and a childlike painted tablecloth—all within a kitchen out of a horror movie. What's amazing about that image is that it makes the point for Hansel and Gretel, but also for us, that we see what we want to see. In this otherwise dark and dirty place is this oasis of sugar—a table full of cake. Our wildest dreams come true. L



Dan Rest



Dan Rest

Elizabeth Deshong (above) as the hungry Hansel, and his parents, Julie Makerov and Brian Mulligan (at left), from Lyric's 2012/13 production.

*Beyond the stage, and beyond the boundaries that often define opera companies, Lyric is igniting creativity across Chicago. Through innovative learning opportunities, creative exploration, and artistic creation and collaboration, Lyric, with your support, encourages students, educators, families, audiences, and Chicagoans from neighborhoods across the city to share their voices and embrace the power and relevance of opera as a catalyst for growth and change.*



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# Beyond the stage



# Planting a seed

Lyric's Learning and Creative Engagement team has re-launched its popular and influential program that brings students to dress rehearsals.

**You may be surprised** to hear that this production of Englebert Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* has been seen before. Not only a decade ago, when the show had a successful run at Lyric Opera of Chicago, but also just a few days before the opening, when students from Chicago Public Schools had a chance to enjoy the production's full dress rehearsal. Those performances have a slightly more casual feel (a good thing, for introducing young people to the art form), but they also offer all the splendor of a regular show—the full orchestra, lush costumes, and, of course, dazzling melodies and singing. “It’s so fun to watch young people walk into the space for the first time,” says Elise LaBarge, Lyric’s Learning Programs Manager—and of course that’s exactly the point. What better place to begin nurturing a lifelong love of opera than in one of its grandest houses?

**The CPS dress rehearsal program** goes back as far as 2012, when Lyric’s Learning and Creative Engagement team was formed. The company had long offered special

performances and education opportunities for students across the city, but the past decade has seen tremendous growth and development. There are matinees and other exclusive performances for students, a wide range of streaming options, opera residencies, and the *Opera in the Neighborhoods* program, which brings youth-focused works to the places where young people and their families live. But perhaps none provide quite so much excitement as an afternoon field trip to see the company in action.

Typically, Lyric has offered CPS students access to dress rehearsals throughout the entirety of a season, though the pandemic of course halted this initiative. The logistics of the reboot are daunting and fall mainly into the hands of Anthony Jones, who joined Lyric as a program coordinator in the Lyric Unlimited office, the company’s division of Learning and Creative Engagement, in 2022. With a background in vocal performance and assistant teaching, Jones is no stranger to the world of creative engagement, and he has been enjoying all the challenges of making the dress rehearsal program work. He had



Seeing a show at Lyric makes for a special field trip.



Kyle Flubacker

There's no dress code, but lots of the attendees don their best.

something of a practice run himself, when Lyric managed to invite students from several schools to attend a dress rehearsal for the hit *Fiddler on the Roof* earlier this season.

Throughout the afternoon, Jones could sense the students' excitement and curiosity. "I feel like a lot of students are surprised by dress rehearsals," he says. "*Fiddler* is such an energetic show, and I heard students ask 'How did they do that?'" That sort of curiosity is often the first step for many of these students as they begin their artistic journey. The inside look at the inner workings of the arts can plant a seed for generations to come.

*Hansel and Gretel* offered the first official opportunity in two seasons to bring the program back and enthusiasm ran high. Months in advance of the dress rehearsal for *Hansel and Gretel*, the Learning and Creative Engagement team had reserved more than 1,645 seats for students and teachers. For schools where travel can be a barrier, Lyric offers bus scholarships that cover the cost of transportation to and from the opera house.


"The Spring rollout is so exciting, for students and for everyone," Jones says. "And given the nature of the story, I expect *Hansel and Gretel* will be especially interesting."

Amy Cholod, music teacher at Hitch Elementary and a CPS arts liaison, agrees. A former opera singer, and an educator for more than 20 years, Cholod saw Lyric's original production of *Hansel and Gretel* back in 2012 and can't wait to share the experience with her students this season. She considers such efforts essential. "We live in a beautiful city with world-class opera," she notes.



Kyle Flubacker

"My students should be exposed to that. And these dress rehearsals make music come alive."

Cholod helped initiate the partnership with Lyric in 2018, and today Hitch Elementary is participating in two Elementary Opera Residencies, and an Opera Discovery Project—and she's planning visits to the opera house for dress rehearsals. She says some of her former students now perform at theaters and opera houses around the country—and she knows experiences like visiting the opera house planted the seed in those young talents. 



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**2022/23 Season appearances include:** Ernesto/*Don Pasquale*, Staatsoper Hamburg and Opernhaus Zürich; Fenton/*Falstaff*, Staatsoper Stuttgart.

"The Ryan Opera Center (2015-2017) gave me so much support during my time in the program. I was able to improve a great deal by working with the outstanding faculty, and the opportunity to coach with guest artists such as alumnus Matthew Polenzani was incredible. It was a very special experience to perform on Lyric's mainstage in such a nurturing environment, and that experience, together with all of the training I received, prepared me to launch my career successfully. I'll always be grateful for everything the Ryan Opera Center did for me."



Tenor Mingjie Lei as Don Ottavio in Staatsoper Stuttgart's *Don Giovanni*.

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*Der fliegende Holländer*  
Vancouver Opera

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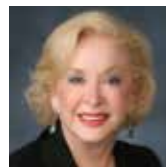
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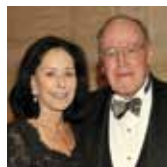


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Michael Black

## CHILDREN'S CHORUS MASTER

Josephine Lee

## CHOREOGRAPHERS

Rena Butler  
Linda Dobell  
Andrew George  
Silvano Marraffa  
Stephanie Martinez  
Otto Pichler  
August Tye

## BALLET MISTRESS

August Tye

## FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHERS

Chuck Coyl  
Nicholas Sandys



The American Guild of Musical Artists, AFL-CIO (AGMA), is the union that represents the singers, dancers, actors, and staging personnel at Lyric Opera of Chicago.



# Lyric staff

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Creative Engagement  
Megan Elk, Engagement Producer  
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Principal Gifts  
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Marisa Lerman, Fundraising Events  
Manager

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Special Events Associate  
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Boards, Guild Board, Chapters,  
and Lyric Young Professionals  
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Women's Board and Ryan Opera  
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Director of Group Sales and  
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Discover Lyric Programs  
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Graphic Design Specialist

Hannah Cremin,  
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Project Associate

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Advertising & Promotions

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Website Content Manager  
Erik Dohner, Digital Marketing  
Manager, Fundraising  
Amanda Reitenbach, Manager  
of Social Media and Content  
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Digital Content Producer  
Shannan Moore,  
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Tessitura & Ticketing  
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Customer Service & Call Center  
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VIP Ticketing Associate  
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VIP Ticketing Coordinator

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Sophia Formella  
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Kenni Ther  
Aren Thompson  
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Ticket Staff

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Loi Lazcano, Senior Accountant  
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Advancement Budget Analyst  
Idalia Andrade,  
Accounts Payable Associate  
Angela Coleman,  
Accounts Payable Associate  
Zachary Kurzenberger,  
Financial Analyst

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People & Culture  
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 Shanell Reynolds, *Payroll Associate*  
 Camilla Fernandez, *Human Resources Coordinator*  
 Sean Hepp, *Payroll Coordinator*

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 Lena Sneed  
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 Adam Bumber,  
*House Supervisor*  
 Jason Thomas, *Bar Manager*  
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 Daniel Chavez  
 Jose Garcia Cisneros  
 Monica Govea  
 Sylvia Hernandez  
 David Jaworski  
 Anthony Lacy  
 Rachel Martinez  
 Ramon Alex Perez  
 Jesus Rios  
 Benjamin Tengkowski  
 Felipe Valadez  
 Lindsey Wolfeld  
 Peter Wood  
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 Linda Cuellar, *Patron Services Coordinator*  
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 Stephanie Bulandr  
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 Ramon Alex Perez  
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Heather Stokes  
 Kevin Topp  
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 Calder Amsden-Iuliano  
 Nathan Ankrom  
 David Barcena  
 Patricia Bell  
 Dominic Bialecki  
 Chenise Brown  
 Summer Burk  
 Nadine Burruss  
 Nila Cabrejos Lau  
 Ronald Castelli  
 Daro Cook  
 Carl Corry  
 Anna Czechut Hoffman  
 Sage Czerwinski  
 Chaurita Davis  
 Marlene Delemore  
 Griselda Garcia  
 Sharon Gaston  
 Ione Graves  
 Ramona Hawkins  
 Gina Jacobs  
 Kristen Jamerson  
 Ariella Kahan-Harth  
 Marlyn Love  
 Jacob Malkinson  
 Keisha Matthews  
 Vanessa Maxwell  
 Stecy Mbemba  
 Julius Medina  
 Thomas Miller-Boeing  
 Lonnie Mitchell  
 Bill Murray  
 Talia Neidorf  
 Steven Pace  
 Iris Porrata  
 Eduard Pulst  
 Frank Reckitt  
 John Rosenthal  
 Leslie Rowan  
 Edwina Schorn  
 Isabella Strazzabosco  
 Ursula Sturgeon  
 Mary Thomas  
 Gina Tovar  
 Adam Wang  
 Katwanya West  
 Cal Willis  
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 Gregg Brody  
*Box Office Manager*  
 Richard Diver  
 Joseph Dunn  
 David Fitzgerald  
 Destiny Mack  
 Jessica Reinhart  
 Allan Waite  
 Laura Waters  
*Box Office Assistant*  
*Treasurers*  
 Joe Minogue,  
*Chief Engineer*  
 Michael LaPorte,  
*Lead Engineer*  
 Philip Casica  
 Anthony Fasano  
 Brian McMahon  
 Bernard McNeela  
 Kevin O'Keefe  
 Thomas Setina  
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*Master Carpenter*  
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*Automation Assistant*  
 Chris Barker  
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 Brian Grenda,  
*Layout Carpenter*  
 Drew Trusk,  
*Head Shop Welder*  
 Bruce Woodruff,  
*Layout Welder*  
 Dan DiBennardi  
*Warehouse Coordinator*  
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 Justin Hull  
 Ryan McGovern  
*Assistant Carpenters*  
 Anthony Bernardy  
 Tyler Gil Ramos  
 Connor Ingersoll  
 John Ingersoll  
 Rory McQuillan  
 Johnny Rivers  
 Chase Topping  
 Luigi Trupiano  
 Brian Walsh  
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 Anthony Coia,  
*Master Electrician*  
 Soren Ersbak,  
*Board Operator*

John Clarke, Jr.  
 Thomas Hull  
 Dan Kuh  
 Robert Reynolds  
*Assistant Electricians*  
 Jason Combs  
 Thomas Fernandez  
 Brian Hobbs  
 Tristan Ramirez  
 Jeremy Thomas  
 Jose Villalpando  
 Amador Williams  
*Electricians*  
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*Head Audio Technician*  
 Matt Eble  
 Asiel Simpson  
 Matt Swiatkowski  
*Audio Technicians*  
 Charles Reilly,  
*Property Master*  
 Michael McPartlin,  
*Properties Crew Head*  
 Phil Marcotte,  
*Prop Carpenter*  
 Bob Ladd, *Armorer*  
 Rachel Boultinghouse,  
*Upholsterer*  
 Michael Buerger  
 Gordon Granger  
 Robert Hartge  
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 Joseph Collins  
 Adam Gorsky  
 Nicholas Gutierrez  
 Frank McPartlin  
 Kevin McPartlin  
 Taylor Topping  
*Properties*  
 Brian Traynor,  
*Charge Artist*  
 Michael Bensancon  
 Michael Murtaugh  
 Donna Slager  
*Scenic Artists*  
 Maureen Reilly, *Costume Director, The Richard P. and Susan Kiphart Endowed Chair*  
 Lucy Lindquist,  
*Wardrobe Mistress*  
 Katelynn Barker  
 Louie Barrios  
 Alice Broughton  
 Laurel Clayson  
 Drake Dabbs  
 Ellouise Davis  
 Molly Herman  
 Mary Keefe  
 Cecylia Kinder  
 Krystina Lowe  
 Bryan McDonald  
 Elise Petrucci  
 Kathy Rubel  
 Joanna Rzepka  
 Marguerite Scott  
 Ewa Szyrak  
 Barbara Szylo  
 Michelle Tan  
 Isaac Turner  
 Megan Turner  
 Kristi Wood  
 Maggie Zabierowski  
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 Scott Barker  
 Whitney Boyd  
 Bridget Brown  
 Lauren Crotty  
 Dawn-Marie Hamilton  
 David Hough  
 Charlie Junke  
 Wendy McCay  
 Lavinia Morozan  
 Moira O'Neil  
 Sarah Santiago  
 Dulce Santillan  
 Angele Shadd  
 Christopher Valente  
 Roger Weir  
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*Department Coordinator*  
 James Ogle, *Wig and Makeup Crew Foreman*

Necole Bluhm  
 Davis Campbell  
 Martha Contreras  
 Brittany Crinson  
 Krista D'Agostino  
 Eric Daniels  
 Mattison Drobney  
 June Gearon  
 Ansley Hughes  
 Chantelle Johnson  
 Lynn Koroulis  
 Claire Moores  
 Megan Pirtle  
 Olivia Roach  
 Alice Salazar  
 Emily Santiago  
 Rachel Stiles  
 Pat Tomlinson  
 Franziska Valus  
 Emily Young  
*Wig and Makeup Department*

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 Katrina Bachus  
 Kristen Barrett  
 Alaina Bartkowiak  
 Jordan Lee Braun  
 David Toulson  
*Assistant Stage Directors*  
 Katrina Bachus  
 Alaina Bartkowiak  
 Gina Hays  
 Sandra Moore  
*Stage Managers*  
 Katrina Bachus  
 Kristen Barrett  
 Alaina Bartkowiak  
 Gina Hays  
 Sandra Moore  
 Daniel Sokalski  
 Peggy Stenger  
 Amy C. Thompson  
 Bill Walters  
*Assistant Stage Managers*

# People of Lyric

Sarah Cohn  
Manager, Chorus and Dancers



Kyle Flubacker

## WHAT IS YOUR ROLE HERE AT LYRIC, AND HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN THIS POSITION?

I started in 2019 as the Music Administration Associate, Chorus, and then in the summer of 2021 I became the Manager, Chorus & Dancers. I oversee our Chorus, which consists of our Regular Chorus (Lyric's full-time, tenured Chorus); the Core Supplementary Chorus (the singers we first reach out to when we need a bigger group for a particular production); and the Supplementary Chorus (for our biggest shows, like this season's *Ernani*, *Don Carlos*, and *Carmen*). I also oversee our dancers each season. As a result, I plan auditions for both sets of artists, working regularly with our Chorus Master Michael Black, our Ballet Mistress August Tye, and with various guest choreographers on hiring and rosters. I also deal with nuts-and-bolts personnel and payroll matters. A large component of my job is to work very closely with our AGMA union colleagues in dealing with everything from small day-to-day issues all the way up to contract negotiations.

## WHAT KEEPS YOU COMMITTED TO THE WORK YOU DO?

The people. I love the members of our Chorus and I love our dancers, and I enjoy working with our Chorus Master and the different choreographers who come to work here. I try to be an advocate for them. I also think that there's a larger reason why I chose to work in opera instead of other art forms: Once you get past the grandness of it, opera is very intimate and personal. In this technology-fueled world, I love that there are no microphones, just the human voice and the human body. That makes for a thrilling kind of storytelling.

## WHAT LED YOU TO LYRIC?

I am a violist by training, but I came to realize in high school that I was not going to pursue music professionally. The summer before I went to college, I interned at my small hometown opera company, even though at that point I had never seen an opera. But I loved theater and I loved music and I loved language, and I soon fell in love with opera since it's a combination of all three. Then I discovered administration as a way that I could stay involved in the arts in a role that was much better suited to my personality and temperament.

I graduated from Columbia University and started working in the Vocal Arts Department of The Juilliard School. After about a decade of living in New York I started thinking about a life beyond the city, and Lyric was high on my radar as a great company to work for. When I saw a job open up here and was lucky enough to get it, I moved to Chicago.

## WHAT IS THE MOST CHALLENGING ASPECT OF YOUR JOB?

A big challenge I face and embrace is working with so many different types of artists, from chorus members to dancers, who all have specific skills and needs, and aligning those with the goals and vision of our creative teams and artistic leadership. It can be quite a balancing act, but we all have such a deep love for opera that we make it work.

## BEYOND OPERA, WHAT ARE YOUR OTHER PASSIONS?

I am a distance runner—I ran my fifth Chicago Marathon in October 2021 and am always on the lookout for my next big race. There are many parallels between opera and marathons. You train and train, and then put everything on the starting line or on the stage. You show up for the important moments. And both take quite the endurance!

## A FAVORITE LYRIC MOMENT?

I think the one that comes to mind was during our season-opening performances of *Macbeth* last season. There is a big choral number, "Patria oppressa," towards the end of the opera. I would always sneak into the back of the house to listen in person. After working on so many film projects when we couldn't do mainstage performances during COVID, to finally come back into the theater and hear this huge chorus all singing together in person was a great reminder of why we do what we do. This moment said so much about why we persevered through all the stresses of the pandemic. This is why we do it, and it's worth it. 