

Kurt Weill

THE KURT WEILL FOUNDATION FOR MUSIC

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Contact: Kate Chisholm (212) 505-5240 x 210 or kchisholm@kwf.org

ANNOUNCING THE 2015 LOTTE LENYA COMPETITION

International Theater-Singing Contest Seeks Exceptional Talent

Applications Open Today, 1 October 2014

Top Prize \$15,000

New York, NY— **Kim H. Kowalke**, President of **The Kurt Weill Foundation for Music**, announced today the launch of the **2015 Lotte Lenya Competition**, a program of the Foundation. The Lotte Lenya Competition seeks exceptionally talented young singer/actors who excel in a wide range of musical theater styles for the 2015 contest. Contestants will compete for top prizes of \$15,000, \$10,000 and \$7,500; total prizes awarded will exceed \$50,000.

Established in 1998, the Lotte Lenya Competition is a unique international contest that bridges the worlds of opera/opera and Broadway musical theater, following the example of Lenya's husband, composer Kurt Weill. The contest emphasizes wide-ranging repertoire, including works by Weill, and the acting of songs and arias within a dramatic context.

The 2015 Lotte Lenya Competition **is open to singer/actors of all nationalities, ages 19-32**, who were born after December 31, 1982 and before January 1, 1996.

Contestants are required to prepare a program of four selections, which must include: one theatrical selection by Kurt Weill (any genre); two songs from the American musical theater repertoire (one pre-1968 and one from 1968 or later); and one aria from the opera or operetta repertoire. They will be judged not only on their vocal talent, but on their ability to create believable characters in a variety of dramatic situations.

“The Lotte Lenya Competition is not a typical voice competition because it emphasizes both acting and singing with a very wide range of repertoire,” said Kowalke, who founded the Competition. “Every judge looks for a different combination of skills, but I think they’re all looking for the complete package. If you look at the list of winners of the Competition you can’t come up with a template for the winner. They’re all very different. The one thing they have in common is that they have to show that they can pretty much do it all.”

The Kurt Weill Foundation for Music encourages participation by a geographically diverse pool of talented artists. Applicants may compete in the preliminary round of auditions by uploading a video, thereby making the first round universally accessible and overcoming any travel barriers. Travel stipends are offered to contestants in the semi-final and final rounds.

To enter the 2015 Competition, contestants must submit an online application by **5 January 2015**. Preliminary auditions may be by video and submitted electronically or performed live in an audition in New York City. Both types of audition will be weighed equally. **In-person auditions will take place on 24 January 2015**; appointments are limited and will be assigned on a rolling basis. **Video auditions must be submitted by 2 February 2015**. Guidelines, application forms, and instructions are available at <http://www.kwf.org/LLC>.

Semi-finalists will be invited to audition in New York City on 13 or 14 March 2015. Finalists will each receive an award of \$1,000 and compete for top prizes at the **Finals on 18 April 2015 at the Eastman School of Music, Rochester, New York**.

A panel of distinguished musical theater and opera professionals will judge the Competition. Past judges have included world-renowned soprano and actress **Teresa Stratas**; legendary director and producer **Harold Prince**; President of Rodgers & Hammerstein and past Chairman of the American Theater Wing **Ted Chapin**; and Broadway leading ladies **Victoria Clark** and **Rebecca Luker**.

A documentary about the Lotte Lenya Competition, *Singing the Story*, premiered on public television in March 2014. Produced by the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music, Inc., and directed, filmed, and edited by Granny Cart Productions, the film traces the journey of the 2013 Competition, on stage and off, through the semi-finals, finals, and a 15th anniversary celebration concert at New York's Symphony Space. Through live footage and interviews, *Singing the Story* reveals the rigorous and unique nature of the Lotte Lenya Competition. A shorter version of the film is available for viewing, sharing, and embedding at <http://www.YouTube.com/KurtWeillFoundation>.

Previous Lenya Competition winners perform regularly on Broadway, in regional theaters and national/international tours, and in major opera houses in the United States and Europe. Highlights of their current and upcoming performances include: **Lauren Worsham** as Phoebe D'Ysquith (Drama Desk Award, Tony nomination) in *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* (Broadway), **Jacob Keith Watson** as Amos in *Chicago* (National Tour), **Noah Stewart** as Rodolfo in *La Bohème* (Nashville Opera), **Kyle Scatliffe** as Enjolras in *Les Misérables* (Broadway), **Ariela Morgenstern** as Diana in *Next to Normal* (Baltimore Center Stage), **Jonathan Michie** as Valentin in *Faust* and Malatesta in *Don Pasquale* (Leipzig Opera), **Erik Liberman** as Clopin in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (La Jolla Playhouse), **Arlo Hill** (swing) in *The Phantom of the Opera* (Broadway), **Cooper Grodin** as The Phantom *The Phantom of the Opera* (25th Anniversary National Tour), **Doug Carpenter** as Billy Kostecki in *Dirty Dancing* (National Tour), and **Liam Bonner** as Aeneas in *Dido and Aeneas* (Los Angeles Opera). At Carnegie Hall on May 6 and 7, 2015, past winners and finalists **Justin Hopkins**, **Megan Marino**, and **Lauren Michelle** will perform in the North American premiere of *The Road of Promise*, a concert adaptation of Kurt Weill and Franz Werfel's *The Eternal Road*, with [The Collegiate Chorale](#) and the Orchestra of St. Luke's.

Further information may be found on the Kurt Weill Foundation's website at www.kwf.org/LLC.

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If you'd like more information about this topic, please contact Kate Chisholm at the Kurt Weill Foundation: (212) 505-5240 x 210 or kchisholm@kwf.org.