



THE KURT WEILL FOUNDATION FOR MUSIC

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Judges for the 20th Anniversary Lotte Lenya Competition Announced

All-Star Judges to preside over 20th anniversary international musical theater competition; top prizes of \$20,000, \$15,000, and \$10,000; total prizes to exceed \$75,000.

NEW YORK (January 10, 2018) — Kim H. Kowalke, President and CEO of the Kurt Weill Foundation, has announced the judges for the **20th Anniversary Lotte Lenya Competition**. A distinguished panel will preside over the finals on 14 April in Rochester, NY: Tony Award-winning actress and singer **Victoria Clark**, renowned opera and musical theater conductor **James Holmes**, and **Jack Viertel**, Broadway producer, author, and Artistic Director of New York City Center *Encores!*

Broadway, film, and television actress and director **Clark** returns as judge for the fourth time. Perhaps best known for her Tony-winning portrayal of Margaret in *The Light in the Piazza*, her recent work includes Sara Jane Moore in *Assassins* (City Center *Encores!* Off-Center), Tony nominations for her roles in *Gigi*, *the Musical* and *Cinderella*, and directing *Newton's Cradle* for which she won the New York Musical Festival Best Director Award.

Holmes' wide-ranging credits include work in major opera houses and theaters around the world, with a particular focus on the music of Weill. This season, he leads the German stage premiere of Weill's *Love Life* at Theater Freiburg, a production which stars two past Lenya Competition winners in the leading roles, Rebecca Jo Loeb (1st Prize, 2008) and David Arnspenger (2nd Prize, 2010). He previously held the posts of Head of Music at English National Opera and Opera North, where this season he is music director for *Kiss Me, Kate!* 2018 marks his sixth appearance as a Lenya judge.

At City Center, **Viertel** has overseen fifty-two productions, including Weill's *Lost in the Stars*, and Blitzstein's *Juno*. Additionally, he is senior vice president of JuJamCyn Theaters on Broadway and the author of *The Secret Life of the American Musical*, published in 2016 by Farrar Straus and Giroux. This is his first time judging the competition.

Semifinalists will audition for and be coached by stage, opera and concert performer **Lisa Vroman** and Tony Award-winning theater and film composer **Jeanine Tesori**. Vroman is no stranger to the music of Kurt Weill, having performed Lucy Brown in *Threepenny Opera*, Anna I in *The Seven Deadly Sins*, and is currently performing with the ongoing Music Unwound "Kurt Weill's America" project. She also sang the role of Birdie in Blitzstein's *Regina* at Utah Opera in 2009. Called "the most accomplished female composer in Broadway history," Tesori co-wrote the musical *Fun Home*, for which she and Lisa Kron won the Tony Award for Best Original Score in 2015. Other major credits include *Caroline, or Change*, *Violet*, *Thoroughly Modern*

Millie, and *Shrek, the Musical*. She is the founding artistic director of City Center *Encores!* Off-Center.

Since its inception in 1998, the Lotte Lenya Competition has grown into an internationally recognized leader in identifying and nurturing the next generation of “total-package performers” (*Opera News*) and rising stars in both the opera and musical theater worlds. The roster of prizewinners has likewise grown to over 100, many of whom have gone on to major performing careers. In addition to top prizes of \$20,000, \$15,000, and \$10,000. Total prizes will exceed \$75,000.

Semifinals take place on 8 & 9 March 2018 at Manhattan School of Music. Finals will be held on **14 April 2018** in Kilbourn Hall at the Eastman School of Music, Rochester, NY. The daytime round and evening concert are both free and open to the public. The evening concert will be live-streamed for free online viewing. Information about where and when to watch will be published on www.KWF.org closer to the date.

The deadline to apply is 22 January 2018. The competition is open to singer/actors of all nationalities, ages 19-32 (born after April 15, 1985 and before January 21, 1999). For complete guidelines, tips, repertoire suggestions, and insights from previous winners, visit www.kwf.org/lc.

ABOUT THE KURT WEILL FOUNDATION

The Kurt Weill Foundation for Music, Inc. (<http://www.kwf.org>) is dedicated to promoting understanding of the life and works of composer Kurt Weill (1900-1950) and preserving the legacies of Weill and his wife, actress-singer Lotte Lenya (1898-1981). The Foundation administers the Weill-Lenya Research Center, a Grant Program, the Kurt Weill Book Prize and the Lotte Lenya Competition, and publishes the Kurt Weill Edition and the Kurt Weill Newsletter.

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