

HGO STUDIO RECITAL SERIES



August 10–20, 2021

HGO DIGITAL
SARAH AND ERNEST BUTLER PERFORMANCE SERIES

A letter from Brian Speck



The 20-21 HGO Digital season was rewarding and gratifying for the artists of the HGO Studio, as their talents were shared to a wider audience than ever before. This summer, we are proud to present this phenomenal group of artists in digital recitals of their own, recorded for our Live from The Cullen series.

Each season, recitals remind me of the power of song to communicate the widest range of human thoughts and emotions. Exploring intimate, personal songs are the lifeblood of artists, and an essential part of the HGO Studio experience. This spring, the nine singers in the HGO spent months cultivating their own interpretation of great works in the song repertoire, together with the Studio's two pianists and members of the HGO orchestra. Their performances are sure to transport you to a world of music and poetry that inspires reflection and transformation.

I hope you'll consider this our summer gift to you. Take a moment each day to watch the latest release, meditate on these extraordinary songs, and enjoy the unique voices and musical gifts of the HGO Studio artists.

Brian Speck

Director of the HGO Studio

Tuesday, August 10

Der Hirt auf dem Felsen

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

Raven McMillon, *soprano*
Sean Krissman, *clarinet*
Bin Yu Sanford, *piano*

Wednesday, August 11

Vier ernste Gesänge

Denn es gehet dem Menschen
Ich wandte mich und sahe an alle
O Tod, wie bitter bist du
Wenn ich mit Menschen-
und mit Engelszungen redete

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

Nicholas Newton,
bass-baritone
Bin Yu Sanford, *piano*

Thursday, August 12

Wesendonck Lieder

Der Engel
Stehe still!
Im Treibhaus
Schmerzen
Träume

Richard Wagner
(1813-1883)

Lindsay Kate Brown,
mezzo-soprano
Alex Munger, *piano*

Friday, August 13

On Wenlock Edge

On Wenlock Edge
From Far, From Eve and Morning
Is My Team Ploughing?
Oh, When I Was in Love With You
Bredon Hill
Clun

Ralph Vaughan Williams
(1872-1958)

Ricardo Garcia, *tenor*
Denise Tarrant, *violin*
Natalie Gaynor, *violin*
Eliseo Rene Salazar, *viola*
Barrett Sills, *cello*
Bin Yu Sanford, *piano*

Monday, August 16

Liederkreis, Op. 39

In der Fremde
Intermezzo
Waldesgespräch
Die Stille
Mondnacht
Schöne Fremde
Auf einer Burg
In der Fremde
Wehmut
Zwielicht
Im Walde
Frühlingsnacht

Robert Schumann
(1810-1856)

William Guanbo Su, *bass*
Bin Yu Sanford, *piano*

Tuesday, August 17

Quatre sonnets à Cassandre

Qui voudra voir comme un dieu me surmonte
Nature ornant la dame qui devait
Avant le temps tes tempes fleuriront
Quand je te vois, seule, assise, à part toi

Frank Martin
(1890-1974)

Sun-Ly Pierce, *mezzo-soprano*
Henry Williford, *flute*
Eliseo Rene Salazar, *viola*
Barrett Sills, *cello*

Wednesday, August 18

Songs of Travel

The Vagabond
Let Beauty Awake
The Roadside Fire
Youth and Love
In Dreams
The Infinite Shining Heavens
Whither Must I Wander
Bright Is the Ring of Words
I Have Trod the Upward and the Downward Slope

Ralph Vaughan Williams
(1872-1958)

Blake Denson, *baritone*
Alex Munger, *piano*

Thursday, August 19

Twelve Poems of Emily Dickinson

Nature, the Gentlest Mother
There Came a Wind Like a Bugle
Why Do They Shut Me Out of Heaven?
The World Feels Dusty
Heart, We Will Forget Him!
Dear March, Come In!
Sleep Is Supposed to Be
When They Come Back
I Felt a Funeral in My Brain
I've Heard an Organ Talk Sometimes
Going to Heaven!
The Chariot

Aaron Copland
(1900-1990)

Elena Villalón, *soprano*
Bin Yu Sanford, *piano*

Friday, August 20

Schwanengesang

Liebesbotschaft
Kriegers Ahnung
Frühlingssehnsucht
Ständchen
Aufenthalt
In der Ferne
Abschied
Der Atlas
Ihr Bild
Das Fischermädchen
Die Stadt
Am Meer
Der Doppelgänger
Die Taubenpost

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

Cory McGee, *bass*
Alex Munger, *piano*

CREDITS

Miah Im	Music Director
Brian Speck	Director, HGO Studio
Jamie Gelfand	HGO Studio Manager

Ben Doyle	Director
Daniel James	Producer
Ciara Ayala	Assistant Producer
Michael James Clark	Lighting Designer
Brian August	Stage Manager
Kristen Burke	Production Manager
Jeremy Johnson	English Subtitles
Dotti Staker	Hair & Makeup
Judy Malone-Stein	Wardrobe

The entire staff of HGO contributed to the success of this production. For a full listing of the company's staff, please visit HGO.org/about-us/people.

Performing artists, stage directors, and choreographers are represented by the American Guild of Musical Artists, the union for opera professionals in the United States.

Stage crew personnel provided by IATSE, Local #51.

Wardrobe personnel provided by Theatrical Wardrobe Union, Local #896.



LINDSAY KATE BROWN
Mezzo-soprano
Mr. and Mrs. James W.
Crownover/Lynn Gissel Fellow

2020-21 HGO Studio alumna Lindsay Kate Brown performed the role of Gertrud in *Hansel and Gretel* during the HGO Digital season; also for HGO, she sang Giovanna in *Rigoletto* (2019) and was cast as Second Lady in *The Magic Flute* (COVID-19 cancellation). She was the third prize winner in HGO's 2018 Eleanor McCollum Competition Concert of Arias. Last year Brown won first place in the Upper Midwest Region of The Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and competed in the national Grand Finals. She earned an Artist Diploma at Rice University and made her professional debut with Tri-Cities Opera in 2014. In summer 2018, she was a young artist at Des Moines Metro Opera, where she reprised the role of Ma Moss in Copland's *The Tender Land* and covered the role of Ježibaba in Dvořák's *Rusalka*. In 2019 she sang the role of the Composer in *Ariadne auf Naxos* with Wolf Trap Opera. She joined Santa Fe Opera in summer 2021 as an apprentice artist, performing the roles of Hippolyta in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Marcellina in *The Marriage of Figaro*.



BLAKE DENSON
Baritone
Drs. Liz Grimm and Jack Roth/
Gloria M. Portela and Richard E.
Evans/Carolyn J. Levy Fellow

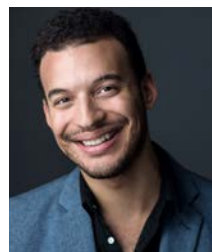
Second-year HGO Studio artist Blake Denson, originally from Paducah, Kentucky, was a Grand Finals Winner in the 2020 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and is a 2018 alumnus of HGO's Young Artists Vocal Academy (YAVA). For HGO's 2021-22 season, Denson will perform the role of Morales in *Carmen*, Daddy/Tim in alternate cast performances of *The Snowy Day*, Jailer in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, and Gregorio in *Romeo and Juliet*. During the 2020-21 HGO Digital season he appeared in *Giving Voice*; *Hansel and Gretel* as Peter; and *Suite Española: Explorando Iberia*. He obtained his Bachelor of Music in voice degree from the University of Kentucky School of Music and completed his Master of Music degree at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. Denson was a studio artist at Wolf Trap Opera in 2018 and

was set to return to Wolf Trap Opera for a second season in the summer of 2020 to perform the Commander and cover the title role in *Eugene Onegin*, as well as cover the role of Marcello in *La bohème*, but those productions were canceled due to COVID-19.



RICARDO GARCIA
Tenor
Michelle Beale and Dick Anderson/
Dr. Ellen R. Gritz and Mr.
Milton D. Rosenau Jr. Fellow

A second-year HGO Studio artist from Castro Valley, California, Ricardo Garcia completed his Master of Music in Voice at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music (SFCM) and holds a Bachelor of Music in Voice from the University of the Pacific. For HGO's 2021-22 season, Garcia will perform the role of El Remendado in *Carmen*, Papí/Jasper in alternate cast performances of *The Snowy Day*, First Commissioner in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, and Romeo in alternate cast performances of *Romeo and Juliet*. During the 2020-21 HGO Digital season he appeared in *Vinkensport* as Hans Sach's Trainer; *The Making of The Snowy Day, an Opera for All*; and *Suite Española: Explorando Iberia*. He was a studio artist at Wolf Trap Opera, where he covered Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* and Giocondo in *La pietra del paragone*, and a voice fellow with Music Academy of the West, where he sang Jenik in *The Bartered Bride*. Recent roles include Lamplighter/Drunkard in *The Little Prince* and Fenton in *Falstaff*. As a first-year apprentice at Santa Fe Opera, he covered Parpignol in *La bohème* and sang Fenton/Normanno in the *Apprentice Scenes Night*. Recently, Garcia won the New Orleans District of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and advanced to the Gulf Coast Region finals. This summer, he returned to Wolf Trap Opera as Valcour in *The Anonymous Lover* and sang the role of Grimoaldo in *Rodelinda* at the Aspen Music Festival.



CORY MCGEE
Bass
Beth Madison Fellow

A second-year HGO Studio artist from Stafford, Virginia, Cory McGee completed his Master of Music degree at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. He was the second prize

winner in HGO's 2020 Eleanor McCollum Competition Concert of Arias. For HGO's 2021-22 season, McGee will perform the role of Billy in *The Snowy Day*. During the 2020-21 HGO Digital season he appeared in *The Making of The Snowy Day, an Opera for All* as Billy, and in *Giving Voice*. In summer 2019, he joined Santa Fe Opera as an apprentice artist, portraying the role of the Gardener in Ruder's *The Thirteenth Child*. In 2018 he was a studio artist with Wolf Trap Opera, where he played La Voce in Mozart's *Idomeneo* and Ranger Nat in David Hanlon's children's opera, *Listen, Wilhelmina!*, and was a soloist in "Bernstein at 100 – A Celebration." Recent engagements include the title role in *The Marriage of Figaro* and Pandolfe in Massenet's *Cendrillon* (Oberlin Opera Theater) and Leporello in *Don Giovanni* (Oberlin in Italy). He returned to Santa Fe this summer as an apprentice artist for the second time, performing the role of Theseus in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Later this season, he will make debuts with Michigan Opera Theater and Florentine Opera as Colline in *La bohème*.



RAVEN MCMILLON

Soprano

Brenda Harvey-Traylor/Nancy Haywood/Kathleen Moore and Steve Homer Fellow

A second-year HGO Studio artist from Baltimore, Raven McMillon

was recently recognized as a 2021 Grand Finals Winner in the Metropolitan Opera's Eric and Dominique Laffont Competition. For HGO's 2021-22 season, McMillon will perform the role of Frasquita in *Carmen*, Peter in *The Snowy Day*, and Papagena in *The Magic Flute*. During the 2020-21 HGO Digital season, McMillon performed the roles of Rona Richards in *The Impresario*; Peter in *The Making of The Snowy Day, an Opera for All*; and Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel*. She also featured in the HGO Digital concert *Giving Voice* and performed as Sister Margaretta in HGO's *My Favorite Things: Songs from The Sound of Music*. McMillon received her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Vocal Performance at Carnegie Mellon University and completed her graduate degree at the University of Cincinnati College – Conservatory of Music (CCM). Her opera credits include Adele in *Die Fledermaus*; the title role in *Goldie B. Locks and the Three Singing Bears*; Linfea in *La Calisto*; and Barbarina in *The Marriage of Figaro*. In addition to her opera credits, McMillon has also workshopped new roles such as Mary in Chiao's *The Secret Codes of Mary Bowser* and Lucy in Picker's *Awakenings*. Her recent roles included La Princesse in *L'enfant et les sortilèges*

with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and Papagena in *The Magic Flute* at CCM in the summer of 2020, which were canceled due to COVID-19. This summer she performed the role of Frasquita in *Carmen* with Cincinnati Opera. Later this season, she joins Opera Philadelphia in her role and company debuts as Gilda in *Rigoletto*.



ALEX MUNGER

Pianist/coach

Dr. Saúl and Ursula Balagura/Gary Hollingsworth and Ken Hyde/Mr. Trey Yates Fellow

A third-year HGO Studio artist from New Berlin, Wisconsin,

Alex Munger previously served as a staff pianist at the University of Illinois, where he helped prepare *La bohème* and *The Rape of Lucretia*. For HGO's 2021-22 season, Munger will serve as coach for *Carmen*, *The Magic Flute*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. Previously with HGO, he served as coach for *Vinkensport* and *Hansel and Gretel* during HGO Digital's inaugural season; coach for *My Favorite Things: Songs from The Sound of Music*, *Rigoletto*, and *La favorite*; and with HGO Studio singers in recital and other performances. Previous engagements include a 2020 recital of Schumann's *Dichterliebe* with tenor Richard Trey Smagur, presented by the Houston Symphony, and an appearance at the Bay View Music Festival (*Carmen*), where he returned in 2019 as a faculty pianist for its two-week opera and art song program. In 2018, Munger was a fellowship pianist with the Aspen Opera Center, where he worked on *The Barber of Seville*; he returned to Aspen in the summer of 2019. In the summer of 2020 and 2021, he served as a coaching fellow at Wolf Trap Opera. He received his Master of Music degree in Vocal Coaching and Accompanying from the University of Illinois.



NICHOLAS NEWTON

Bass-baritone

Nancy Haywood/Kathleen Moore and Steve Homer/Jill and Allyn Risley Fellow

2020-21 HGO Studio alumnus
Nicholas Newton performed in

HGO Digital productions *The Making of The Snowy Day, an Opera for All, Giving Voice*, and *Marian's Song*, as well as HGO's spring 2021 performances of *Marian's Song* at Miller Outdoor Theatre. During HGO's 2021-22 season, he will perform as Daddy/Tim in *The Snowy Day* and Friar

Laurence in *Romeo and Juliet*. The third prize winner in HGO's 2019 Eleanor McCollum Competition Concert of Arias and an alumnus of HGO's Young Artists Vocal Academy (2016), he previously played Billy King in the world premiere of *Marian's Song* (2020) and Monterone in *Rigoletto* (2019); he also was cast as Second Soldier in *Salome* (canceled). His notable performances include the roles of Count Ceprano in *Rigoletto* and Capulet (cover) in *Romeo and Juliet* with Wolf Trap Opera, Achilla in *Julius Caesar* at Rice University, and L'arbre and Le fauteuil in *L'enfant et les sortilèges* at the Aspen Music Festival. Newton was a 2019 national semifinalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and the first-place winner in the 2018 Virginia & Susan Hawk Competition. In summer 2019, he sang Monterone in *Rigoletto* with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. In the summer of 2020, he had been set to return to Wolf Trap Opera as Colline in *La bohème*, but that production was canceled due to COVID-19.



WILLIAM GUANBO SU

Bass

Anne and Albert Chao Fellow

A third-year HGO Studio artist from Beijing, William Guanbo Su is a Grand Finals Winner of the 2019 Metropolitan Opera National

Council Auditions and the second place winner in HGO's 2019 Eleanor McCollum Competition Concert of Arias. For HGO's 2021-22 season, Su will perform the roles of Zuniga in *Carmen*, First Officer in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Second Armored Man in *The Magic Flute*, A Mandarin in *Turandot*, and the Duke of Verona in *Romeo and Juliet*. During the 2020-21 HGO Digital season, he performed the role of Bowie Krebs in *The Impresario* and in fall 2019 with HGO, he performed the role of Usher in *Rigoletto*. He has studied German lieder at the Franz Schubert Institute in Vienna, and in 2017 won first prize in the Gerda Lissner Lieder Competition. During the summer of 2019, he sang Count Ceprano in Verdi's *Rigoletto* with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis as a Gerdine Young Artist. Last spring, he made his Austin Opera debut as Angelotti in *Tosca*, and this summer, he returned to the Aspen Music Festival as a voice fellow to sing Sarastro in *The Magic Flute* and Garibaldo in *Rodelinda*.



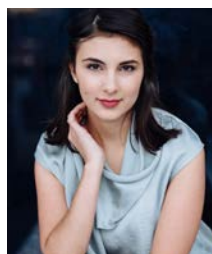
SUN-LY PIERCE

Mezzo-soprano

*Mr. and Mrs. Charles G. Nickson/
John Serpe and Tracy Maddox
Fellow*

Originally from Clinton, New York, Chinese American mezzo-soprano

Sun-Ly Pierce is a second-year HGO Studio artist and the first prize winner in HGO's 2020 Eleanor McCollum Competition Concert of Arias. For HGO's 2021-22 season, she will perform the roles of Mercedes in *Carmen*, Sister Mathilde in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, 2nd Lady in *The Magic Flute*, and Stephano in *Romeo and Juliet*. Last season with HGO, she appeared as Liesl in *My Favorite Things: Songs from The Sound of Music* and as Hansel in HGO Digital's *Hansel and Gretel*. Pierce completed the graduate vocal arts program at the Bard College Conservatory of Music and holds a bachelor's degree in vocal performance from the Eastman School of Music. As a winner of the Marilyn Horne Song Competition, Pierce was set to perform on an international recital tour with pianist Chien-Lin Lu featuring the premiere of a new song cycle by two-time Grammy Award-winning composer Jennifer Higdon, which was canceled due to COVID-19. In the fall of 2019, Pierce joined the Broad Street Orchestra as Dorinda in Handel's *Acis and Galatea*. She returned to the Music Academy of the West this summer as 2021 Vocal Fellow.



ELENA VILLALÓN

Soprano

Mr. and Mrs. Harlan C. Stai Fellow

A third-year HGO Studio artist from Austin, Elena Villalón was a Grand Finals Winner of the 2019 Metropolitan Opera National

Council Auditions, Second Prize winner in the 2021 Hans Gabor Belvedere International Singing Competition, and the Audience Choice Award winner in HGO's 2019 Eleanor McCollum Concert of Arias. For HGO's 2021-22 season, Villalón will perform as Amy in *The Snowy Day* and as Juliet in alternate cast performances of *Romeo and Juliet*. During the HGO Digital 2020-21 season she performed the roles of Farinelli's Trainer in *Vinkensport*; Amy in *The Making of The Snowy Day, an Opera for All*; and Dew Fairy and Sandman in *Hansel and Gretel*. Also with HGO, she previously performed Page in *Rigoletto*; Woman in selected performances of the world premiere of *El Milagro del Recuerdo/The Miracle of Remembering*; and Inez in *La favorite*. Villalón is a graduate of the University of Cincinnati College - Conservatory of Music (CCM), has been a vocal fellow at the Tanglewood Music

Center, and is an alumna of HGO's 2018 Young Artist Vocal Academy. In summer 2019, she performed Barbarina in *The Marriage of Figaro* at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis as a Gerdine Young Artist and returned to the Tanglewood Music Center as a soprano fellow. She returned to Opera Theatre of Saint Louis in the summer of 2021 as Laretta in *Gianni Schicchi*. Also in the 2021-22 season, she makes debuts with Austin Opera (Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro*) and The Dallas Opera (Tina in *Flight*).



BIN YU SANFORD

Pianist/coach

Ms. Lynn Des Prez/Stephanie Larsen/Dr. and Mrs. Miguel Miro-Quesada Fellow

A second-year HGO Studio artist from Seoul, Bin Yu Sanford has established herself as a solo pianist, vocal coach, and chamber musician. For HGO's 2021-22 season, Yu Sanford will serve as coach for *The Snowy Day*, *The Magic Flute*, and *Turandot*. During the 2020-21 HGO Digital season, she served as coach for *The Impresario* and *The Making of The Snowy Day, an Opera for All*. She also appeared with HGO Studio singers in recitals and other performances and served as coach for *My Favorite Things: Songs from The Sound of Music*. Yu Sanford earned her Doctor of Musical Arts in Solo Piano Performance and an Artist Diploma in Opera Coaching at the University of Cincinnati College - Conservatory of Music (CCM). Recently, she was selected as one of the vocal piano fellows at Music Academy of the West, where she worked on Jennifer Higdon's *Cold Mountain*. From 2017 to 2020, Yu Sanford served as a graduate assistant in the opera department at CCM. She was the first prize winner of the Pennsylvania MTNA Young Artist Piano Competition. In the summer of 2020, she was scheduled to join the Glimmerglass Festival as an apprentice pianist, however the festival was canceled due to COVID-19.

