

HOUSTON GRAND OPERA

STUDIO

21-22



SHOWCASE

SEPTEMBER 18 • 7 P.M. / WORTHAM THEATER CENTER

HOUSTON GRAND OPERA

AN EVENING WITH

JONAS KAUFMANN

Oct. 6 | 7 p.m.
Wortham Theater Center

Powerhouse tenor Jonas Kaufmann visits Houston for a spectacular once-in-a-lifetime concert event, performing selections from the Italian repertoire and the operas of Wagner. HGO Artistic and Music Director Patrick Summers conducts the HGO Orchestra during this extraordinary evening.

Concert begins at 7 p.m. in the Wortham Theater Center's Brown Theater. Single tickets now on sale. For information about the concert and dinner, contact our Special Events team at 713-546-0271 or specialevents@HGO.org.



TICKETS AT [HGO.ORG/JONAS](https://www.hgo.org/jonas)

I am delighted to be here at the Cullen Theater tonight as host of the HGO Studio Showcase, a beloved annual tradition for us all at Houston Grand Opera.

Since 2019 I have had the privilege of serving as Artistic Advisor for HGO and the HGO Studio program, but that is far from the beginning of my association with this wonderful company. More than two decades ago, I was a starry-eyed artist training with the HGO Studio, dreaming of a life as an opera singer performing on the stages of the world's greatest opera houses. Even though I had no guarantee at the time of how my professional life would go, it was, in fact, here, at this very place, where I was able to develop my artistry and launch what would turn out to be the career of my dreams.



HGO Studio Showcase host Ana María Martínez

It is a tremendous joy to work with the talented young artists selected to train with this prestigious program, and to watch them grow and develop as they pursue their own dreams. Competition for entry to the HGO Studio is intense for a reason. There are very few places that offer an opportunity like this one. Areas of focus include languages, combat lessons, and vocal and acting coaching, among many others. Our young artists also get the chance to perform roles in mainstage productions before audiences of thousands, alongside current major opera stars. This program truly nurtures tomorrow's stars in a most comprehensive way.

I know it is also a thrill for HGO's audiences to watch these young artists develop over the course of their many performances with HGO each season. Their spotlight starts with this event, which each year kicks things off with a selection of opera scenes carefully curated by HGO Studio Director Brian Speck and Music Director Miah Im as a means to showcase their talents and create excitement for the season ahead.

From Blake Denson and Raven McMillon performing a scene from *Rigoletto* in roles that are sure to become staples in their respective repertoires, to Ricardo Garcia and Cory McGee honing their dramatic skills in a piece from *The Rake's Progress*, many of tonight's offerings feature our artists trying on parts for the very first time. Of note, two of tonight's selections are from mainstage operas HGO will perform this season—Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet* and Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites*—providing a wonderful taste of the delights to come.

Our Studio artists have been preparing for tonight's Studio Showcase for months. Please join me in welcoming them to the Wortham stage. I hope you enjoy the program!

Ana María Martínez

HGO Artistic Advisor

Gluck
(1714-87)

Orfeo ed Euridice – Act III
“Vieni, segui... Vieni, appaga il tuo consorte!”
Euridice: **Raven McMillon**
Orfeo: **Emily Treigle** • Piano: **Alex Munger**

Strauss
(1864-1949)

Der Rosenkavalier – Act II
“Mir ist die Ehre wiederfahren... Ich kenn’ Ihn schon recht wohl!”
Octavian: **Sun-Ly Pierce** • Sophie: **Elena Villalón**
Piano: **Bin Yu Sanford**

Gounod
(1818-93)

Faust – Act IV
“Qu’attendez-vous encore?... Vous qui faites l’endormie... que voulez-vous, messieurs?”
Méphistophélès: **William Guanbo Su**
Faust: **Eric Taylor** • Valentin: **Luke Sutliff**
Piano: **Kirill Kuzmin**

Verdi
(1813-1901)

Rigoletto – Act I
“Figlia! Mio padre!”
Rigoletto: **Blake Denson** • Gilda: **Raven McMillon**
Giovanna: **Sun-Ly Pierce**
Duke of Mantua: **Ricardo Garcia**
Piano: **Bin Yu Sanford**

Intermission

Stravinsky
(1882-1971)

The Rake’s Progress – Act III
“How dark and dreadful... I burn! I freeze!”
Tom Rakewell: **Ricardo Garcia**
Nick Shadow: **Cory McGee**
Anne Trulove: **Elena Villalón**
Piano: **Kirill Kuzmin** • Harpsichord: **Alex Munger**

Poulenc
(1899-1963)

Dialogues of the Carmelites – Act II
“Pourquoi vous tenez-vous ainsi”
Chevalier de la Force: **Eric Taylor**
Blanche de la Force: **Sun-Ly Pierce**
Mère Marie: **Emily Treigle** • Piano: **Kirill Kuzmin**

Rossini
(1792-1868)

L’italiana in Algeri – Act I
“Oh! che muso, che figura!”
Isabella: **Emily Treigle** • Mustafà: **Cory McGee**
Taddeo: **Luke Sutliff** • Haly: **Blake Denson**
Piano: **Bin Yu Sanford**

Gounod
(1818-93)

Romeo and Juliet – Act IV
“Va! je t’ai pardonné... Nuit d’hyménée!”
Juliet: **Elena Villalón** • Romeo: **Ricardo Garcia**
Piano • **Alex Munger**

CREATIVE TEAM

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Ana María Martínez | Host |
| Kristine McIntyre | Stage Director |
| Ben Doyle | HGO Digital Video Director |
| Daniel James | HGO Digital Producer |
| Michael James Clark | Lighting Designer |
| Adam Noble | Fight Director |

PRODUCTION CREDITS

| | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Kristen Burke | Interim Director of Production |
| Meg Edwards | Stage Manager |
| Meghan Spear | Assistant Stage Manager |
| Dotti Staker | Hair & Makeup |
| Kristie Osi | Costume Realizer |
| Jeremy Johnson | English Subtitles |
| Kirill Kuzmin, Kevin J. Miller, Peter Pasztor | Musical Preparation |
| Carl Ferguson | Assistant Technical Director |
| Megan | Properties Design Director |

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.

With deepest thanks to the members of the HGO Studio Committee, who helped make the Studio Showcase possible:

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|---------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Jack Roth, Chair | Patrick Carfizzi | Maureen Hetzel | Beth Madison | Allyn Risle |
| Warren Ellsworth, Vice Chair | Molly Crownover | Mel Hetzel | Miguel Miro- Quesada | John Serpe |
| Robin Angly | Lynn Gissel | Steve Homer | Valerie Miso- Quesada | Janet Sims |
| Saúl Balagura | Sandy Godfrey | Marianne Kah | Richard Leibman | Dian Stai |
| Michelle Beale | Ellen R. Gritz | Stephanie Larsen | Kathy Moore | Harlan Stai |
| Larissa Bither | Brenda Harvey- Traylor | Carolyn J. Levy | Charlene Nickson | John G. Turner |
| Melinda Brunger | Nancy Hayward | Tracy Maddox | Gloria Portela | Bob Wakefield Trey Yates |



**KRISTINE
MCINTYRE**

Director

Stage director
Kristine McIntyre
has directed more

than 90 operas across the U.S. with a focus on new, contemporary, and American works. Productions include Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer's *Moby Dick* (Utah Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, Opera San Jose); *Dead Man Walking* (Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Des Moines Metro Opera, Madison Opera); the world premieres of Louis Karchin's *Jane Eyre* (Center for Contemporary Opera, New York) and Mark Lanz Weiser and Amy Punt's *The Place Where You Started* (Art Share, LA); new productions of *Wozzeck*, *Billy Budd* (regional Emmy award), and *Peter Grimes*, as well as *As One* (Kaminsky / Campbell / Reed), *Glory Denied*, and *Soldier Songs* (Des Moines Metro Opera), Jonathan Dove's *Flight* (Pittsburgh Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, Austin Opera), Jake Heggie's *The End of the Affair* (Lyric Opera of Kansas City) and *Three Decembers* (Des Moines Metro Opera); *Florencia en el Amazonas* (Madison Opera), *Elmer Gantry* (Tulsa Opera), *Of Mice and Men* (Utah Opera, Austin Opera, Tulsa Opera), the world premiere of Kirke Mechem's *John Brown* (Lyric Opera of Kansas City); new productions of *Street Scene*, *The Tender Land* (Michigan Opera Theater), and Lee Hoiby's *Bon Appétit*; a staged concert version of *Vanessa* (Toledo Opera), and the world premiere of *The Canticle of the Black Madonna* (Newmark Theater, Portland). Current projects include new productions of *UNKNOWN* with UrbanArias, *A Thousand Acres* with Des Moines Metro

Opera, and *Hometown to the World* with Santa Fe Opera, as well as *Flight* for Utah Opera and The Dallas Opera.



**ANA MARÍA
MARTÍNEZ**

Host

Grammy Award-winning soprano Ana María Martínez is

considered one of the foremost sopranos of her time, with an international career that spans the world's most important opera houses and concert halls. HGO's artistic advisor since 2019, Martínez has a storied history with the company, performing roles including Cio-Cio San in *Madama Butterfly* (2010), the title role in *Carmen* (2014), Marguerite in *Faust* (2016), and *Florencia in Florencia en el Amazonas* (2019). During the 2020-21 season, Martínez performed the role of Mimi in *La bohème* at San Diego Opera, the world's first-ever drive-in opera production, and portrayed Nedda in *Pagliacci* at Palm Beach Opera. She also gave a series of virtual performances including a "Living Room Recital" for Los Angeles Opera, and curated and performed in two Spanish themed virtual programs: *Suite Española*, a celebration of the music of Spain, for HGO, and "Pasión Latina," alongside pianist Craig Terry, for Lyric Opera of Chicago. Other engagements last season include her first-ever performances in the title role of *Tosca* at Opera Philadelphia and then again at Cincinnati Opera. Martínez's career highlights include Cio-Cio San and Musetta in *La bohème* at the Metropolitan Opera; the title role in *Rusalka* at the Glyndebourne Festival and Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires; the title role in *Luisa Miller* and the Countess in *Le nozze di Figaro* at the Bayerische Staatsoper; Violetta in *La traviata*, Donna Elvira, and Cio-Cio San

at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden; Donna Elvira at San Francisco Opera; Nedda in *I Pagliacci*, Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin*, Marguerite in *Faust*, Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, and *Rusalka* at Lyric Opera of Chicago; Elisabetta in *Don Carlo*, Amelia in *Simon Boccanegra*, Mimi, Violetta, Nedda, and the title role in *Carmen* at Los Angeles Opera; and her major roles with HGO. Orchestral highlights include performances with the Berlin Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Filharmonica della Scala, Puerto Rico Symphony, Seoul Philharmonic, Tchaikovsky Symphony in Moscow, the Sinfônica Brasileira, and the BBC Symphony.



MICHAEL JAMES CLARK
Lighting Designer

Michael James Clark is the lighting supervisor for HGO. He

designed lighting for HGO's production of *Aida* (2020) and *La bohème* at Miller Outdoor Theatre, as well as the world premiere of *The Phoenix* (2019). He lit the HGOco world premieres of *Some Light Emerges* (2017), *After the Storm* (2016), and *O Columbia* (2015); *Otello* (2014); *Die Fledermaus*, *Aida*, and *Il trovatore* (2013); *La bohème*, *La traviata*, and *The Rape of Lucretia* (2012); *The Marriage of Figaro* (2011); the world premiere of *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna* (2010); and numerous outdoor productions. Clark also has designed lighting for Teatro La Fenice, San Francisco Opera, the Canadian Opera Company, Stages Repertory Theatre, Theatre Under the Stars, and Rice University.



KIRILL KUZMIN
Pianist and Principal Coach

HGO Studio alumnus Kirill Kuzmin is currently principal coach at

HGO and a music staff member at The Glimmerglass Festival. In the 2020-21 HGO Digital season, he accompanied Arturo Chacón-Cruz and Sasha Cooke for their Live from The Cullen recitals and served on music staff for numerous other productions. In the 2019-20 season, Kuzmin served on HGO's music staff for productions of *Saul* and *Aida*. Previous HGO credits include *Eugene Onegin* (also as diction coach), *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Faust*, *Giulio Cesare* (also as continuo player), and *West Side Story*, as well as two of Wagner's monumental Ring cycle operas, *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung*. He also served as principal coach for HGO's world premiere of Ricky Ian Gordon and Royce Vavrek's *The House Without a Christmas Tree* and was involved in the world premiere of David Hanlon and Stephanie Fleischmann's *After the Storm*. In the summer of 2020, he had been engaged to serve as principal coach for the production of *Die Feen* at the Glimmerglass Festival, but it was canceled due to COVID-19. He returned to the Glimmerglass Festival this summer.



BLAKE DENSON
Baritone

Gloria M. Portela and Richard E. Evans/ Carolyn J. Levy/Liz Grimm and Jack Roth 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

Dr. Ellen R. Gritz and Mr. Milton D. Rosenau Jr./Michele Beale and Dick Anderson 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*, Papi/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

*Kathleen Moore and
Steven Homer/Nancy
Haywood 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 Margareta 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 workshoped 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 and Rosina in *The Barber of Seville* with Opera Steamboat. Later this season, she joins Opera Philadelphia in her role and company debuts as Gilda in *Rigoletto*.



ALEX MUNGER
Pianist/Coach

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



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.



**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*.



LUKE SUTLIFF
Baritone

Lynn Gissell/Brenda Harvey-Traylor Fellow

A first-year HGO Studio artist from Littleton, Colorado, Luke Sutliff recently completed his Master of Music degree at Rice University's Shepherd School of

Music. For HGO's 2021-22 season, he will perform El Dancairo in *Carmen*, M. Javelinot/Thierry in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, and Mercutio in alternate cast performances of *Romeo and Juliet*. At the Shepherd School, he appeared as Kaiser Overall in *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* and Johannes Zegner in *Proving Up*. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the Juilliard School, where he studied with the late Sanford Sylvan and made his Alice Tully Hall debut performing Fauré's *L'horizon chimérique*. Sutliff previously performed the roles of Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Belcore in *The Elixir of Love* at the Chautauqua Institute. Last summer, he had been set to make his debut in the role of Elder McLean in *Susannah* at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, but that was canceled due to COVID-19. Sutliff joined Santa Fe Opera as an Apprentice Artist for summer 2021, covering the role of Jon Seward in *The Lord of Cries* and performing Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.



ERIC TAYLOR

Tenor

Mrs. Sharon G. Ley and Mr. Robert F. Lietzow/ Jill and Allyn Risley/ Drs. Rachel and Warren A. Ellsworth IV Fellow

A first-year HGO Studio artist from Saint George, Utah, Eric Taylor recently completed his Master of Music degree at Rice University, where he performed the roles of Sam Polk in *Susannah* and Tito in *La clemenza di Tito*. He was named the second prize winner in HGO's 2021 Eleanor McCollum Competition Concert of Arias. For HGO's 2021-22 season, he will perform Chevalier in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, First Armored Man in *The Magic Flute*, Pong in *Turandot*, and Tybalt in *Romeo and Juliet*. While pursuing his undergraduate degree in music at Westminster College, he

performed several leading roles, including Nemorino in *The Elixir of Love* and Rodolfo in *La bohème*, in addition to appearing in *Carmina Burana* with Salt Lake City's Ballet West. Taylor has participated in Apprentice Artist programs with Santa Fe Opera, Central City Opera, and Utah Lyric Opera. He had been set to perform in Santa Fe Opera's *Tristan and Isolde* and HGO's *Werther* and *Parsifal* last season, but those engagements were canceled due to COVID-19. He was named a semi-finalist at the Metropolitan Opera's National Council Auditions in 2017.



EMILY TREIGLE

Mezzo-Soprano

Mr. and Mrs. James W. Crownover/Mr. Veer Vasishtha Fellow

A first-year HGO Studio artist from New Orleans, Emily Treigle was named a Grand Finals Winner in the Metropolitan Opera's 2021 Eric and Dominique Laffont Competition and was the third prize winner in HGO's 2021 Eleanor McCollum Competition Concert of Arias. For HGO's 2021-22 season, she will perform Mother Jeanne in *Dialogues of the Carmelites* and Gertrude in *Romeo and Juliet*. This spring, she covered the title role of L'enfant in *L'enfant et les Sortilèges* at Rice. In 2019, Treigle trained with HGO's Young Artist Vocal Academy and participated in the Aspen Music Festival, where she portrayed Madame Armfeldt in *A Little Night Music*. This summer, she returned to Wolf Trap Opera as a Studio Artist for the second time. Previous roles include Bradamante in *Alcina* and Mrs. Ott in *Susannah*, an opera made famous by her grandfather, world-renowned bass-baritone Norman Treigle. Treigle pursued her Master of Music degree at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music, where she received her Bachelor of Music degree last year.


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 Lauretta 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

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

HOUSTON GRAND OPERA STUDIO

Faculty and Staff 2021-22

Brian Speck, Director

Miah Im, Music Director

Jamie Gelfand, Studio Manager

Ana María Martínez, HGO Artistic Advisor

Carlisle Floyd, Artistic Advisor

Stephen King,

Director of Vocal Instruction

Sponsored by Jill and Allyn Risley, Janet Sims, and James J. Drach Endowment Fund

Patrick Summers,

Conducting Instructor and Coach

Sarah and Ernest Butler Chair

Peter Pasztor, Principal Coach

Sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. James A. Elkins Jr. Endowment Fund

Kirill Kuzmin, Principal Coach

Kevin J. Miller, Assistant Conductor

Madeline Slettedahl, Assistant Conductor

Brian Connelly, Piano Instructor

Tara Faircloth, Drama Coach

Adam Noble, Movement Instructor

Christa Gaug, German Instructor

Raymond Hounfodji, French Instructor

Enrica Vagliani Gray, Italian Instructor

Sponsored by Marsha Montemayor

Kristine McIntyre, Showcase Director

The HGO Studio is grateful for the in-kind support of the Texas Voice Center. The Young Artists Vocal Academy (YAVA) is generously underwritten by Mr. and Mrs. Robert N. Wakefield and the HGO Guild.

Additional support for YAVA is provided by Mr. Patrick Carfizzi, Gwyneth Campbell, and David and Norine Gill. HGO thanks Magnolia Houston for outstanding support of the HGO Studio and YAVA programs.

Additional support for the Houston Grand Opera Studio is provided by the following funds within the Houston Grand Opera Endowment, Inc.:

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