

Lotte Lenya LOTTE LENYA COMPETITION

A Program of The Kurt Weill Foundation for Music



1st Prize Winners, 2013-2015. Clockwise from top left: Ben Edquist, 2014; Lauren Michelle, 2015; Doug Carpenter, 2013.

2016 LOTTE LENYA COMPETITION FINALS

Daytime Round

Kilbourn Hall, Eastman School of Music

Saturday, 16 April 2016, 8:00 pm

Each finalist will have fifteen minutes in which to present a program of four contrasting selections, as listed in the program below. To ensure that each contestant has the opportunity to sing his/her entire program, **please withhold applause until the conclusion of each contestant's final selection.**

- 11:00 Tom Schimon, baritenor;** Glenn Lewis, piano
 "Papagena, Papagena, Papagena!" from *Die Zauberflöte* Mozart/Schikaneder
 "Der Song von Mandelay" from *Happy End* Weill/Brecht
 "It's Hard to Speak My Heart" from *Parade* Brown
 "Forbidden Fruit" from *The Apple Tree* Bock/Harnick
- 11:15 Briana Silvie, soprano;** Shane Schag, piano
 "It's Me" from *Me and Juliet* Rodgers/Hammerstein
 "Seguidilla" from *Carmen* Bizet/Meilhac, Halévy
 "Surabaya Johnny" from *Happy End* Weill/Brecht (Feingold)
 "Not a Day Goes By" from *Merrily We Roll Along* Sondheim
- 11:30 Dennis Wees, baritone;** Glenn Lewis, piano
 "Pass That Football" from *Wonderful Town* Bernstein/Comden, Green
 "People Carry On" from *The Story of My Life* Bartram
 "It Never Was You" from *Knickerbocker Holiday* Weill/Anderson
 "The Confession Aria" from *Dead Man Walking* Heggie/McNally
- 11:45 Lindsay O'Neil, soprano;** Shane Schag, piano
 "Ah! Je veux vivre" from *Roméo et Juliette* Gounod/Barbier, Carré
 "What Good Would the Moon Be?" from *Street Scene* Weill/Hughes
 "I Don't Need a Roof" from *Big Fish* Lippa
 "Mr. Snow" from *Carousel* Rodgers/Hammerstein
- 12:00 Tony Potts, baritone;** Glenn Lewis, piano
 "Se vuol ballare" from *Le nozze di Figaro* Mozart/Da Ponte
 "No One Has Ever Loved Me" from *Passion* Sondheim
 "This is New" from *Lady in the Dark* Weill/Gershwin
 "Soliloquy" from *Carousel* Rodgers/Hammerstein
- 12:15 Kayla Wilkens, soprano;** Shane Schag, piano
 "Verdi" Gerle
 "Make Someone Happy" from *Do Re Mi* Styne/Comden, Green
 "Is It Him or Is It Me?" from *Love Life* Weill/Lerner
 "Pâle et blonde" from *Hamlet* Thomas/Carré, Barbier
- 12:30 Brian Vu, baritone;** Glenn Lewis, piano
 "O Carlo, ascolta" from *Don Carlo* Verdi/Méry, du Locle
 "Bowler Hat" from *Pacific Overtures* Sondheim
 "West Wind" from *One Touch of Venus* Weill/Nash
 "Where is the Life that Late I Led?" from *Kiss Me, Kate* Porter

-INTERMISSION-

- 1:45 Bradley Smoak, bass-baritone;** Shane Schag, piano
 "Come, master" from *The Rake's Progress* Stravinsky/Auden
 "It's Hard to Speak My Heart" from *Parade* Brown
 "Let Things Be Like They Always Was" from *Street Scene* Weill/Hughes
 "Pass That Football" from *Wonderful Town* Bernstein/Comden, Green
- 2:00 Reilly Nelson, mezzo-soprano;** Glenn Lewis, piano
 "Je suis Lazuli" from *L'étoile* Chabrier/Vanloo, Leterrier
 "Almost Real" from *The Bridges of Madison County* Brown
 "Nannas Lied" Weill/Brecht
 "Warm All Over" from *The Most Happy Fella* Loesser
- 2:15 Jim Schubin, tenor;** Shane Schag, piano
 "Try Me" from *She Loves Me* Bock/Harnick
 "Serenade" from *The Student Prince* Romberg/Donnelly
 "How Much I Love You" from *One Touch of Venus* Weill/Nash
 "Taking Flight" from *Allison Under The Stars* Goldrich/Heisler
- 2:30 Erika Cockerham, mezzo-soprano;** Glenn Lewis, piano
 "Je ne t'aime pas" Weill/Magre
 "Before the Parade Passes By" from *Hello, Dolly!* Herman/Stewart
 "So Anyway" from *Next to Normal* Kitt/Yorkey
 "Ô ma lyre immortelle" from *Sapho* Gounod/Augier
- 2:45 Curtis Bannister, tenor;** Shane Schag, piano
 "It Never Was You" from *Knickerbocker Holiday* Weill/Anderson
 "Ô souverain, ô juge, ô père" from *Le Cid* Massenet/Gallet, Blau, d'Ennery
 "Make Someone Happy" from *Do Re Mi* Styne/Comden, Green
 "Being Alive" from *Company* Sondheim
- 3:00 Talya Lieberman, soprano;** Glenn Lewis, piano
 "Youkali" Weill/Fernay
 "Vanilla Ice Cream" from *She Loves Me* Bock/Harnick
 "Stars and the Moon" from *Songs for a New World* Brown
 "No, no, I'll take no less" from *Semele* Handel
- 3:15 Eric Parker, tenor;** Shane Schag, piano
 "Inkslinger's Song" from *Paul Bunyan* Britten/Auden
 "Lost Boy" from *Darling* Oliver
 "Come to Me, Bend to Me" from *Brigadoon* Loewe/Lerner
 "Lotterieagents Tango" from *Der Silbersee* Weill/Kaiser

Lotte Lenya Competition Finalists



Described by *TimeOut Chicago* as “radiating with slowly simmering energy”, tenor **CURTIS BANNISTER** has been praised for his “dramatic inflection and compelling energy” by *The Washington Post* and his “thrilling tenor voice and a towering stage presence” by *The Herald Journal*. Last season, Curtis debuted with Theater an der Wien and covered the title role in *Sweeney Todd* for the Finger Lakes Musical Theatre Festival. Upcoming performances include Don Jose in *Carmen* at the Natchez Festival of Music, Mozart’s *Requiem* with Musica Lumina Orchestra and the Niles Metropolitan Chorus in Chicago, and Sportin’ Life in *Porgy & Bess* and the Lover in *Il tabarro* at the Utah Festival Opera. He has performed with Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Baltimore Symphony

Orchestra, Sarasota Opera, and the Musique de Chambre du Musée de Louvre.
www.thecurtisbannister.com.

ERIKA COCKERHAM made her professional debut last month as Harriet in Leanna Kirchoff’s opera, *The Clever Artifice of Harriet and Margaret*, with Gateway Opera in St. Louis. Erika was the first of seven children born into an extended family of hilarious, eccentric, expressive, loud, ever musical, unconditionally loving, and dedicated people. Her life with them has shaped her into the passionate person and musician she is today. A deep love for music, instilled in her from the age of 7 when she began playing the piano, was ardently cultivated by her parents and grandparents. Erika has a BFA in Musical Theater and currently studies voice with an emphasis on opera with Martha Hart. She is also the young artist and second soprano section leader for the St. Louis Women’s Hope Chorale.



Recently described by *Opera News* as “delectably stylish,” “poetically compelling,” and “technically refined,” **TALYA LIEBERMAN** will be assuming the soprano position in the Opernstudio at Komische Oper Berlin after finishing her Artist Diploma studies at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where she currently studies with Bill McGraw. Upcoming highlights include a Cincinnati Opera debut as Lucy in the World Premiere of *Fellow Travelers*. Last summer she sang Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro* as a Filene Young Artist with Wolf Trap Opera. A graduate of the Merola Opera Program, Talya made her recital debut at the San Francisco Opera Center’s Schwabacher Debut Recital series. Talya is a convert from the orchestra pit, having received her master’s degree in trumpet performance from the University of North Carolina. Talya was a finalist and Lys Symonette Prize winner in 2015. www.talyalieberman.com

Born in the coastal town of Sault Ste. Marie in Ontario, Canada, **REILLY NELSON** attended Eastman School of Music, where she received a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance, and University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where she completed a Masters of Music. At CCM she performed Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel*, Mary in Ricky Ian Gordon’s *Morning Star*, and as a soloist in Bolcom’s *Cabaret Songs*. She also performed both Hansel and Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro* at Janiec Opera Company at the Brevard Music Center. The mezzo-soprano was a vocal fellow at Tanglewood in summers 2013 and 2014, performing *Les nuits d’été*, Op. 7 and *Folk Songs* by Bernard Rands.



LINDSAY O'NEIL Broadway/National Tour: *The Phantom of the Opera* (Confidante, Madame Firmin, Carlotta u/s), *A Christmas Story, The Musical* (Mother u/s), *CATS* (Jellylorum/Griddlebone). New York City: *The Most Happy Fella*, *Little Me*, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (City Center Encores!), *A Prairie Home Companion* (Garrison Keeler Live from Town Hall), *Carousel* (NY Philharmonic), *W.S. Gilbert and the Broadway He Inspired* (Lyrics & Lyricists), *Babes In Toyland* (Avery Fisher Hall). Regional: *Good News* (Goodspeed Opera House), *Sunset Boulevard* (Ogunquit Playhouse), *The Pirates of Penzance* (LTOTS). Education: MM – Manhattan School of Music, BM – Eastman School of Music. This summer Lindsay will be performing in *The Pirates of Penzance* at Barrington Stage Company. Thanks to Jason and Clara for their constant love and support.



Los Angeles native **ERIC MICHAEL PARKER** has been lauded for his vocal and theatrical versatility on stages around the world, from Operafestival di Roma to the Tokyo Disney Resort. Recent credits: Freddy (*My Fair Lady*), Melchior (*Spring Awakening*), Jasper (*The Mystery of Edwin Drood*), Henry (*Next to Normal*). Eric was Man One u/s in the song cycle *The Trouble With Words* (LA Fringe Festival's Best Musical Award, Ovation Award for Best Original Music & Lyrics). He performed numerous roles with Cape Cod's College Light Opera Company, including Edwin (G&S's *Trial by Jury*), Pirelli (*Sweeney Todd*), Will Parker (*Oklahoma!*). Eric holds his B.M. in Vocal Performance from the Hall-Musco Conservatory of Music at Chapman University, where he sang such roles as Alfredo

(*La Traviata*) and Monostatos (*Die Zauberflöte*). He received the Conservatory's Award for Artistic Excellence in 2013.

TONY POTTS is a Minneapolis-St. Paul based performer. This past summer he performed the roles of Vicar in Britten's *Albert Herring* and the father in *Hansel and Gretel* at the Miami Music Festival, as well as various concerts and recitals. His stage roles have included Fagin in *Oliver!*, Koko in *The Mikado*, The Watchman, Umpire, and Manager in *The Mighty Casey*, Curly in *Oklahoma!*, Buddy in *Side Show*, and Harold Hill in *The Music Man*. Tony is a recent graduate of the University of Northwestern, St. Paul where he completed his undergraduate degree in vocal performance. This summer, Tony heads back to Miami to perform the role of Marcello in *La bohème*. Tony studies with Carol Eikum, who teaches at the University of Northwestern, St. Paul.



TOM SCHIMON, born in Vienna, now lives in Berlin. In 2009 he graduated from the Bayerische Theaterakademie August Everding in Munich, where he studied Musical Theater. His professional career started in 2007 at the Staatstheater am Gärtnerplatz in Munich as Mercedes in *La Cage aux Folles* and Toby in *Sweeney Todd*. He has appeared as Angel in *Rent*, Jack in *Into the Woods*, Nick in *Fame* and Seymour in *The Little Shop of Horrors* at such theaters as the Vienna Volksoper, the Deutsches Theater Munich and the Theater Basel. In 2010 he performed in a commemorative concert for Paul Abraham with the Bayerisches Rundfunkorchester conducted by Ulf Schirmer. Tom is currently 1st Man in *Kiss Me, Kate* at the Staatstheater Kassel, Action in *West Side Story* at Oper Leipzig and rehearsing the role of

Henrik for a new production of *A Little Night Music* at the Theater Bielefeld.

Currently on the new National Tour of *The Sound of Music*, **JIM SCHUBIN** has worked both in New York as well as extensively around the country in regional theaters, including Barrington Stage, Cape Playhouse, West Virginia Public Theater, and more. Off-Broadway, Jim starred as Matt in the longest running musical of all time, *The Fantasticks*. Jim has performed as a soloist as well as a member of Teatro with orchestras around the country and most recently he performed his self-written and produced solo show, *Life is a Highway*, in the famous Metropolitan Room in New York. Favorite past credits include Jesus (*Godspell*), Beast (*Beauty and the Beast*), Barrett (*Titanic*), The Courier (1776), and Freddie (*Chess*). He holds a BFA in Musical Theater from Emerson College. This is Jim's third consecutive year as a finalist.



The winner of the inaugural Carolyn Weber Award in the 2015 Lotte Lenya Competition, **BRIANA SILVIE**'s past performances include Lillian Holiday in *Happy End*, L'enfant in *L'enfant et les sortilèges*, Gertrude McFuzz in *Seussical*, Cathy in *The Last Five Years*, and the title role in the recent New York premiere of a musical adaptation of *Emma*. Briana is an alumna of the Interlochen Arts Academy and earned her undergraduate degree in Music at UCLA. She has been the recipient of the Fine Arts Award and Maddy Summer Artist Award from the Interlochen Center for the Arts, a National YoungArts Foundation Award, and the second-place prize in the Walter Jurmann Vocal Competition. Briana's voice can be heard on video-game, musical, and feature-film soundtrack recordings for companies

including Sony Music Entertainment Japan, Hal Leonard, MTI Broadway Jr., Skywalker Sound, and Universal Pictures. www.BrianaSilvie.com.

Known for his compelling presence on both operatic and concert stages, bass-baritone **BRADLEY SMOAK** continues to delight audiences with his "easy charismatic charm" and versatility across a wide variety of musical styles and theatrical characterizations. A member of the Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center, Smoak's credits include principal roles with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Palm Beach Opera, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, New York City Opera, and Wexford Festival Opera (Ireland). Upcoming: Lyric Opera of Chicago (*Zuniga/Carmen*, Bandit Chief/*Don Quichotte*), Opera Theatre of St. Louis (*Colline/La bohème*), and a debut with Michigan Opera Theatre (*Lignière/Cyrano*). Recently, he made his Chicago Symphony Orchestra debut in *Pelléas et Mélisande* and *L'enfant et les sortilèges* with Esa-Pekka Salonen. A North Carolina native, Mr. Smoak holds a BFA in Music Theater from Illinois Wesleyan University.



BRIAN VU, a 2015-16 Resident Artist with the Pittsburgh Opera, is slated to perform this season as John Brooke in *Little Women*, Leo Stein in *27*, and Figaro in the student matinee performance of *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. With Yale Opera, he sang Count Almaviva in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Dapertutto in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, Dandini in *La Cenerentola*, Marcello in *La bohème*, and Robert in *Iolanta*. His awards include the Sullivan Foundation Award, Grand Finalist in the 2016 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and a career grant from the Opera Buffs of Los Angeles, among others. Brian is a graduate of Yale School of Music and University of California, Los Angeles. He has been a Young Artist at the Glimmerglass Festival, Vocal Fellow in Marilyn Horne's Music Academy of the West, and a

member of the Wolf Trap Opera Studio.

DENNIS WEES, an Albuquerque, NM native, and is a Dallas/Fort Worth-based actor and singer. Credits include Fyedka in *Fiddler on the Roof* at both Casa Mañana and Lyric Stage, Matt in *The Fantasticks* (Theatre Three), Nanki-Poo in *The Hot Mikado* (Theatre Three), Charles in *Titanic* (Lyric Stage), Doc MacCahan in *The Golden Apple* (Lyric Stage), Montparnasse in *Les Miserables* (Casa Mañana) Melchior in *Spring Awakening* (Albuquerque Little Theater), and Papageno in *The Magic Flute* (SMU). He also appears as Doc on the first full recording of *The Golden Apple* released last year by PS Classics. Dennis will graduate from Southern Methodist University with a BM in Vocal Performance in May.



With a passion for musical theater and opera, **KAYLA WILKENS** is a versatile young artist originally from Salem, OR. She has performed in the world premieres of *Persephone Unplugged* (Persephone), *O Pioneers!* (Marie Shabata), Libby Larsen's *Moabit Sonnets* (soprano soloist), and in the American debut of Robert Owen's *Culture, Culture!* (featured coloratura). As a soloist, her concert performances include Paulus' *To Be Certain of the Dawn*, Bach's *Magnificat*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, and performing with Tony-winner Steven Lutvak in a staged revue celebrating his music. While completing her masters at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, she sang La Fée in *Cendrillon*, Miss Wordsworth in *Albert Herring*, and Cunegonde in *Candide*. Honors include the Dorothy Kirsten-James Browning Most

Promising Singer prize in the NATS National Artist Awards and awards in the Metropolitan Opera Council Auditions, and the Carolyn Bailey and Dominick Argento National Vocal Competition.

2016 Awards Presented Before the Finals

Emerging Talents (\$500)

Jeremy Brown, 21 (Nebraska, USA)
 Kaitlyn Davis, 24 (New York, USA)
 Katherine McLellan, 22 (Connecticut, USA)
 Todd McNeel, 23 (Massachusetts, USA)
 Randa Meierhenry, 22 (Iowa, USA)
 Lucas Pastrana, 21 (Wisconsin, USA)
 Janell Stallard, 22 (Texas, USA)
 Katherine Weber, 24 (New York, USA)

Grace Keagy Award for Outstanding Vocal Promise (\$500)

Brendan Slinger, 28 (Maryland, USA)

Non-Advancing Semifinalists (\$500)

Amanda Achen, 24 (California, USA)
 Gan-ya Ben-gur Akselrod*, 28 (Tel Aviv, Israel)
 Justin Austin, 25 (New York, USA)
 Chase Cornett, 31 (New York, USA)
 Jasmine Habersham, 26 (Georgia, USA)
 Anthony Heineman, 28 (Missouri, USA)
 Kimberly Hessler, 25, (California, USA)
 Adam Hill, 26 (New York, USA)
 Stephanie Junge, 23 (Osnabrück, Germany)
 Stephanie Maloney, 27 (New York, USA)
 Ian McEuen, 29 (Maryland, USA)
 Cassandra Mikat, 21 (Michigan, USA)
 Taylor Pardell, 27 (Vancouver, Canada)
 Daniel Schwait, 26 (Maryland, USA)
 Annie Sherman, 25 (California, USA)
 Cecilia Ticktin, 26 (New Jersey, USA)
 Aaron Young, 31 (Alaska, USA)

*Gan-ya Ben-gur Akselrod was invited to the Finals, but was unable to attend due to a prior professional engagement.

Today's Judges

THEODORE S. CHAPIN is President of Rodgers & Hammerstein, a position he has held for many years. They are currently represented with the Lincoln Center Theater production of *The King and I*, and touring productions of *Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella*, and the Jack O'Brien-directed production of *The Sound of Music*, for which Chapin is one of the producers. Chapin serves on several boards including The American Theater Wing (where he was Chairman for four years), Goodspeed Musicals, and New York City Center, where he was part of the creation of the *Encores!* series. He served as a Tony Awards nominator for two seasons, and is currently a member of the Tony Administration Committee. His career began as an assistant for the Broadway productions of *Follies*, *The Rothschilds* and *The Unknown Soldier and His Wife*, as well as Bernstein's *Mass* at the Kennedy Center and *Candide* in San Francisco. As associate to Alan Arkin, he worked on the original Broadway production of Neil Simon's *The Sunshine Boys* and the CBS-TV special of George Furth's *Twigs* starring Carol Burnett. Odd though it sounds, he was the musical director for the National Theater of the Deaf's production of *Four Saints in Three Acts*. He has been a visiting lecturer at several universities and colleges, including Yale, NYU, Lawrence University, and Columbia. His book *Everything Was Possible: The Birth of the Musical "Follies,"* was published by Alfred A. Knopf in 2003 and is currently in print in paperback by Applause Books. He is honored to be making his tenth appearance as a judge of the Lotte Lenya Competition.

ANDY EINHORN, leading Broadway music director and conductor, conducts concerts in the 16/17 season with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, National Arts Centre Orchestra, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Tucson Symphony and the Fresno Philharmonic. Einhorn boasts Broadway credits for *Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella*, *Evita*, *Brief Encounter*, *The Light in the Piazza*, and *Sondheim on Sondheim*. He most recently served as music director and conductor for the Châtelet Theatre's production of Sondheim's *Passion* in Paris and the Broadway production of Woody Allen's *Bullets Over Broadway*. Since 2011 Einhorn has served as music director and pianist for six-time Tony Award winner, Audra McDonald, performing with her at such prestigious orchestras and venues including the Rochester Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Opera, Avery Fisher Hall, Carnegie Hall, Walt Disney Concert Hall and Teatro Real, Madrid. They recently recorded performances for an upcoming telecast with the Sydney Symphony at the Sydney Opera House in Australia. Einhorn has also music directed for Barbara Cook at Feinstein's and Toronto's Royal Conservatory of Music. His tour work includes *Sweeney Todd*, *The Light in the Piazza*, *Mamma Mia!*, and *The Lion King*. Einhorn is the Musical Supervisor for the current touring production of Rodgers & Hammerstein's *The Sound of Music*. Recording credits include *Bullets Over Broadway*, *Cinderella*, *Evita*, *Sondheim on Sondheim* (Grammy nominee), *Stage Door Canteen* and McDonald's newest release, *Go Back Home*. He served as the music director for HBO's Peabody Award-winning documentary *Six by Sondheim* and music supervisor for Great Performances Peabody Award-winning special "*Broadway Musicals: A Jewish Legacy*" on PBS. Andy is an honors graduate of Rice University in Houston, Texas.

TERESA STRATAS made her debut at the Metropolitan Opera in 1959 in Massenet's *Manon*. By the time she was 25, she was an international star, singing in all the major opera houses in the world, including a Mimi at Covent Garden, a Violetta in Munich, and a Butterfly at the Met. Over the next three decades, she sang 41 roles in 382 performances at the Met alone, including seven new productions mounted for her. Other career highlights include the world premiere of

the three act version of *Lulu* under Boulez in Paris, creating the roles of Marie Antoinette in *The Ghosts of Versailles* and the lead role in the Broadway musical *Rags*, and singing Julie in the landmark recording of *Show Boat*. She has made more than two dozen opera films, won three Grammy Awards, an Emmy, a Gemini, a Drama Desk Award, a Tony nomination, and an Academy Award citation. In 1997 the NYSTA awarded her its American Artist Citation, and the Canadian government bestowed upon her its highest civilian honor, Officer of the Order of Canada, followed in 2000 with the Governor General's Performing Arts Award. She holds five honorary doctorates, including one from the University of Rochester. In 2015, Stratas was honored with an Opera News Award. The Kurt Weill Foundation gave her its Distinguished Achievement Award in 1998, when she judged the first Lenya Competition and named her an honorary trustee in 2005. Stratas first sang Weill's music in 1979, when she played Jenny in the Met premiere of *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*. Lotte Lenya dubbed Stratas "her dream Jenny" and gave her a collection of unpublished material which Stratas recorded in 1989 as *The Unknown Kurt Weill*, which garnered a fistful of awards. She followed with *Stratas Sings Weill*, appeared in Peter Sellars's film of *Die sieben Todsünden*, and two music videos in *September Songs: The Music of Kurt Weill*. This is her tenth appearance as judge of the Lotte Lenya Competition.

Today's Staff Accompanists

GLENN LEWIS is a native of Rochester, NY. Since 2008 he has held the position of Head of Music Staff for Pittsburgh Opera, where he has served as conductor, recitalist, rehearsal pianist and vocal coach. Prior to this he worked for 11 years in the opera houses of Cologne and Düsseldorf as pianist and conductor. He has worked for 14 summers as a member of the music staff of the Santa Fe Opera festival. He has done guest engagements for the Metropolitan Opera, the Lyric Opera of Chicago and is currently working in Washington DC on the soon to be presented Wagner *Ring* cycle. He has played song recitals for major artists, including Susanne Mentzer, Stephanie Blythe, and Matthew Worth. He is an active solo recitalist and chamber music player as well. He holds degrees in piano performance from Ithaca College and Northwestern University and an artist certificate in opera coaching and conducting from University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.

Ohio native **SHANE SCHAG** has performed in recital throughout the United States and Europe, including a concerto performance with the Ashland Symphony Orchestra. He has won several awards and scholarships, including the Gwendolyn Koldofsky Memorial Award, given to "a musician who demonstrated outstanding professionalism in collaborative piano." He has worked as a vocal coach for Centro Studi Italiani Opera Festival and as an assistant conductor for the Gotham Chamber Opera. In 2007, Mr. Schag made his debut at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall. Now he serves as staff pianist for Carnegie Hall's Muscial Explorers and Link Up concert series. Recently, Mr. Schag appeared on PBS Sunday Arts in a showcase for rising young opera singers. He has been the pianist and musical director for numerous recitals and cabaret acts including *Songs My Mother Never Taught Me*, by Deborah Karpel. Mr. Schag is a member of the recital coaching faculty and resident musical director for the American Musical Theater Ensemble at the Manhattan School of Music. He has also served on the faculty of Operaworks in Los Angeles and the International Vocal Arts Institute in Tel Aviv and Virginia. **He has accompanied the finals of the Lotte Lenya Competition since 2008.**

About the Lotte Lenya Competition

Lotte Lenya (1898-1981) was an extraordinary singer/actress and one of the foremost interpreters of the music of her husband, Kurt Weill. In 1998, to celebrate the centenary of her birth, the Kurt Weill Foundation established the annual Lotte Lenya Competition.

The Lotte Lenya Competition recognizes talented young singer/actors ages 19-32 who are dramatically and musically convincing in wide-ranging modes of theater music. More than a vocal competition, the Lenya Competition emphasizes idiomatic performance and the acting of songs within a dramatic context. Contestants 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. All selections must be sung in their original theatrical versions, and the Weill selections and the opera/operetta aria must be sung in their original language and key.

For the first round of the 2016 competition, 224 contestants from eleven countries submitted a preliminary audition video of their four repertoire selections. In mid-March, thirty-one semi-finalists auditioned live in New York for adjudicator/coaches Jeanine Tesori and Victoria Clark. Eight additional contestants ages 21-24 received Emerging Talent Awards of \$500 each, and Brendon Sliger, tenor, of Hagerstown, MD, received the Grace Keagy Award for Outstanding Vocal Promise (\$500).

Fourteen contestants advanced to the finals. Today's performers are competing for top prizes of \$15,000, \$10,000 and \$7,500. Each finalist will receive a prize of at least \$1,000 and a stipend to defray travel costs. In addition to the top prizes, judges may give additional discretionary prizes of \$3,500 each. Lys Symonette Awards, named in honor of Weill's musical assistant on Broadway and Lenya's longtime accompanist and advisor, recognize outstanding potential or individual performances. The Carolyn Weber Award, established in 2015, recognizes outstanding creativity in crafting a dramatically compelling and diverse program as well as exceptional sensitivity to text/music relationships. This year marks the establishment of the Marc Blitzstein Award, given for an outstanding performance of a Golden Age musical theater number.

In awarding \$750,000 in prizes and awards since the competition began, the Kurt Weill Foundation has recognized the talent and supported the careers of dozens of rising stars. Since 2012, the Foundation has supported the career advancement of previous prizewinners through Professional Development Grants, which past competition winners have used for voice lessons, acting classes, repertoire coaching, language studies, travel to auditions and more. Learn more about the Lotte Lenya Competition at www.kwf.org/LLC.

About the Kurt Weill Foundation

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, and it fosters understanding of Weill's and Lenya's lives and work within diverse cultural contexts. 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.

Lenya Competition News

Past Lenya Competition Winners in the Spotlight

• **Megan Marino**, 2012 3rd Prize: Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* at Fort Worth Opera, April & May 2016 and at Virginia Opera November & December 2016. • **Kyle Scatliffe**, 2010 Lys Symonette Award: Currently starring as Harpo in *The Color Purple* on Broadway. • **Zachary James**, 2009 3rd Prize: The Scribe in *Akhnaten* at English National Opera, March 2016; Pooh-Bah in *The Mikado* at Anchorage Opera, April 2016. • **Jonathan Michie**, 2005 1st Prize: Papageno in Barrie Kosky's production of *Die Zauberflöte* at LA Opera, under the baton of James Conlon, March 2016. • **Nicole Cabell**, Lys Symonette Award, 2002: Violetta in *La traviata*, at Royal Opera House, March 2016. Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus*, at Cincinnati Opera, June 2016. • **Lucas Meachem**, 2002 Lys Symonette Award: Count Almaviva in *Les noces de Figaro/Le nozze di Figaro* at Théâtre du Capitole, Toulouse (FR) April 2016. Title role in *Don Giovanni* at Semperoper Dresden, June-July 2016. • **Noah Stewart**, 2001 Lys Symonette Award: Rodolfo in *La bohème* at Opera Columbus (OH), March 2016. Cavaradossi in *Tosca* at New Orleans Opera, April 2016. In concert with Ulster Orchestra (Belfast), April 2016.

Marc Blitzstein Award Inaugurated

This year marks the establishment of the Marc Blitzstein Award (\$3,500), in recognition of an outstanding performance of a Golden Age musical theater number. The award honors American composer Marc Blitzstein (*The Cradle Will Rock*, *Regina*), whose English adaptation of Weill's *The Threepenny Opera* opened off-Broadway in 1954, starring Lotte Lenya in the role of Jenny Diver. It subsequently ran for 2,707 performances, which set the record for longest running musical at that time and secured *Threepenny's* success in America. In 2012, the Kurt Weill Foundation acquired 50% ownership of Blitzstein's compositions. The creation of the award further underscores the connection between these artists.

Kurt Weill/Lotte Lenya Glimmerglass Artists

This year, the Kurt Weill Foundation has expanded its partnership with the Glimmerglass Festival to include the sponsorship of Kurt Weill/Lotte Lenya Artist, a designation reserved for principal guest artists at the Glimmerglass Festival who were distinguished in Lotte Lenya Competitions. Brian Mulligan, winner of the top prize at the first Lenya Competition in 1998, has been named the inaugural Weill/Lenya Artist; he will be seen as John Proctor in *The Crucible*. Other appearances this year include Paolo Albani in *Simon Boccanegra* at the Metropolitan Opera, April 2016, and Jack Torrence in *The Shining* (world premiere) at Minnesota Opera, May 2016.

The Foundation's annual sponsorship at Glimmerglass began in 2014, with support given to a young artist who had previously reached the finals of the Lotte Lenya Competition. 2014 1st Prize Winner Ben Edquist and 2013 2nd Prize Winner Maren Weinberger were named the Weill/Lenya Young Artists at Glimmerglass in 2014 and 2015, respectively.

Competition Administration for the Kurt Weill Foundation

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Acknowledgements

The Kurt Weill Foundation is grateful to the University of Rochester's Eastman School of Music for hosting today's competition in Kilbourn Hall. In particular, thanks to Jamal Rossi, Dean of the Eastman School of Music; Keith C. Elder, Director of Concert Activities; Julia Ng, Rental Sales Manager; the Concert Office staff; Helene Snihur, Assistant Director of Public Relations; Nana Stotz, Operations Coordinator, Technology and Media Production; and Valerie Alhart, University of Rochester Press Officer for Humanities and Broadcast Media.

Kurt Weill

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