

20TH ANNIVERSARY

Lotte Lenya

LOTTE LENYA COMPETITION

A Program of The Kurt Weill Foundation for Music



Finalists from the 2017 Competition

2018 LOTTE LENYA COMPETITION FINALS

Daytime Round

Kilbourn Hall, Eastman School of Music

Saturday, 14 April 2018, 11:00 am

Each finalist will have fifteen minutes to present a program of four contrasting selections. 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.** For the daytime round, accompanists Lyndon Meyer and Shane Schag will alternate.

11:00	John Tibbetts, 27 "This is New" from <i>Lady in the Dark</i> "In Praise of Women" from <i>A Little Night Music</i> "Lieben, Hassen, Hoffen, Zagen" from <i>Ariadne auf Naxos</i> "This is the Life" from <i>Love Life</i>	Weill/Gershwin Sondheim Strauss/von Hofmannsthal Weill/Lerner
11:15	Andrea Lett, 27 "Youkali" "Vanilla Ice Cream" from <i>She Loves Me</i> "Perfect" from <i>Edges</i> "Chacun le sait" from <i>La fille du régiment</i>	Weill/Fernay Bock/Harnick Pasek, Paul Donizetti/Saint-Georges, Bayard
11:30	Nkrumah Gatling, 32 "The Hills of Ixopo" from <i>Lost in the Stars</i> "Not My Father's Son" from <i>Kinky Boots</i> "Feeling Good" from <i>Roar of the Greasepaint – Smell of the Crowd</i> "There's a Boat Dat's Leavin' Soon For New York" from <i>Porgy and Bess</i>	Weill/Anderson Lauper Bricusse/Newley G. Gershwin/DuBose, I. Gershwin
11:45	Christian Hoff, 25 "Maria" from <i>West Side Story</i> "The Streets of Dublin" from <i>A Man of No Importance</i> "Quanto è bella" from <i>Lelisir d'amore</i> "Lonely House" from <i>Street Scene</i>	Bernstein/Sondheim Flaherty/Ahrens Donizetti/Romani Weill/Hughes
12:00	Reilly Nelson, 28 "Que fais-tu, blanche tourterelle" from <i>Roméo et Juliette</i> "Foolish Heart" from <i>One Touch of Venus</i> "Neid" from <i>Die sieben Todsünden</i> "So Anyway" from <i>Next to Normal</i>	Gounod/Barbier, Carré Weill/Nash Weill/Brecht Kitt/Yorkey
12:15	Christof Messner, 31 "Freunde, das Leben ist lebenswert" from <i>Giuditta</i> "When I'm Not Near the Girl I Love" from <i>Finian's Rainbow</i> "Lotterieagents Tango" from <i>Der Silbersee</i> "At the Fountain" from <i>Sweet Smell of Success</i>	Lehár/Knepler, Löhner-Beda Lane/Harburg Weill/Kaiser Hamlisch/Carnelia
12:30	Gan-ya Ben-gur Akselrod, 30 "Je ne t'aime pas" "Almost Real" from <i>The Bridges of Madison County</i> "So In Love" from <i>Kiss Me, Kate</i> "Lied der Lulu" from <i>Lulu</i>	Weill/Magre Brown Porter Berg
12:45	Benjamin Pattison, 27 "The Rain Song" from <i>110 in the Shade</i> "And where is the one who will mourn me when I'm gone?" from <i>Down in the Valley</i> "Una furtiva lagrima" from <i>L'elisir d'amore</i> "If I Sing" from <i>Closer Than Ever</i>	Schmidt/Jones Weill/Sundgaard Donizetti/Romani Shire/Maltby
-INTERMISSION-		
2:00	Philip Stoddard, 26 "Or vi dirò..." from <i>La bohème</i> "Daybreak" from <i>Floyd Collins</i> "Ballade vom angenehmen Leben" from <i>Die Dreigroschenoper</i> "Joey, Joey, Joey" from <i>The Most Happy Fella</i>	Puccini/Illica, Giacosa Guettel Weill/Brecht Loesser
2:15	Christine Amon, 31 "Mister Snow" from <i>Carousel</i> "Is It Him or Is It Me?" from <i>Love Life</i> "I Won't Mind" "Chacun à son goût" from <i>Die Fledermaus</i>	Rodgers/Hammerstein Weill/Lerner Blumenkrantz/Kessler, Saines Strauss/Haffner, Genée
2:30	Richard Glöckner, 23 "Ma-ma-ma matička povídala" from <i>Prodaná nevěsta</i> "Johanna" from <i>Sweeney Todd</i> "Try Me" from <i>She Loves Me</i> "Bilbao Song" from <i>Happy End</i>	Smetana/Sabina Sondheim Bock/Harnick Weill/Brecht
2:45	Daniel Berryman, 27 "She Loves Me" from <i>She Loves Me</i> "Martin's Song" from <i>The Tender Land</i> "Wooden Wedding" from <i>One Touch of Venus</i> "At the Fountain" from <i>Sweet Smell of Success</i>	Bock/Harnick Copland/Everett Weill/Nash Hamlisch/Carnelia
3:00	Caroline Hewitt, 26 "Simple Little Things" from <i>110 in the Shade</i> "Faites-lui mes aveux" from <i>Faust</i> "Je ne t'aime pas" "How Did We Come to This?" from <i>The Wild Party</i>	Schmidt/Jones Gounod/Barbier, Carré Weill/Magre Lippa
3:15	John Brancy, 29 "Uzhel ta samaja Tatiana" from <i>Eugene Onegin</i> "This is New" from <i>Lady in the Dark</i> "Awaiting You" from <i>Myths and Hymns</i> "Soliloquy" from <i>Carousel</i>	Tchaikovsky Weill/Gershwin Guettel Rodgers/Hammerstein
3:30	Laura Corina Sanders, 23 "Chacun le sait" from <i>La fille du régiment</i> "Ich bin eine Verwandte" from <i>Der Silbersee</i> "Just Not Now" from <i>I Love You Because</i> "Will He Like Me?" from <i>She Loves Me</i>	Donizetti/Saint-Georges, Bayard Weill/Kaiser Salzman/Cunningham Bock/Harnick

Looking Back: 20 – and 120 – Years

The twentieth anniversary of the Lotte Lenya Competition coincides with the 120th birthday of its namesake. That isn't coincidental, as I conceived the competition as an Eastman event in 1998 to celebrate her 100th birthday. I thought that it might be a fitting one-off tribute, in that Lenya's career encompassed, in addition to her landmark performances and recordings of Weill's music, opera/operetta in Europe and musical theater on both sides of the Atlantic. The inaugural event also celebrated the arrival at Sibley Music Library of Weill's manuscripts of the scores published in Vienna by Universal Edition prior to his flight from the Nazis in 1933. And now, twenty years later, those documents remain on loan in the vault across the street, while the Competition has grown gradually but exponentially into one of the most prestigious and high-stakes international contests for singing actors. In retrospect, not in my most fanciful dreams could I have imagined such a trajectory.

That success required paradigm shifts and aesthetic reassessments that were but glimmers on the horizon twenty years ago. At the time, opera singers were routinely "elevating" Broadway musicals with their pearly tones and incomprehensible "singer-ese" (think of the recording of *West Side Story* with Kiri Te Kanawa as Maria and Jose Carreras as Tony), and television and movie stars were routinely faking their way vocally on Broadway. Not everything has changed, but now major orchestras routinely present concert versions of musicals and opera companies include the classics of the American musical theater in their seasons. And the "cross-over" phenomenon has morphed into what was almost unimaginable in 1998, with Broadway baby Kelli O'Hara appearing this spring as Despinna in *Così fan tutte* uptown at the Met while Renee Fleming takes on Nettie in *Carousel* at the Imperial on 45th Street. Even the training offered the next generation of singers is starting to catch up. From the perspective that informed my motivations in founding the Lenya Competition, that's all for the better.

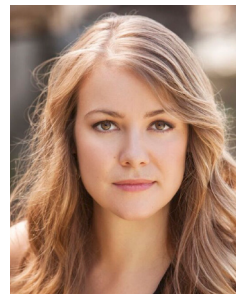
From the outset, the Competition has tried to nurture precisely the sort of performer who could "do it all" by performing idiomatically the full range of music theater. That goal has determined both the range of required repertoire and the composition of the jury for the finals – in an attempt to balance acting and singing, Broadway and opera. Sometimes Lenya-winners have gone on to exclusively operatic careers, sometimes to careers grounded in musical theater. But that has usually been by choice, not because of limitation in ability or experience. And more and more the boundaries between categories of both repertoire and performer have been blurred, if not erased in new works for the music theater. As the survey of the achievements of some previous winners elsewhere in this program amply demonstrates ("Where Are They Now?"), the alumni of the Competition collectively offer ongoing homage to both Lenya and Weill, as well as their shared values.

Kim H. Kowalke
President & CEO, Kurt Weill Foundation for Music

Judges may choose to award, at their sole discretion, any combination of the following prizes: 1st (\$20,000); 2nd (\$15,000); 3rd (\$10,000); Lys Symonette Awards (\$3,500) for outstanding performance of a number or excellence in one area; Marc Blitzstein Award (\$3,500) for outstanding performance of a Golden Age selection; Carolyn Weber Award (\$3,500) for outstanding creativity in the design of a diverse program and exceptional sensitivity to text/music relationships; the Kurt Weill Award (\$5,000) for outstanding performances of two contrasting selections by Weill.

All finalists receive travel stipends and an award of at least \$1,000.

Lotte Lenya Competition Finalists



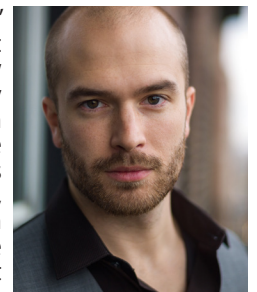
Hailed for her "sweet, powerful voice," American mezzo-soprano **CHRISTINE AMON** recently made company and role debuts as Erika in *Vanessa* with Toledo Opera, and as Carrie in *Carousel* with Union Avenue Opera of St. Louis. Other recent engagements include Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel* with Opera Louisiane and Opera Memphis, Gretchen in *The Student Prince* with Opera Grand Rapids, and Edith in *The Pirates of Penzance* with Nashville Opera. In 2014, Christine created the role of Mich in *Mich and the Moon* in the premiere of *The Ghosts of Crosstown* with Opera Memphis. She was a finalist in the 2012 Lotte Lenya Competition and has been awarded 1st place in The Beethoven Club of Memphis Young Artist Competition, Opera Grand Rapids Collegiate Vocal Competition, and the Dr. Marjorie Conrad Art Song Competition.

Born in Tel-Aviv, **GAN-YA BEN-GUR AKSELROD** completed her Bachelor's degree *cum laude* at the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music and a Master's in opera from Brooklyn College. After winning 1st prize at the Hilde Zadek Competition in Vienna, she was invited to join the Young Ensemble of Theater an der Wien where she performed numerous roles. Gan-ya also performed with Glyndebourne Opera on tour, Théâtre du Capitole, the Israeli Opera, the Neue Oper Wien, Aix-en-Provence Festival, Berlin Deutsche Oper, The Ravinia Music Festival, and at Carnegie Hall. Future engagements include a debut with Opera Stuttgart as Chiang Ch'ing in a new production of *Nixon in China* and a European concert tour with Hans Zimmer. Other honors include 2nd prize, the Güzin Gürel Competition; a Special Award, 2017 Lotte Lenya Competition; and awards from Brooklyn Conservatory of Music, the Paul Ben-Haim Competition, the AICF Foundation, the Ronen Foundation, and the IVAI Institute.



DANIEL BERRYMAN New York: *The Golden Apple* (Encores!), *The Fantasticks* (Theatre Center). National Tours: *Les Misérables*, *The Sound of Music*. Regional: *Sweeney Todd*, *A Christmas Carol* (Denver Center); *West Side Story* (Finger Lakes MT Festival); *Hello, Dolly!* (MUNY); *The Most Happy Fella* (Goodspeed); *Les Misérables*, *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown* (Theatre Aspen); *A Little Night Music* (Indiana Repertory Theatre); and *Rent* (The 5th Ave Theatre). Daniel received his BFA from the University of Michigan. Berryman was a finalist in the 2013 Lotte Lenya Competition. Jesus is Lord.

Hailed by *The New York Times* as "a vibrant, resonant presence," **JOHN BRANCY** is equally deft in opera productions, symphonic concerts, and intimate recitals. He is a fervent champion of new music as well as an actor for the stage and screen. In 2017, Brancy won 2nd Prize at the Wigmore Hall International Song Competition in London and the Media Prize in the Hans Gabor Belvedere Singing Competition in Moscow. This season he appeared as Albert in Stadttheater Klagenfurt's new production of *Werther*, made his Alice Tully Hall debut with pianist Peter Dugan with the premiere of "Armistice: The Journey Home," and will tour the program throughout 2018. This fall, he returns to Oper Frankfurt for a new production of *Lost Highway* directed by Yuval Sharon. This is Brancy's second time in the Lenya Competition finals, having previously won a Lys Symonette Award in 2008.



NKRUMAH GATLING originally hails from Houston, TX, where he earned his BFA in Musical Theater at Sam Houston State University. Upon finishing his education, he was awarded an internship at Theater Under the Stars, where he participated in productions of *Dreamgirls* and *It's a Wonderful Life*. Gatling earned his Equity card at the Goodspeed Opera House in a production of *Band Geeks*. He recently appeared in the Broadway revival of *Miss Saigon* in the Ensemble/John (cover). Regional: *Hair* (Hollywood Bowl); *Little Mermaid* (Theater by the Sea); *Once on This Island* (Meadowbrook Theater). National Tour: *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess*, *Hair*, *Miss Saigon*. Broadway/Off: *Hair*, *Cabin in the Sky (Encores!)*, *Invisible Thread* (2nd Stage). @nkrumah_g



Praised for her "clear voice soaring to stratospheric heights" (*Opera Canada*), soprano **ANDREA LETT** makes debuts in the 2018/19 season with the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra (Mozart *Requiem*), and Manitoba Opera (Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*), and returns to Saskatoon Opera for the role of Musetta in *La bohème*. Lett was recently engaged at San Francisco Opera as a principal cover (Ah Sing) for the world premiere of John Adams and Peter Sellars' *Girls of the Golden West*. Other roles include Adele cover (Santa Fe Opera), Queen of the Night (Manitoba Underground Opera), Gretel (Saskatoon Opera School Tour), and Rose Maybud in *Ruddigore* (Winnipeg G&S Society). Lett is a graduate of the Opera School at University of Toronto (M.Mus Opera) where she studied with soprano Mary Morrison and holds a B.Mus Perf from University of Manitoba.



Born and raised in Dresden, Germany, tenor **RICHARD GLÖCKNER** started his musical education at the age of 5, gaining stage experience during his youth. He graduated from a specialized Art & Music high school and studied at the Hochschule für Musik Dresden with Prof. Claudia Schmidt-Krahmer. In 2014, he won 1st prize of the *Jugend musiziert*, a German youth competition. Richard currently studies opera at the Universität Mozarteum Salzburg with Prof. Elisabeth Wilke, and has participated in Masterclasses with Prof. Noelle Turner and Prof. Olaf Bär to expand his musical styles and techniques. Apart from his passion for singing and performing, he's also very interested in organizing events and directing, and recently served as resident director of a production

of *Titanic*, directed by Stefan Huber, at the prestigious Bad Hersfelder Festspiele, in the Summer of 2017.

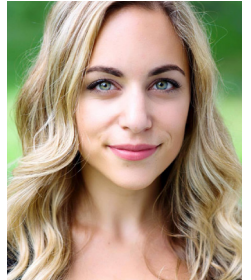


CHRISTOF MESSNER was born in Southtyrol, Italy, and studied Musical Theater at the Music and Art University MUK in Vienna where he graduated with distinction. While a student, he appeared in *Die Dreigroschenoper*, *Fame*, and *The Wild Party* (Burrs). Following his studies, he was engaged at the Stadttheater Klagenfurt as Freddy in *My Fair Lady*, Hans in *Puss in Boots*, and Carl Denham in *King Kong*. In 2009 he won the first competition for Musical Theater "MUT" in Austria, and in 2015, he received the German Musical Theater Award for "Best Actor in a Musical" for his role in *Grimm* at the Opera Graz. Recent credits: Tony, *West Side Story* (Stadttheater Bozen); Zinnowitz, *Grand Hotel* (Stadttheater Baden); Schlomo, *Fame* (Opera Kiel); Henry, *Puss in Boots* (Opera Graz). This summer he will play Claude in *Hair* at the Bad Hersfelder Festspiele in Germany.

A California native, **CAROLINE HEWITT** trained at the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco. She graduated from Vanderbilt University where she studied Voice and English Literature. She is a recipient of the Hirsch Endowment Scholarship at University of Houston's Moores Opera Center, and the Tony Cuevas Award at West Bay Opera's 2018 Holt Competition. Recent roles include Beatrice in John Musto's *The Inspector*, Mary Warren in Robert Ward's *The Crucible*, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Luisa Fernanda, Meg Page in *Die Lustigen Weiber von Windsor*, and Thelma in Musto's *Later the Same Evening*. Upcoming performances include the title role in *Cenerentola* and soloist in *Sondheim on Sondheim*. Caroline is a passionate personal trainer and the co-founder of Bespoke Fitness Ltd., serving opera singers and classical musicians across America.



Canadian mezzo-soprano **REILLY NELSON** has been praised by the *Boston Music Intelligencer* for her "bright and glowing [voice], with a bit of edge when needed." Reilly recently completed her graduate studies at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. In August 2018 Reilly will join The Barbara Halsey Sanford Studio Artist Program with Kentucky Opera. The 2017-2018 season includes two role debuts for Ms. Nelson: Flora Bervoix in *La traviata* and Vera Lynn in the United States premiere of *Another Brick in the Wall* with Cincinnati Opera. At home in both operatic and concert repertoire, 2017 saw Nelson's debuts with both the Cincinnati Symphony and the Cincinnati Pops. She was the winner of the 2017 Middle/East Tennessee District MONC auditions and winner of the Carolyn Weber Award in the 2016 Lotte Lenya Competition.



CHRISTIAN HOFF is a graduate of the University of Maryland, where he earned Bachelor's degree in vocal performance under Professor Gran Wilson. During his time at UMD, Hoff performed regularly at the Kennedy Center as a member of the UMD Chamber Singers. He performed works such as Handel's *Messiah*, Britten's *War Requiem*, and Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem* in collaboration with the National Symphony Orchestra and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. Recent credits include the lead role of Eddie Birdlace in Pasek and Paul's *Dogfight* with the Red Branch Theatre Company; and Tobias in *Sweeney Todd* with Janiec Opera Company, at the Brevard Music Center. Since 2016, Christian has been a member of the U.S. Army Chorus, and has had the honor of performing solos at The White House, The U.S. Capitol, and the Pentagon.



Since 2012, **BENJAMIN PATTISON** has been a tenor with the U.S. Army Chorus, performing for all six living presidents and numerous heads of state. Prior to joining the Army Chorus, Pattison studied trumpet and voice at DePaul University and further vocal studies at the University of Maryland. He has appeared as the title role in *Albert Herring* with DePaul Opera Theatre, Bill Starbuck in *110 in the Shade*, and Ralph Rackstraw in *H.M.S. Pinafore* with the Janiec Opera Company at the Brevard Music Center. Concert engagements: National Symphony Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and at the 10th World Symposium on Choral Music in Seoul, South Korea. Print and commercial work across Washington D.C. including shoots for the Washington Nationals.

Outside of performing, Mr. Pattison is a music program director at two elementary schools with the organization noteBUSTERS.



LAURA CORINA SANDERS is from San Francisco, California. She received both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the Eastman School of Music, studying with Katherine Ciesinski. She won 1st prize in the 2017 Friends of Eastman Opera Competition, and the 2017 Voice Concerto Competition. Laura has been featured in major roles in several Eastman Opera Theatre productions, including Lucette in *Cendrillon*, Mabel in *The Pirates of Penzance*, Barbarina in *Le nozze di Figaro*, and most recently the title role of Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea*. Other roles include Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro* with Oswego Opera and First Lady in *Die Zauberflöte* with Berlin Opera Academy. This spring she will appear in Eastman's production of *The Light in the Piazza* as Signora Naccarelli, and this

summer she will be working as a Studio Artist with Wolf Trap Opera.

PHILIP STODDARD is an actor, singer, and director based in New York City. He earned a Bachelor of Music from Juilliard's Marcus Institute for Vocal Arts and will earn his MFA in Acting from Juilliard's Drama Division this May. Favorite credits include the title role in *Don Giovanni* and Tommy Albright in *Brigadoon* at the Chautauqua Institution, the title role in *Woyzeck*, Colonel in *Father Comes Home from the Wars*, Dorian Belle in the world premiere of *P.Y.G.*, Agis in *The Triumph of Love*, Cloten in *Cymbeline*, Ferryman in *Curlew River*, and Arlecchino in *Le donne curiose*. Stoddard is co-founder of OperaComp, the first interdivisional opera development laboratory at Juilliard, which culminates in the world premiere of six new operas at National Sawdust on April 22nd. This September, he directs the world premiere of *Echo & Narcissus* with Satellite Collective at BAM.



Georgia native **JOHN TIBBETTS**, baritone, has been praised for his "mature voice and sensitivity" in the arena of concert and opera. In February he made his Kentucky Opera debut as Fiorello in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. This summer he will return to Opera Saratoga to sing Cascada in *The Merry Widow* and Prince Gabriel III of Belgium's Trainer's Son in David T. Little's *Vinkensport*. Last summer he sang the role of Yasha in Blitzstein's *The Cradle Will Rock* conducted by John Mauceri. Solo engagements: Haydn's *The Creation*, The Burnt Hills Oratorio Society; *Carmina Burana*, The NY Choral Society; and Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, Atlanta Master Chorale. Young artist credits include Opera Saratoga, Opera Theater of St. Louis, Central City Opera, and Kentucky Opera. He received his MM in Voice from Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and his BM from Georgia State University.

Today's Staff Accompanists

LYNDON MEYER is a Tulsa-based conductor, vocal coach, pianist, and organist. Since 2014 he has served as chorusmaster, assistant conductor, principal pianist, and vocal coach for Tulsa Opera. Previous positions include pianist and harpsichordist for the OK Mozart International Festival; faculty voice coach for *Si Parla, Si Canta* in Urbania, Italy; assistant conductor and young artist coach for the Florida Grand Opera; and staff accompanist and vocal coach at the Eastman School of Music. He is a recipient of 1st prize in the Jesse Kneisel Lieder Competition and has performed twice at the Kennedy Center in Washington D. C.

SHANE SCHAG has performed in recital both as soloist and ensemble performer throughout the United States and Europe. He is a recipient of the Gwendolyn Koldofsky Memorial Award, given to "a musician who demonstrated outstanding professionalism in collaborative piano." Currently, Schag is a faculty member of the Opera and Musical Theater Departments at the Manhattan School of Music. In 2017, he collaborated with Lisa Vroman and William Sharp in an original cabaret as part of *Kurt Weill's America*, presented at the Brevard Music Festival and DePauw University.

Today's Judges

VICTORIA CLARK maintains a remarkable career as actor, director, and educator. Ms. Clark's twelve Broadway credits include the original production of *Sunday in the Park with George*, *How To Succeed...*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Urinetown*, *Cabaret*, and the original casts of *A Grand Night for Singing*, *Titanic*; Tony nominations for *Rodgers & Hammerstein's Cinderella*, *Gigi*, and *Sister Act*; and *The Light in the Piazza*, for which she won the Tony, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle Awards. Plays: *When the Rain Stops Falling* (Drama Desk nom), *The Marriage of Bette and Boo*, *A Prayer for My Enemy*, and *The Snow Geese* on Broadway. Film: *Wanderland*, *The Happening*, *Cradle Will Rock*, *Tickling Leo*, *Harvest*, *Main Street*, and *Archaeology of a Woman*. Television: *Homeland*, *Mercy*, *Law and Order* (and *SVU*), *The Good Wife*, and *The Truth About the Harry Quebert Affair* mini-series for *EPIX* (forthcoming). Clark has directed for the New York Musical Theater Festival (*Newton's Cradle*, 2016 Best Musical, Best Director), Fredericia Theater in Denmark (2017, *The Trouble with Doug*), Philadelphia Opera Theater, Texas Opera Theater, Chautauqua Opera, and the 92nd Street Y, and has taught in numerous universities and conservatories world-wide including Yale University and Juilliard. Her solo debut CD *Fifteen Seconds of Grace* is available through PS Classics. Ms. Clark serves on the Board of Trustees for the Kurt Weill Foundation and New York City Center. This is Ms. Clark's fourth appearance as a judge of the Lenya Competition.

A former staff conductor for English National Opera and Head of Music for Opera North, **JAMES HOLMES** is now a freelance conductor, accompanist, and arranger. Alongside an operatic repertoire ranging from Mozart to contemporary world premières, he has maintained a lifelong interest in musical theatre, playing a significant part in its adoption by opera houses in the UK. Notable successes include *Street Scene*, *Pacific Overtures* (Grammy-nominated recording) for ENO; *Into The Woods* (Royal Opera House); *Seven Deadly Sins*, *Carousel*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Into The Woods* (Opera North); *Sweeney Todd*, *Kiss Me, Kate* (Welsh National Opera); *The King and I* (Châtelet). In 2018 he also revives *Kiss Me, Kate* for Opera North and makes his debut in Vienna with *Wonderful Town*. In pursuing a passion that dates back decades, he has conducted a wide range of Weill's music, including the major British stage premieres of *Zaubernacht* (ROH), *One Touch of Venus*, and *Der Kuhhandel* (Opera North), as well as *Street Scene* for its first-ever staging in Berlin and an acclaimed DVD. He also recorded *Street Scene* for BBC TV, along with a documentary on Weill's American years, *I'm A Stranger Here Myself*. His regular contributions to the Kurt Weill Festival in Dessau include *One Touch of Venus* and song suites he arranged from *Der Kuhhandel* and *Huckleberry Finn*. He serves as a Trustee of the Kurt Weill Foundation, and is both volume editor and Advisory Board member for the Kurt Weill Edition. This marks his sixth appearance as a Lenya Competition judge.

JACK VIERTEL is the Senior Vice President of Jujamcyn Theaters, which owns and operates five Broadway Theaters, currently presenting *The Book of Mormon*, *Springsteen on Broadway*, *Kinky Boots*, *Mean Girls*, and *Frozen*. He is also the Artistic Director of New York City Center's *Encores!* series, which celebrates its 25th Anniversary this year with *Hey, Look Me Over!*, *Grand Hotel*, and *Me and My Girl*. He spent two years as Dramaturg of the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles, and from 1980 to 1985 was the drama critic and arts editor of the Los Angeles Herald Examiner. He was the original conceiver and co-producer of *Smokey Joe's Cafe*, and the conceiver of *After Midnight*. Producer credits include six of August Wilson's plays on Broadway; Tony Kushner's *Angles in America*; *Into the Woods*; *City of Angels*; *Jelly's Last Jam*; and *Hairspray*, among many others. His first book *The Secret Life of the American Musical: How Broadway Shows are Built* was published in 2016. He spent ten years as an adjunct professor at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, teaching musical theater structure, and began his career playing National Steel-body guitar behind Bonnie Raitt, Son House, and the Pointer Sisters.

20 Years of Lenya Winners: Where Are They Now?

1998: Brian Mulligan (Top Prize) – Nelusko, *L'Africaine*, Oper Frankfurt, March—April 2018; Donner, *Das Rheingold* at San Francisco Opera, June 2018.

1999: Dirk Weiler (1st Prize) – Frank Sr., *Catch Me If You Can* at Staatstheater Nürnberg, October 2018.

2000: Kaja Plessing (2nd Prize) – Gertrud, *Hänsel und Gretel*, Theater Lübek, Winter 2017.

2001: Noah Stewart (Lys Symonette Award) – Cavaradossi, *Tosca*, Michigan Opera Theatre, April 2018; Tamino, *Die Zauberflöte*, Florentine Opera, May 2018.

2002: Lucas Meachem (Lys Symonette Award) – Marcello, *La bohème*, Metropolitan Opera, February—March 2018;

2003: Elaine Alvarez (3rd Prize) – Florencia, *Florencia en el Amazonas*, San Diego Opera, March 2018.

2004: Amy Justman (Top Prize) – Ensemble, Julie (cover), Nettie (cover), *Carousel* on Broadway, Spring 2018.

2005: Jonathan Michie (1st Prize) – Donald, *Billy Budd*, Opera di Roma, May 2018; Ping, *Turandot*, Oper Leipzig, June 2018; Ottokar, *Der Freischütz*, Oper Leipzig, June 2018.

2006: Rodell Rosel (2nd Prize) – Loge, *Das Rheingold*, Arizona Opera, April 2018.

2007: Analisa Leaming (2nd Prize) – Principal Rosalie Mullins, *School of Rock*, Broadway; *Hello, Dolly!* Broadway revival, original cast album (Grammy nomination).

2008: Rebecca Jo Loeb (1st Prize) – Susan, *Love Life*, Theater Freiburg, Spring 2018; Gymnast, *Lulu*, Municipal de Santiago, Fall 2018.

2009: Zachary James (3rd Prize) – Fafner, *Das Rheingold*, Arizona Opera, April 2018; Ghost, *Avow*, Fort Worth Opera, May 2018; Frank Maurant, *Street Scene*, Virginia Opera, October 2018.

2010: David Arnsperger (2nd Prize) – Sam, *Love Life*, Theater Freiburg, Spring 2018, Konzert Theater Bern, September 2018.

2011: Jorell Williams (Lys Symonette Award) – Bobby, *Mahagonny Songspiel*, Downtown Music Productions, March 2018; Soloist, Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, Geneseo Symphony Orchestra, April 2018;

2012: Jacob Keith Watson (2nd Prize) – Ensemble, Captain, Enoch Snow (cover), *Carousel*, Broadway, Spring 2018.

2013: Ginger Costa-Jackson (Lys Symonette Award) – Maddalena, *Rigoletto*, Los Angeles Opera, May—June 2018; Moll, *The Cradle Will Rock*, Opera Saratoga, original cast album, release June 2018.

2014: Ben Edquist (1st Prize) – Manfred, *Out of Darkness: Two Remain*, Atlanta Opera, April 2018; William Dale, *Silent Night*, Austin Opera, Winter 2019.

2015: Lauren Michelle (1st Prize) – Anna I, Bessie, *Die Sieben Todsünden/Pierrot Lunaire/Mahagonny Songspiel* (triple bill) Opéra national du Rhin, April—May 2018.

2016: Brian Vu (1st Prize) – Riff, *West Side Story*, Houston Grand Opera, Spring 2018, Glimmerglass Festival, Summer 2018; featured in April issue of *Opera News*.

2017: Paulina Villarreal (3rd Prize) – Grisette, *The Merry Widow*; Vera Boronel, *The Consul*, Opera Saratoga, Summer 2018.

Lenya at Large

- Lenya has new life in Germany as a brand of wine! Stuttgart's Collegium Wirtemberg has produced a "Lotte Lenya" vintage, available exclusively from the Württemberg Weinhaus in Berlin. She comes in red, white, and sparkling varieties.
- Last year, actress and singer Sona MacDonald wowed audiences with her portrayal of Lotte Lenya in *Lenya Story: Ein Liebeslied*, a new play featuring songs by Weill. The show ran for 30 performances at the Theater in der Josefstadt in Vienna. This October, MacDonald reprises her role when the show comes to the Renaissance-Theater in Berlin.
- "Lotte Lenya in Her Own Words", a two-part radio documentary inspired by Lenya's life and career, will premiere on 18 October 2018, Lenya's 120th birthday. Produced for ConcertZender Radio Netherlands and hosted by Guy Livingston of the *American Highways* radio series, the program will feature commentary from Kim H. Kowalke, 2012 LLC Prizewinner Justin Hopkins, and Sona MacDonald; segment on the Lenya Competition; as well as archival recordings of Lenya telling her own story.

Kurt Weill/Lotte Lenya Artist Sponsorships

The Kurt Weill Foundation continues its support of Lenya Competition alumni through its Kurt Weill/Lotte Lenya Artist Sponsorships. Two-time finalist Heather Phillips (2013 and 2014) has been named the Kurt Weill/Lotte Lenya Artist at the 2018 Glimmerglass Festival. Phillips performs the title role in Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen*, opposite Eric Owens. Two 2018 semifinalists, Abigail Benke and Mark Hosseini (current ESM student), have been named Kurt Weill/Lotte Lenya Artists at the College Light Opera Company in Cape Cod, MA.

Awards Presented Before the Finals

Non-Advancing Semifinalists (\$500)

Carly Augenstein (28, Ohio)
*Curtis Bannister (32, Wisconsin)
Abigail Benke (24, Missouri)
Jason Berger (26, Delaware)
Maire Carmack (24, Colorado)
Caitlin Finnie (23, Texas)
*Anthony Heinemann (30, Missouri)
Gabrielle Hondorp (20, New York)
Mark Hosseini (23, Illinois)
Barrie Kreinik (32, New York)
Luke Sikora (29, California)
Rachel Zatzoff (30, New York)
Andreja Zidaric (29, Slovenia)

*Denotes a contestant who has previously reached the finals of the Lenya Competition.

Emerging Talents (\$500)

Keenan Buckley (21, New York)
Emily Harkins (21, New York)
Marlene Jubelius (22, Germany)
Sarah Jane Juliano (19, New York)
Claire Leyden (23, New York)
Grace Roberts (22, United Kingdom)
Trevor Todd (21, Minnesota)

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

Shannon Jennings (29, Pennsylvania)

2018 Semifinals Coach/Adjudicators were singing actor Lisa Vroman and Tony Award-winning composer Jeanine Tesori

Tonight's concert and awards presentation will be live-streamed beginning at 8pm at <https://www.esm.rochester.edu/live/kilbourn/>.

“No vocal contest better targets today’s total package talents.” -OPERA NEWS 2014

About the Competition

In 1998, to honor the centenary of the birth of Lotte Lenya (1898-1981), an extraordinary singer/actress and one of the foremost interpreters of the music of her husband, Kurt Weill (1900-1950), the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music established the annual Lotte Lenya Competition. The competition recognizes talented young singer/actors who are dramatically and musically convincing in repertoire ranging from opera/opera to contemporary Broadway scores, with a focus on the works of Kurt Weill. More than a vocal competition, the Lotte Lenya Competition emphasizes idiomatic performances of diverse repertoire and the acting of songs and arias within a dramatic context.

Competition Administration for the Kurt Weill Foundation

Kim H. Kowalke, President & CEO, Founder of the Competition
Brady Sansone, Director of Programs and Business Affairs
Elizabeth Blaufox, Associate Director of Programs and Promotion
Veronica Chaffin, Office Manager and Administrative Assistant
Natasha Nelson, Administrative Assistant

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. To subscribe to the Kurt Weill Newsletter and our E-News, please visit our website, kwf.org.

Acknowledgements

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Kurt Weill

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