



LOTTE LENYA COMPETITION

CELEBRATING 15 YEARS



Cover photos (left to right): Nine-time Competition judge Teresa Stratas; 2012 winners Matthew Grills, Jacob Keith Watson, Justin Hopkins, and Megan Marino; 2009 judge Ted Chapin with winners Lauren Worsham, Ginger Costa-Jackson, Yannick-Muriel Noah, and Zachary James.

THE LOTTE LENYA COMPETITION PAST WINNERS AND JUDGES

2012

First Prize: Matthew Grills
Second Prize: Justin Hopkins,
Jacob Keith Watson
Third Prize: Megan Marino
Lys Symonette Awards: Natalie
Ballenger, Maria Failla
Judges: Rob Berman, Theodore
S. Chapin, Rebecca Luker

2011

First Prize: Caitlin Mathes
Three equal runner-up prizes:
Jing Lin, Emma Sewell, Jacob
Lewis Smith
Lys Symonette Awards: Daniel
Schwait, John Viscardi, Jorell
Williams
Judges: Rob Berman, Rebecca
Luker, Michael Kaufmann

2010

First Prize: Rebekah Camm
Second Prize: David Arnsperger,
Margaret Gawrysiak
Lys Symonette Awards: Cooper
Grodin, Timothy J. McDevitt,
Edward Mout, Kyle Scatliffe
Judges: Rob Berman, Timothy
Nolen, Lisa Vroman

2009

First Prize: Alen Hodzovic
Second Prize: Lauren Worsham
Third Prize: Zachary James
Lys Symonette Awards: Ginger
Costa-Jackson, Michael Anthony
McGee, Yannick-Muriel Noah
Judges: Rob Berman, Theodore
S. Chapin, Teresa Stratas

2008

First Prize: Rebecca Jo Loeb
Second Prize: Ariela Morgenstern
Third Prize: Maija Skille, Bray
Wilkins
Lys Symonette Awards: John
Brancy, Tora Augestad, Lauren
Jelencovich, Elizabeth Reiter
Judges: Theodore S. Chapin,
Victoria Clark, James Holmes

2007

First Prize: James Benjamin
Rodgers
Second Prize: Analisa Leaming
Third Prize: Leena Chopra,
Christopher Herbert
Lys Symonette Awards: Paul
Corona, Jeanine De Bique, Brian
Charles Rooney
Judges: Theodore S. Chapin, Ted
Sperling, Teresa Stratas

2006

First Prize: Justin Welsh
Second Prize: Justin Lee Miller,
Rodell Aure Rosel
Third Prize: Sarah Blaskowsky,
Hallie Silverston
Lys Symonette Awards: Meredith
Arwady, Karim Sulayman, Bray
Wilkins

Judges: Theodore S. Chapin,
James Holmes, Teresa Stratas

2005

First Prize: Jonathan Michie
Second Prize: Liam Bonner, Erik
Liberman
Third Prize: Morgan James
Lys Symonette Award: Jendi
Tarde

Judges: William Bolcom, Harold
Prince, Angelina Réaux

2004

Three top prizes: Richard Todd
Adams, Amy Justman, Misty Ann
Sturm
Judges: Theodore S. Chapin,
Alvin Epstein, Angelina Réaux

2003

First Prize: Siri Vik
Second Prize: Peter McGillivray
Third Prize: Elaine Alvarez,
Jeffrey Behrens, Michael
McKinsey
Judges: Theodore S. Chapin, Ted
Sperling, Teresa Stratas

2002

First Prize: Lisa Conlon
Second Prize: Kyle Barisich,
Ethan Watermeier
Lys Symonette Awards: Nicole
Cabell, Lucas Meachem, Amy
Van Looy
Judges: Eric Stern, Teresa Stratas,
Stanley Walden

2001

First Prize: Jennifer Dyan Goode
Second Prize: Jacob Langfelder,
Raquela Sheeran
Lys Symonette Awards: Noah
Stewart, Misty Ann Castleberry
Sturm
Judges: André Bishop, Welz
Kauffman, Teresa Stratas

2000

Two special competitions were
held in Germany, one for students
and one for young professionals.
Winners of the professional
competition were:

First Prize: Annette Postel
Second Prize: Kaja Plessing,
Kathrin Unger, Cordula Wirkner
Judges: James Holmes, Elmar
Otenthal, Teresa Stratas

1999

First Prize: Amy Orsulak
Second Prize: Christina Carr, Dirk
Weiler
Third Prize: Daniel Spiotta, Amy
Van Looy

Lys Symonette Awards: Thomas
Rosenkranz (Outstanding
Accompanist)

Judges: Jonathan Eaton, John
Mauceri, Teresa Stratas

1998

Prizes were awarded to:
Rachel Albert, Leah Arlington,
Heidi Bieber, Rebecca
Comerford, Katia Escalera,
Danielle Frink, Elizabeth
McDonald, Brian Mulligan,
Lauren Pastorek, Tami Petty,
Teresa Winner

Judges: Mark Cuddy, Julius
Rudel, Teresa Stratas

THE LOTTE LENYA COMPETITION

is a one-of-a-kind, international contest for singer-actors that bridges the worlds of opera and Broadway musical theater, following the example of Lenya's husband Kurt Weill, whose compositions spanned many genres. While most vocal competitions focus primarily on vocal prowess, the Lenya Competition encourages excellence in the performance of music for the theater by placing equal emphasis on singing and acting. Contestants must present fully enacted, idiomatic performances of a wide range of repertoire, from opera and operetta to contemporary Broadway musicals, including the works of Kurt Weill.

Since its inception fifteen years ago, the Lotte Lenya Competition has recognized scores of exceptional young performers who are dramatically and musically convincing in a broad range of theater repertoire. Past winners are making careers on Broadway, in national and international theatrical tours, and in major opera houses around the world. They are the accomplished singers, compelling actors, and versatile performers who have what it takes to succeed in the changing musical theater landscape of the 21st century.

"Judging for the Lotte Lenya competition has given me the marvelous opportunity to meet and interact with some of today's brightest students of theater and opera and tomorrow's stars. I have been delighted by the high quality of both the singing and the acting, and the enormous passion and vision that these actors have for their craft. The iconic precision and intelligence that Lenya herself possessed reside in these competitors. As they grow in their knowledge of self, we learn and grow with them. Few things are as inspiring as watching young actors pursue their dream. This competition is unparalleled in the crossover world between opera and musical theater. Any aspiring artist who wishes to pursue a career in either or both arenas should enter this competition and learn more about the magnificent world of Kurt Weill."

**Victoria Clark,
Tony Award winning singer-actress
and Lenya Competition judge**



Victoria Clark with fellow 2008 judges Theodore S. Chapin (left) and James Holmes (right).

HISTORY OF THE LOTTE LENYA COMPETITION

In 1998, to celebrate the centenary of Lotte Lenya (1898-1981), an extraordinary singing actress and one of the foremost interpreters of the music of her husband, Kurt Weill, the Board of Trustees of the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music approved President Kim Kowalke's proposal to establish an annual Lotte Lenya Competition. The competition recognizes excellence in the performance of music for the theater, in its broadest sense, including opera, operetta, and American musical theater. Dr. Kowalke, the Richard L. Turner Professor in Humanities at the University of Rochester and professor of musicology at the Eastman School of Music, arranged for the inaugural contest to be held at the Eastman School to coincide with Sibley Music Library's receipt of Weill's holograph scores from Vienna—including that of his seminal work of 20th-century musical theater, *Die Dreigroschenoper* (*The Threepenny Opera*). The Eastman School has continued to host the finals, even as the competition has grown from a local event to a major international contest.

The first Lotte Lenya Competition was held on November 12, 1998, with seventeen contestants, all of whom were Eastman students, and a top prize of \$1,000. Year by year, the eligibility was expanded to include a broader segment of young artists, and the number of participants and prizes awarded also grew. Thousands of contestants have vied for the coveted top prizes since that first small contest. In 2004, the contest evolved into an international competition; since then top prizes have gone to finalists from the United States, Canada, China, Finland, Germany, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. Currently the Competition is open to performers ages 19-32, and the first prize is \$15,000.

Despite immense growth and minor changes to the repertoire requirements, the essential concept of the Lenya Competition has remained the same. Contestants have always been required to sing a variety of selections, including arias from the opera or operetta repertoire, music by Weill, and songs from the American musical theater. Criteria for adjudication have consistently

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"I want these young singers to be truthful, to strip away artifice. I want them to go away knowing that the most important thing is for them to bring what is special about themselves to their singing. This is the only competition that requires contestants to prepare so many kinds of songs, and then take what the judges give them and put it to work. What a terrific idea that honors the singing and Lenya both. And now it's one of the most important international competitions in the world."

**Teresa Stratas,
legendary soprano and Lenya Competition judge**



2009 First Prize winner Alen Hodzovic with Teresa Stratas.



Kurt Weill Foundation President Kim Kowalke announcing the 2009 winners.

included acting, interpretation, idiomatic performance, and stage presence, in addition to vocal technique and beauty.

The Lenya Competition garnered prestige early on with the support of renowned soprano Teresa Stratas, whom Lenya had crowned as her successor. Despite her skepticism of competitions, Ms. Stratas embraced the goal of deeply felt singing combined with equally genuine acting, and agreed to be a judge the first year. She became a strong advocate, judging the Competition nine times and always demanding the best from contestants.

Other distinguished past judges have included legendary director and producer Harold Prince; conductors Julius Rudel, James Holmes, John Mauceri, Rob Berman, and Eric Stern; director/conductor Ted Sperling; actor/conductor David Loud; Broadway and opera performers Victoria Clark, Judy Kaye, Rebecca Luker, Joyce Castle, Lauren Flanigan, Angelina Réaux, Timothy Nolen, and Lisa Vroman; arts administrators Welz Kauffman (Ravinia Festival), André Bishop (Lincoln Center Theater), Theodore S. Chapin (Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization), Paulette Haupt (O'Neill Center National Music Theater Conference), and Michael Kaufmann (Kurt Weill Fest); actor/director Alvin Epstein; directors Jonathan Eaton, Elmar Ottenthal, and Mark Cuddy; composer Jeanine Tesori; performer/music director/coach Vicki Shaghoian; and composer/performers William Bolcom and Stanley Walden.

Competition guidelines now require each contestant to prepare four selections: one aria from the operatic or operetta repertoire; one theatrical selection by Kurt Weill; and two songs from the American musical theater repertoire, one from the "Golden Age" (pre-1968) and one from 1968 or later. The Weill selection(s) and the opera/operetta aria must be sung in their original languages, keys, and arrangements (with the exception of authorized English translations of selections from *The Threepenny Opera* and *Happy End*). Finalists must make it through a preliminary round of auditions by video submission and a round of live semi-finals in New York City.

In addition to the top prizes of \$15,000, \$10,000, and \$7,500, judges may award special prizes at their discretion, including Emerging Talent Awards and Grace Keagy Awards for Outstanding Vocal Promise, as well as Lys Symonette Awards, named in honor of Weill's musical assistant on Broadway and Lenya's longtime accompanist and advisor, to finalists who excel in a particular aspect of the Competition.

In awarding more than \$450,000 in prizes and awards since the Competition's inception, the Kurt Weill Foundation has upheld the highest standards for the performance of musical theater and recognized the talent and supported the careers of dozens of rising stars.

"The Lenya Competition is special because it celebrates and rewards artists as much, if not more, for their interpretive and acting abilities as for their vocal and technical abilities. It rewards artists who make the listener lean forward to hear *why* they are singing a song, not just to hear *how* they sound singing it. In musical theater, the lyrics are everything, and to get to hear accomplished vocal artists who also excel at the art of song interpretation has been a pleasure each year I have judged."

Rob Berman,
Broadway and Encores! music director and Lenya Competition judge

The spirit and values of the Lenya Competition are inspired by the examples of both Lotte Lenya and Kurt Weill, two consummate artists of the musical theater. In a career that spanned stage, recording, and film, the inimitable Lenya brought a standard of honesty and clarity to whatever she performed. And as a composer, Weill was just as much at home on Broadway as in opera. Throughout his career, he challenged rigid notions of genre by envisioning musical theater as a continuum. He composed his songs as mini-dramas and required singers to be compelling storytellers. Since the first contest in 1998, Weill's theater songs have been an integral part of the Lenya Competition.

"In training its sights on both Lotte Lenya and Kurt Weill, the Competition highlights in a very individual way the bond that needs to exist between an interpreter and the material they interpret. But more than that—in requiring its entrants to encompass the whole gamut of lyric theater styles from opera to the contemporary musical, it challenges compartmentalized concepts of 'serious' and 'light' (something Weill was always ready to do), and places center stage the simple question of what works and doesn't work in a performance. In doing so it honors the lady who gives the competition its name—someone who, while not possessed of the most naturally beautiful vocal instrument, really knew how to inhabit a song and breathe theatrical life into it."

James Holmes, conductor and Lenya Competition judge



LOTTE LENYA AND KURT WEILL

"Lotte Lenya stepped to the front of the stage to sing ... At that moment the miniature confines of the theater stretched and were replaced by a broad and sweeping arena of genuine sentiment. For that's what art can do, and that's what an artist does."

New York Herald Tribune review
of *The Threepenny Opera*, 1954

*Lotte Lenya as Jenny in
The Threepenny Opera
Off-Broadway.*



"When I began to branch out into other fields of the musical theater I discovered the simple truth that the varying categories of musical shows were actually nothing but different ways of mixing the same ingredients—music, drama and movement."

Kurt Weill, 1947

Born in Vienna in 1898, Lotte Lenya began her theatrical career as a teenager in Zurich. She arrived in Berlin in 1921 to pursue a career as a dancer and married Kurt Weill in 1926. Lenya became Weill's muse, and the first role she sang for him was Jessie in *Mahagonny Songspiel* at the Baden-Baden Music Festival in 1927. A year later, she triumphed as Jenny in *The Threepenny Opera* and thereafter enjoyed a vibrant career until Hitler's ascent to power in 1933.

Kurt Weill, born in Dessau in 1900, began his career in the early 1920s in Berlin. By the time he fled Nazi Germany for Paris in March 1933, he had established himself as the leading theatrical composer in Germany with a dozen stage works, among them his collaborations with Bertolt Brecht, including *The Threepenny Opera* and *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*. In Paris, Weill created *The Seven Deadly Sins* for George Balanchine, with Lenya starring in the role of Anna. Weill and Lenya travelled to New York in 1935 for Max Reinhardt's *The Eternal Road* and settled there for the remainder of their lives. While Lenya played Miriam in *The Eternal Road*, sang at Le Ruban Bleu, and toured with Helen Hayes in Maxwell Anderson's *A Candle in the Wind*, Weill wrote innovative works for Broadway, including *Johnny Johnson*, *Knickerbocker Holiday*, *Lady in the Dark*, and *One Touch of Venus*. The final years of his all-too-short career featured the boundary-busting Broadway opera *Street Scene*, the first concept musical *Love Life*, and the musical tragedy *Lost in the Stars*. Weill and Maxwell Anderson were at work on a musical version of *Huckleberry Finn* when Weill died suddenly in April 1950.

Lenya devoted the rest of her life to promoting Weill's works, beginning with the overwhelming success of the 1954 Off-Broadway revival of *The Threepenny Opera* (adapted by Marc Blitzstein), in which she recreated the role of Jenny (Tony Award), and a series of now-classic recordings. In 1966 Lenya's portrayal of Frau Schneider in *Cabaret* earned her a second Tony nomination. On screen she appeared in *The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone* (Academy Award nomination), *The Appointment*, *Semi-Tough*, and most famously as the stiletto-toed Rosa Klebb in *From Russia with Love*. She died in 1981.

"There really is no other singing competition quite like it. Not only does the young performer need to be able to belt out a show tune, with all the requisite acting ability that must accompany it, but he or she must be able to soar in an aria and also negotiate Kurt Weill—no easy feat. The Lotte Lenya competitor must have it all: acting and singing chops from a wide variety of theatrical and musical realms and also that certain something—charisma, star-quality, call it what you will—that puts them above all others. It's a competition every young singer/actor should pursue."

**Rebecca Luker,
Tony Award nominated singer-actress and Lenya Competition judge**

SPOTLIGHT ON

Lotte Lenya Competition winners enjoy successful stage, concert, and recording careers across the globe. They are just as likely to appear on Broadway as at the Metropolitan Opera or Deutsche Oper Berlin. Some past winners reflect on their experiences in the Competition.



ERIK LIBERMAN 2nd Prize, 2005

Career Highlights

LoveMusik (Broadway); *Motel in Fiddler on the Roof*, opposite Topol (national tour); Groucho Marx in *Minnie's Boys* (Off-Broadway) and *The Most Ridiculous Thing You Ever Hoid* (New York Musical Theater Festival); Charlie in *Merrily We Roll Along* (Signature Theatre, Helen Hayes Award); The Baker in *Into the Woods* (Centerstage, Westport Country Playhouse).

"The Lenya Competition is special because it honors the voice only as it serves the actor, and the actor only as he or she serves the text. It's not a recital—the crook of the piano might be a bar in Bilbao or a pilot's seat in *Der Lindberghflug*—but it's never just a place to stand and showboat. I guess you could say 'form follows function' in the Competition. The work ethic I developed for the Competition became the foundation for my career. It forced me to be specific with my acting in ways I hadn't been before and expanded my range as a singer."



REBECCA JO LOEB 1st Prize, 2008

Career Highlights

Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Hänsel in *Hänsel und Gretel*, Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus*, Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Hamburgische Staatsoper); Second Lady in *Die Zauberflöte* (Deutsche Oper Berlin); Marie in the premiere of *Written on Skin* (Festival Aix-en-Provence); Carrie in *Carousel* (Boston Pops); Jenny in *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* (Tanglewood Music Festival).

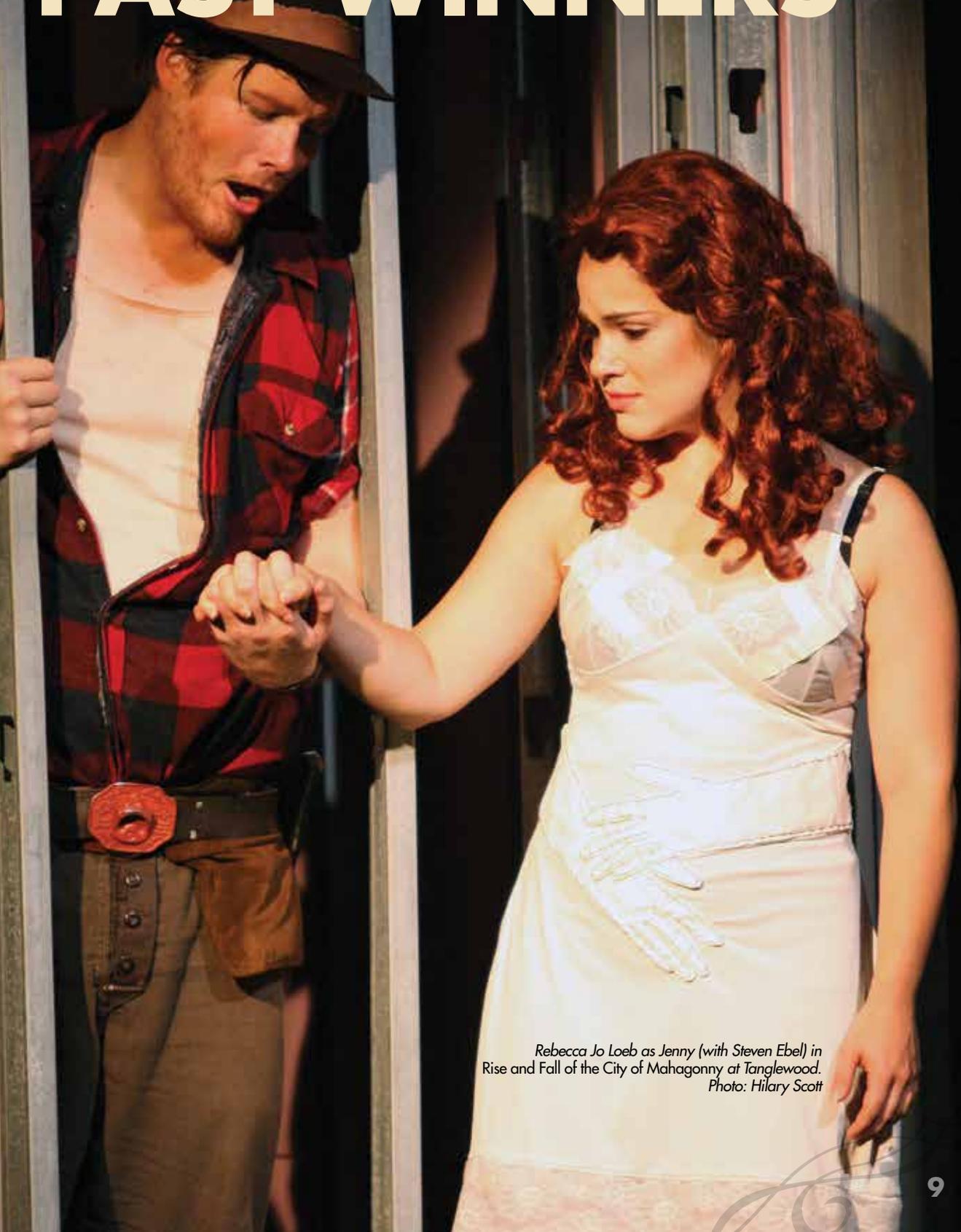
"The Lenya Competition is very different from most other vocal competitions in that dramatic ability is just as important as vocal technique and beauty. For me, telling a story and being as real and theatrically alive as possible has always held the same importance as technique and making pretty sounds. The higher up I get in my field the more I see how many people have really impeccable acting chops and that's what sets them apart from the rest."

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Erik Liberman (right) with Michael Cerveris and Donna Murphy in LoveMusik on Broadway. Photo: Carol Rosegg

PAST WINNERS



*Rebecca Jo Loeb as Jenny (with Steven Ebel) in Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny at Tanglewood.
Photo: Hilary Scott*



LAUREN WORSHAM 2nd Prize, 2009

Career Highlights

Cunegonde in *Candide*, Flora in *Turn of the Screw* (New York City Opera); Amy in *Where's Charley?* (New York City Center Encores!); Olive in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (first national tour); Lili in *Carnival!* (Goodspeed Opera House); Cinderella in *Into the Woods* (Kansas City Rep); Clara in *The Light in the Piazza* (Weston Playhouse); Sophie in *Master Class* (Paper Mill Playhouse); Pitti-Sing in *The Mikado* (Carnegie Hall).

"The Lenya Competition is unique in that it asks the participants to focus on the storytelling aspect of performance. It attracts competitors who enjoy trying new things and transforming themselves for different genres. It was a great fit for me because I perform in musical theater, new music, and

opera (not to mention pop and rock). The Lenya Competition gives contestants an edge by introducing them to industry professionals in a performance setting; it has definitely helped me in my career as it has introduced me to many people who have later helped me book gigs."



JONATHAN MICHIE 1st Prize, 2005

Career Highlights

Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte*, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, Harlekin in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Schaunard in *La bohème* (Oper Leipzig); the Vicar in *Albert Herring* (Los Angeles Opera, Santa Fe Opera); Mercutio in *Roméo et Juliette*, Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte* (Florida Grand Opera). Jonathan is an alumnus of the San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program and was an apprentice artist with Florida Grand Opera.

"Most traditional vocal competitions prioritize vocal fireworks and large, mature sounds. The Lenya Competition lowers the barrier that can exist

between styles of performance and contestants are primarily judged on honest, direct communication, regardless of style. Being judged principally on career potential and stage ability, as opposed to being a finished product, allowed me to shine as a young performer of age 20."



KYLE BARISICH 2nd Prize, 2002

Career Highlights

Currently playing the role of Raoul, Vicomte de Chagny, in Harold Prince's record-breaking Broadway production of *The Phantom of the Opera*, Kyle has portrayed twenty different roles in *Phantom* between the national tour and Broadway. Regional credits include *South Pacific* at the Hollywood Bowl, Cinderella's Prince in *Into the Woods*, and Barrett in *Titanic* at the Media Theatre.

"With its mix of languages and styles, the Lenya Competition was ideal for my diverse strengths as a performer. It helped me realize that even if I didn't fit into a neat category like some other singers did, I had a lot to offer. There are tons of amazing singers out there, but what will always catch someone's attention

at an audition are a strong acting choice and a deeply felt emotion."

winners continued on page 12

*Lauren Worsham as Amy
(with Rob McClure)
in Where's Charley?
at New York City Center Encores!
Photo: Joan Marcus*



*Jonathan Michie (right) as the Vicar in Albert Herring at Santa Fe Opera.
Photo: Ken Howard*



*Kyle Barisich as Raoul
(with Sierra Boggess) in
The Phantom of the Opera
on Broadway.
Photo: Joan Marcus*





*Amy Justman as Mary Turner (on chair)
in Of Thee I Sing at Bard SummerScape.
Photo: Stephanie Berger*



*Richard Todd Adams as the
Phantom (with Marni Raab)
in the national tour of
The Phantom of the Opera.
Photo: Joan Marcus*



*Rodell Rosel as Goro in
Madame Butterfly
at Los Angeles Opera.
Photo: Robert Millard*



AMY JUSTMAN 1st Prize, 2004

Career Highlights

Susan in *Company*, *White Christmas* (Broadway); Betty Haynes in *White Christmas* (Pioneer Theatre); *Lost in the Stars*, *Where's Charley?*, *Music in the Air* (New York City Center Encores!); Heidi in *Title of Show* (Repertory Theatre of St. Louis); Mary Turner in *Of Thee I Sing* (Bard SummerScape Festival); Peep-Bo in *The Mikado* (Carnegie Hall, Light Opera of Oklahoma); Cinderella and Rapunzel in *Disney on Classic* with the Tokyo Philharmonic. Recordings: *Company* Original Revival Cast Recording and *PBS Great Performances* DVD; Bernstein's *Mass* with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra.

"The Lenya Competition is special in its focus on dramatic performance in multiple genres. It has an eclectic group of competitors, as well as high-level judges from a range of professional worlds who truly know how to judge both a beautiful voice and exceptional acting. It was the only competition that really addressed my particular strength, which is bringing a classical vocal foundation to a range of styles. It also forced me to step up what I was doing in terms of how I approached a song, to let it come more from me and to be more spontaneous in the moment."



RODELL ROSEL 2nd Prize, 2006

Career Highlights

Valzacchi in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Nathanaël in *Les contes d'Hoffmann* (Metropolitan Opera, both broadcast live in HD); Goro in *Madama Butterfly* (Los Angeles Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Pittsburgh Opera); title role in *Albert Herring*, Monostatos in *Die Zauberflöte* (Florentine Opera); Remendado in *Carmen*, Bardolfo in *Falstaff*, Blind in *Die Fledermaus*, Second Jew in *Salome* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); Squeak in *Billy Budd*, Tanzmeister in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Houston Grand Opera); Ong Chi Seng in the world premiere of Paul Moravec's *The Letter* (Santa Fe Opera). Rodell is an alumnus of the Lyric Opera of Chicago's Ryan Opera Center.

"The Competition challenges singers not just to be great singers, but also great performers and interpreters of both opera and musical theater. You may be doing repertoire similar to another singer's, but it's not what you do, it's how you do it. Individuality and the ability to grab the audience are paramount. Winning the competition reinforced my passion to inhabit, not just sing, every role."



RICHARD TODD ADAMS 1st Prize, 2004

Career Highlights

The Woman in White, *The Pirate Queen* (Broadway); title role in *The Phantom of the Opera* (national tour); Jean Valjean and Javert (cover) in *Les Misérables* (25th anniversary tour); Javert in *Les Misérables* (Marriott Lincolnshire Theatre, Jeff Award); Cervantes in *Man of La Mancha* (Hangar Theatre); *Little Fish* (Second Stage), *Listen to My Heart* (Studio 54); *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* (Yale Rep); Ted and Richard in *2 Pianos, 4 Hands* at theaters all across the United States and Canada.

"As someone who considers himself a 'singing actor,' I was never into the typical operatic vocal competition, as you were almost punished if even one note got away from you or wasn't perfectly sung. With the Lenya Competition, it's about conveying the text through the music in a perfect symbiosis. To me, that's what it's all about. Thank God for the Lenya Competition!"

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ALLEN HODZOVIC 1st Prize, 2009

Career Highlights

Raoul in *The Phantom of the Opera* (Stuttgart); *Mozart!* (Theater an der Wien); Jack Seward in the European premiere of Frank Wildhorn's *Dracula*, Bernhard Spyri in the world premiere of *Heidi* (Switzerland); and in repertory companies throughout Germany, Austria, and Switzerland: Tony in *West Side Story*, Marius in *Les Misérables*, Cliff in *Cabaret*, Anthony in *Sweeney Todd*, Henrik in *A Little Night Music*, The Baker in *Into the Woods*, Oscar in *Sweet Charity*, Jamie in *The Last Five Years*, and Molina in *Kiss of the Spider Woman*.

"The Lenya Competition builds a bridge between opera and musical theater. It addresses trained singers from both fields and encourages truthful acting in every song or aria, no matter which genre. I liked being challenged to sing in different styles and languages and to approach every song as an acting piece in the context of a character in a situation."

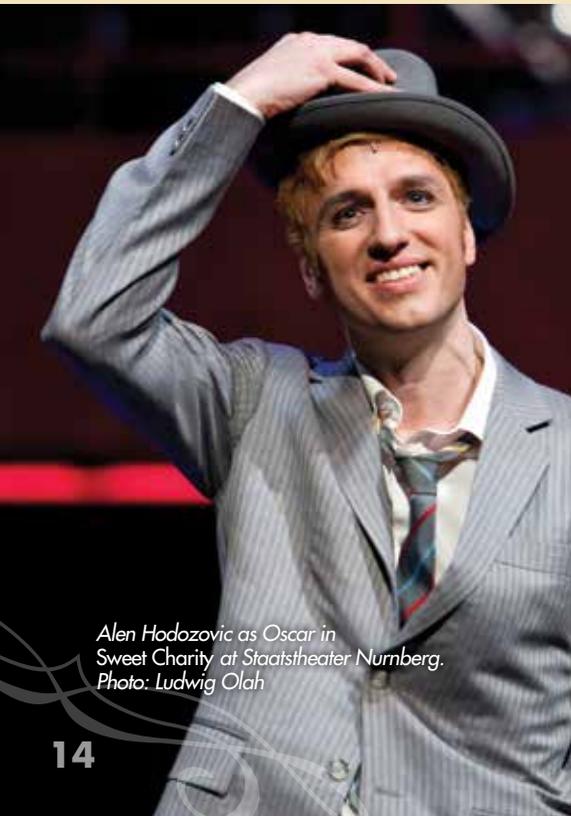


ZACHARY JAMES 3rd Prize, 2009

Career Highlights

Coram Boy, *South Pacific*, Lurch in *The Addams Family* (Broadway); Abraham Lincoln in the world premiere of Philip Glass's *The Perfect American* (Teatro Real Madrid, English National Opera); Joe in *The Most Happy Fella* (Knoxville Opera). Cast recordings: *The Addams Family*, *South Pacific*, *Il Sogno* and *The Toymaker*.

"Not only does the Lenya Competition honor the legacy of Kurt Weill's important body of work and Lotte Lenya's unique artistry, but it gives singers an opportunity to focus on character and storytelling hand-in-hand with beautiful singing. As an actor and an opera singer, I was excited to compete on a stage where acting was judged equally alongside singing. Competing instilled me with confidence and a feeling of validation that I had chosen the right career. It is a rare thing to be able to go back and forth between musical theater and opera, and I feel very lucky that I continue to get opportunities in both."



Alen Hodzovic as Oscar in *Sweet Charity* at Staatstheater Nurnberg.
Photo: Ludvig Olah



Zachary James as Lincoln in Philip Glass's *The Perfect American* at Teatro Real Madrid.
Photo: Javier del Real

15 YEARS SUPPORTING CAREERS

The impact of the Lenya Competition endures well beyond the distribution of prizes each year. The exposure to leading industry professionals and the continuing support of the Kurt Weill Foundation have contributed to the advancement of many winners' careers. The Foundation has arranged concerts and recommended winners for professional opportunities, and several judges have hired winners for their projects. Here are just a few examples:

- In 2000, Lenya Competition winners were presented in a concert of Weill songs at New York City's 92nd Street Y, hosted by Teresa Stratas.
- A group of six past winners performed *Mahagonny Songspiel* at the 2009 Ravinia Festival with members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, conducted by James Conlon (Amy Justman, Rebecca Jo Loeb, Bray Wilkins, James Benjamin Rodgers, Jonathan Michie, and Paul Corona).
- The annual Kurt Weill Fest in Dessau, Germany, featured winners in song evenings in 2005 (Richard Todd Adams and Amy Justman) and 2011 (Alen Hodzovic and Rebecca Jo Loeb), and the 2013 Fest featured seven past winners in four different concerts (Richard Todd Adams, Maria Failla, Analisa Leaming, Michael McKinsey, James Benjamin Rodgers, Jacob Lewis Smith, and Jacob Keith Watson).
- Winners Michael McKinsey, Jacob Lewis Smith, and Lauren Worsham sing supporting roles on the first complete recording of *One Touch of Venus*, alongside Broadway stars Brent Barrett, Victoria Clark, Melissa Errico, Judy Kaye, and Ron Raines.

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"Two things stand out for me: the pleasure I have taken as I watch winners wend their way through their careers—and on rare occasions I have been able to make a few professional matches—and the times when I have seen returning contestants get to the top of their game after having stumbled slightly the first time out. The Lenya Competition is unique, and I have loved being a part of it."

Ted Chapin,
President of the Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization
and Lenya Competition judge

- After judging him in the 2005 Competition, director Harold Prince cast Erik Liberman in the Broadway production of *LoveMusik*, a new musical by Alfred Uhry, suggested by the letters of Weill and Lenya.
- Rob Berman, Music Director of New York City Center Encores!, has cast winners in four Encores productions (Amy Justman, Analisa Learning, Jonathan Michie, Jorell Williams, and Lauren Worsham).
- Theodore Chapin and Ted Sperling helped Analisa Learning secure auditions for high-profile projects in New York, leading to a role in the international tour of *The Sound of Music*.
- Ted Sperling has cast Amy Justman, Analisa Learning, and Lauren Worsham in various projects, including *The Mikado* and *The Grapes of Wrath* at Carnegie Hall and *Brooklyn Village* with the Brooklyn Philharmonic.

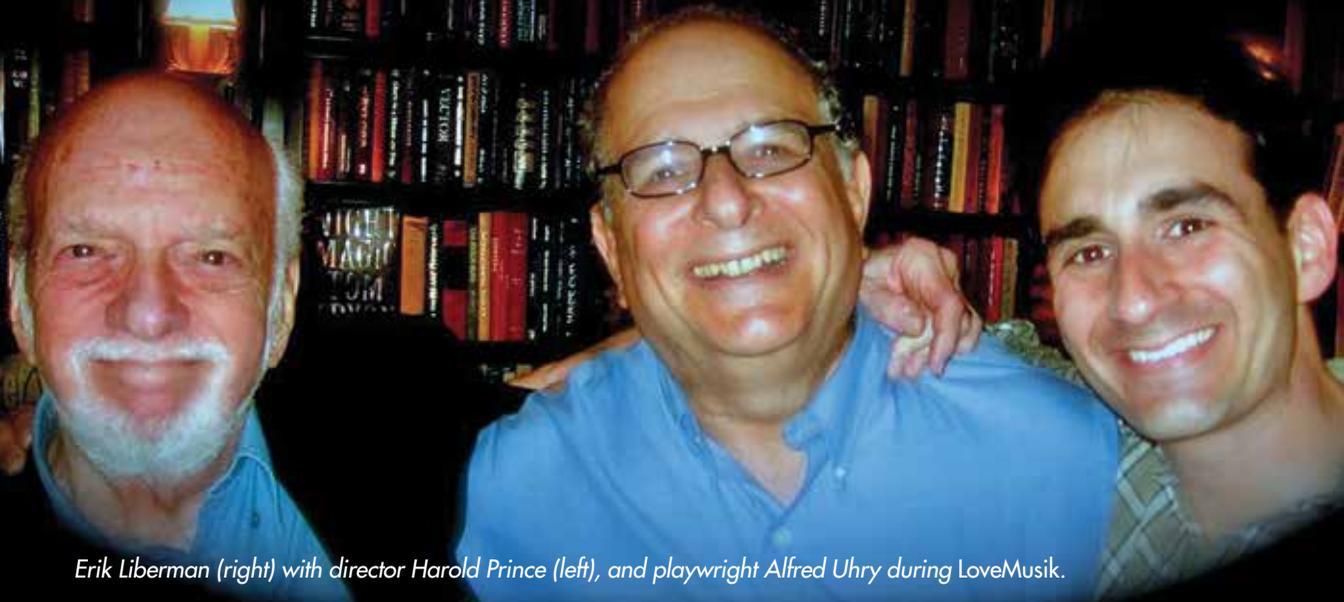
In addition, the Foundation awards career development grants to past winners to provide financial support toward a specific endeavor aimed at furthering their careers.

"I have had the pleasure of working with quite a few winners in a professional capacity. All were impeccably prepared for rehearsals, and brought a warmth and sense of humor to their performances that were a joy to be around."

Ted Sperling,
director, conductor and Lenya Competition judge



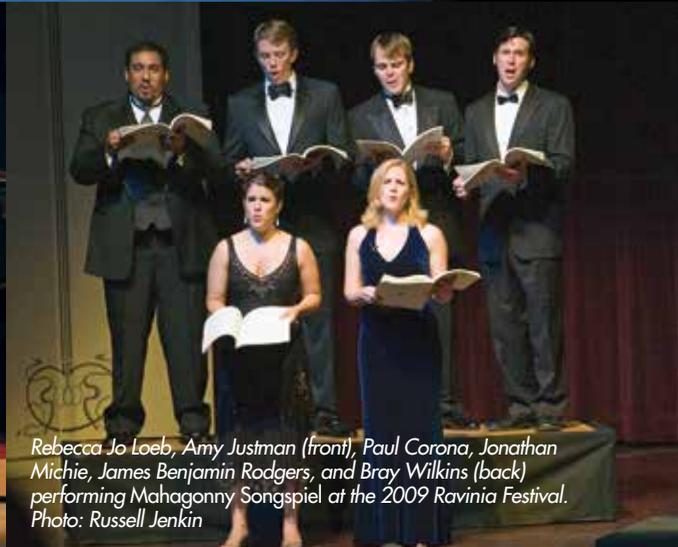
Richard Todd Adams, Jacob Keith Watson, and Michael McKinsey singing "New York, New York" in the opening gala concert of the 2013 Kurt Weill Fest.
Photo: Andreas Burkhardt



Erik Liberman (right) with director Harold Prince (left), and playwright Alfred Uhry during LoveMusik.



Amy Justman (left) and Lauren Worsham (right) with Kelli O'Hara in The Mikado at Carnegie Hall. Photo: Erin Baiano



Rebecca Jo Loeb, Amy Justman (front), Paul Corona, Jonathan Michie, James Benjamin Rodgers, and Bray Wilkins (back) performing Mahagonny Songspiel at the 2009 Ravinia Festival. Photo: Russell Jenkin

*Alen Hodzovic and Rebecca Jo Loeb at the Kurt Weill Fest 2011
Photo: Thomas Ruttke*



THE KURT WEILL FOUNDATION FOR MUSIC, INC.

administers, promotes, and perpetuates the legacies of Kurt Weill and Lotte Lenya. It encourages broad dissemination and appreciation of Weill's music through support of performances, productions, recordings, and scholarship; it fosters understanding of Weill's and Lenya's lives and work within diverse cultural contexts; and, building upon the legacies of both, it nurtures talent, particularly in the creation, performance, and study of musical theater in its various manifestations and media.

Program Credits

Kate Chisholm, Kurt Weill Foundation, Content
David Raymond, Eastman School of Music, Editor
Karen Ver Steeg, Eastman School of Music, Design and Layout

Lenya Competition Administration, for the Kurt Weill Foundation

Kim H. Kowalke, President and Founder of the Competition
Carolyn Weber, Director and Administrator of the Competition
Brady Sansone, Office Manager and Event Coordinator

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7 E 20th Street, New York, NY 10003-1106
(212) 505-5240
www.kwf.org