

1/3/2008

**PITTSBURGH OPERA NEWS RELEASE**

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**PITTSBURGH OPERA TAKES *FLIGHT*  
WITH A NEW OPERA BY JONATHAN DOVE**

**WHAT**

Jonathan Dove's *Flight*

**WHERE**

CAPA Theater

**WHEN**

Saturday, January 26, **8:00 p.m.**

Friday, February 1, **8:00 p.m.**

Tuesday, January 29, **7:00 p.m.**

Sunday, February 3, **2:00 p.m.**

**Note: Saturday, January 26 performance SOLD OUT.**

**RUN TIME**

2 hours and 45 minutes including two fifteen-minute intermissions

**LANGUAGE**

Sung in English with texts projected above the stage

**TICKETS**

General Admission at \$40. Call (412) 456-6666, visit [www.pittsburghopera.org](http://www.pittsburghopera.org), or purchase in person at the Theater Square box office at 665 Penn Avenue.

**Pittsburgh, PA . . .** Artistic Director Christopher Hahn announces this season's Pittsburgh Opera Center production, Jonathan Dove's *Flight*. An accessible new opera that's all about the human condition, *Flight* mixes farce and drama when a storm strands airline passengers and crew, forcing them to take stock of their tempestuous lives.

For the first time, seasoned guest artists join the rising stars of the Pittsburgh Opera Center. Internationally-known countertenor sensation **David Walker** headlines as the Refugee, along with Pittsburgh favorite **Myrna Paris** as the Older Woman looking for love in all the wrong places. Both Walker and Paris have sung these roles before to great critical acclaim in previous American productions. Conductor **James Lowe** leads a 45-piece orchestra in this major operatic work.

**Links**

[The Story](#)

[Cast](#)

[Production Credits](#)

[Related Events](#)

[Jonathan Dove and \*Flight\*](#)

[Genesis of the Opera](#)

[The Production](#)

[Cast and Production Bios](#)

1/3/2008

## The Story

Set in the departure lounge of an airport, *Flight* tells the story of passengers and crew members whose planes have been delayed by an electric storm. In this high-tech environment, Nature herself forces them to pause, reflect on their lives, and reconsider their relationships. Despite their apparent isolation, they are bound together by the universal concerns of love and sexuality, birth and death.

Like every good ensemble comedy, *Flight* involves several pairs of characters. The two earthbound characters are the Controller, who announces flights and the weather, and the Refugee, a mysterious stranger who lives at the airport, stranded for lack of immigration papers. They are fascinated with the planes and passengers—and with each other. Bill and Tina are off on a second honeymoon to Portugal, hoping to rekindle their lifeless marriage with the aid of book on relationships. The Minskman and his pregnant wife should be departing for a diplomatic post, but she suddenly refuses to depart, fearful of the future, and he leaves without her. The two randy Flight Attendants seek every opportunity for a quick fling, while the Older Woman waits for a rendezvous with her fiancé who is thirty years younger. At first, the self-absorbed passengers refuse to help the Refugee when the Immigration Officer comes looking for him. But when a fierce electrical storm forces everyone to bed down in the terminal for the night, things really begin to happen—most hilariously for Bill, who expects to awaken the Stewardess for a little fun and ends up getting the Steward instead. When morning breaks, tempers flare as the nocturnal affairs are revealed, and the Minskwoman unexpectedly goes into labor. The birth of her child brings a change in everyone as hope is reborn. Most touchingly, the Refugee finally tells his tragic story, and the Immigration Officer agrees to turn a blind eye, allowing the Refugee to live at the airport indefinitely. The skies are clear once again, and life begins again on an optimistic note.

## CAST

|                     |                   |                    |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Refugee             | David Walker+     | countertenor       |
| Controller          | Audrey Luna*      | coloratura soprano |
| Bill                | Dean Kokanos+*    | tenor              |
| Tina                | Deborah Selig*    | soprano            |
| Older Woman         | Myrna Paris       | contralto          |
| Steward             | Jonathan Beyer*   | baritone           |
| Stewardess          | Katherine Drago*  | mezzo-soprano      |
| Minskman            | Craig Verm †      | baritone           |
| Minskwoman          | Karin Mushegain † | mezzo-soprano      |
| Immigration Officer | Liam Moran*       | bass               |

+ Pittsburgh Opera Debut

\* Resident Artist of the Pittsburgh Opera Center

† Pittsburgh Opera Center Alumni

1/3/2008

## PRODUCTION CREDITS

|                   |                                  |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Conductor         | James Lowe + [rhymes with "how"] |
| Stage Director    | Kristine McIntyre                |
| Set Designer      | Carol Bailey                     |
| Costume Designer  | Toni West                        |
| Lighting Designer | Allen Hahn +                     |

## RELATED EVENTS

### **Pittsburgh Opera Preview on WQED-FM (89.3)**

Sunday, January 20 and Thursday, January 31, 7:00 – 7:30pm

An in-depth introduction to the singers, music and production of *Flight*.

### **Free Pre-Opera Talks**

*One hour before every performance, CAPA Theater.*

Join Opera Lady Beth Parker for a lively behind-the-scenes introduction to Dove's *Flight*. Free of charge to all ticket holders. No reservations necessary.

## THE OPERA

### **Jonathan Dove and *Flight***

*Flight* premiered in September 1998 at Glyndebourne, England's prestigious summer opera festival, and toured throughout the UK and Europe. To date it has received 70 performances, Pittsburgh Opera's being the third professional production in the US following the American premiere at Opera Theatre of St. Louis in 2003 and a subsequent performance at Boston Lyric Opera in 2005. The recording is available on Chandos.

**Jonathan Dove** has written more than a dozen operas. Like Benjamin Britten, he has written numerous works for community groups, including four large-scale operas and a church opera, *Tobias and the Angel*. Dove's television opera about the death of Princess Diana *When she died...* was first broadcast in 2002 to an audience of nearly a million viewers in the UK alone, and a staged version was premiered at Kammeroper Vienna in 2007. *Man on the Moon*, a TV opera about the first moon landing starring Patricia Racette and Nathan Gunn (Pittsburgh Opera's Billy Budd) as Joan and Buzz Aldrin, was first broadcast in the UK in 2006. *Kwasi & Kwame*, a chamber opera adapted by Arthur Japin from his bestselling novel *The Two Hearts of Kwasi Boachi*, was commissioned by Opera OT Rotterdam and tours the Netherlands from October 2007 until April 2008. Opera North (UK) and Sadler's Wells have commissioned a touring production of *The Adventures of Pinocchio* which premiered last month and goes to Chemnitz and Minnesota Opera later in 2008. Pittsburgh audiences may be familiar with Dove's

1/3/2008

English language adaptation of Richard Wagner's *Ring Cycle*, seen in Opera Theater's production in 2006.

### **Genesis of the Opera**

Composer Jonathan Dove credits his librettist, playwright April De Angelis, for proposing an opera about life in that strange purgatory known as an airport. Its central figure, the Refugee, is based on the compelling story of Mehran Karimi Nasseri, who lived in the departure lounge of Terminal One in Charles de Gaulle Airport from 1988 until 2006. Nasseri's story has inspired press reports all over the world, several documentaries, and two feature films, including Steven Spielberg's *The Terminal*. But the opera came first. In a program note, Dove writes about Nasseri's story:

...we were struck by its almost mythic quality: a man trapped between two worlds, living in a kind of limbo. It made us think about what an extraordinary place an airport is, how full of stories, hopes and dreams. We wondered what kind of people the refugee might have met, and how he might have tried to enlist their help. We didn't try to tell his full story – it would be better to do that in a documentary – but instead, took his predicament as our starting-point.

The airport itself offered plenty of musical opportunities: obvious ones, like planes taking off and the storm that grounds everyone overnight – but also the operatic opportunity to eavesdrop on the thoughts and feelings of those ordinary people you see in airports, whose inner turmoil is usually invisible. We're very used to the banal interiors of airports, and maybe forget what extraordinary places they are, portals between the everyday world and the magical world of flying; people who seem to be just waiting quietly in an airport may be in the grip of an intense experience.

The characters are a microcosm, ranging through the social strata, and through the vocal spectrum, from the stratospheric soprano of the lofty Controller to the threatening bass of the Immigration Officer. Right in the middle is the Refugee, a counter-tenor whose other-worldly voice sets him apart from everyone else. I was excited by the opportunities for vocal ensembles our airport story gave me. The voices are usually in the foreground, with the orchestra providing a colourful accompaniment. I have tried to write vocal lines that are simple enough to give the singers room to act.

Dove's sparkling score calls for a 45-piece orchestra, including three very busy percussionists, piano, celesta, and harp. The orchestra shines brilliantly in the two airplane take-offs, the storm, and a steamy love scene that takes its cue from the opening of Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*. Dove, who spent many years arranging and preparing the masterworks of the operatic repertoire, seems to have absorbed and remixed the lessons from his great predecessors. One hears echoes of Britten, Sondheim, Prokofieff, the Minimalists, and Wagner, as well as the comedies of Mozart and Rossini.

1/3/2008

## THE PRODUCTION

Artistic Director Christopher Hahn feels that *Flight* is a perfect vehicle for the resident artists of the Pittsburgh Opera Center artists. “They have wonderful music to sing that is really gratifying for young voices, but above all, it’s a true ensemble piece that will stretch them in every possible direction. And they will benefit enormously from the presence of Myrna Paris and the countertenor David Walker, who so brilliantly played these roles in the previous American professional productions.”

Hahn decided to commission a new production for CAPA Theater, with set design by **Carol Bailey** (Opera Center productions of *La clemenza di Tito* in 2003, *The Return of Ulysses* in 2004, last season’s mainstage production of *Romeo & Juliet*) and costumes by Pittsburgh Opera’s costume director, **Toni West**. New to Pittsburgh Opera is lighting designer **Allen Hahn** (no relation to Christopher Hahn), a Carnegie Mellon University alumnus and current CMU faculty member.

Now on the staff of the Metropolitan Opera, stage director **Kristine McIntyre** returns to the Pittsburgh Opera Center for the third time, having previously directed *The Return of Ulysses* and *La clemenza di Tito*. McIntyre photographed every airport she’s visited over the past year in preparation for the production. She and designer Carol Bailey created a look based on 1960s high modernist design. The impression the audience will have is of clean metal and glass in a lofty space. A dramatic spiral staircase links the world of the goddess-like Controller with that of the still-earthbound passengers below. It’s a somewhat utilitarian space that showcases the fun, drama, and romance of the air travel.

McIntyre says, “*Flight* is about all of the other stuff that actually happens when you take a trip. Each character brings a kind of emotional baggage that is either resolved or left unresolved during the piece. From the opening notes of the opera you know it’s not a normal story—there’s something very unearthly going on here. We feel this right away because of the Refugee, who’s sung by a countertenor. It’s the weirdest sound in the world. The Refugee brings a kind of earthy magic. He is neither entirely godlike like the Controller nor like the other human characters. What’s interesting is the way interacting with him affects the other characters. I see him as a kind of shaman who opens up all of their stories.”

“Unreal things begin to happen as soon as people come into contact with the Refugee,” McIntyre says. Bill and Tina are the first to experience an emotional out-of body experience. “Dance rhythms appear in the orchestra when they start to feel that things are really starting to happen for them. As they create this

1/3/2008

holiday atmosphere in their own minds, we fly in a palm tree, bunches of bananas, parrots—the things we fantasize about. It's a tiki world of promise and excitement.” And when the fantasy is over, the objects disappear.

Hahn has brought in another young gun to lead the show, conductor **James Lowe**, who has already made his mark conducting some important premieres with Houston Grand Opera: Rachel Portman's *The Little Prince*, Jake Heggie's *The End of the Affair*, Mark Adamo's *Little Women* and *Lysistrata*. A versatile conductor and pianist, he led the Broadway First National Tour of *The Light in the Piazza* and is currently touring with *My Fair Lady*.

Lowe and McIntyre were both stuck by Jonathan Dove's use of Wagnerian-style *Leitmotifs*, a kind of musical calling-card for each of the characters. Each character has a musical identity that is not only based on a melodic idea, but also a rhythmic and harmonic identity. McIntyre notes the difference between the high, soaring vocal lines of the Controller and Refugee, and the more conversational, down-to-earth parts for the other characters.

Dove also employs another Wagnerian device in his use of time. There are two kinds of time in the opera: the actual time it takes for a dialogue to play out, and then there are these “timeless” episodes like Bill and Tina's “tiki” experience, when fantasy takes over and time seems to stop. McIntyre noted that the Minskwoman, who fears that the arrival of her baby will end the romance and freedom in her life, has the equivalent of the old operatic mad scene—another example of this out-of-time experience in the opera. For Jonathan Dove, this aria is the emotional center of the piece, and McIntyre feels the same resonance. “Every professional woman who has a child goes through this, and everyone can identify with a fear of the unknown.” During her aria, the Minskwoman unpacks her suitcase and takes out all of the things she's packed for her baby. All of the objects are white. “I wanted her to be in a sea of white objects—she's literally ‘at sea’ with her emotions.”

Although the emotions in the opera are universal, the language is firmly British English. Not only will there be supertitles to assist the audience, but Christopher Hahn has enlisted the services of **Kathryn LaBouff**, an English diction coach, to give the production a more authentic British sound.

## CAST AND PRODUCTION BIOS

### MYRNA PARIS - OLDER WOMAN

Contralto Myrna Paris sings the Older Woman for the third time, having sung it in the US premiere with Opera Theatre of St. Louis in 2003 and subsequently with Boston Lyric Opera. A beloved Pittsburgh favorite, she appeared here last season as the Nurse/*Romeo & Juliet* and previously in *Andrea Chenier* (1998) and *Tales of Hoffmann* (1981). In the spring of 2007, she sang the Katisha/*The Mikado* with Opera Theatre of St. Louis. This season, she sings Ruth/*Pirates of Penzance* and Marthe Schwerlein/*Faust* with Samuel Ramey for her debut with Wichita Opera. Since her debut with New York City Opera in 2000, Ms. Paris has sung several roles for the company including Mrs. Lovett/*Sweeney Todd*, Katisha, Zita /*Gianni Schicchi*, Mama McCourt/*The Ballad of Baby Doe*, Mrs. Vanderveer in Sousa's *The Glassblowers*, Marcellina/*Le nozze di Figaro*, and Bianca/*The Rape of Lucretia*. She has also performed Leda and Mrs. Traxell in Richard Rodney Bennett's *The Mines of Sulpher* as well as Kleonike in Mark Adamo's *Lysistrata*, a role she created in the world premiere with Houston Grand Opera. Some notable recent engagements include Mrs. Lovett/*Sweeney Todd* with Cleveland Opera and Toledo Opera, Eunice in Previn's *A Streetcar Named Desire* with Washington National Opera, Mrs. Peachum in *The Beggar's Opera* with Santa Fe Opera, Buttercup/*HMS Pinafore* with Pittsburgh Public Theater, and the Old Lady in Bernstein's *Candide* with Central City Opera Company. In concert, she made her Carnegie Hall debut in Janacek's *Glagolitic Mass* with the Pittsburgh Symphony under Michael Tilson Thomas and has also performed *Messiah* with the PSO.

### DAVID WALKER - REFUGEE

David Walker is one of the world's most highly regarded countertenors. He makes his first appearance with Pittsburgh Opera as the Refugee, a role he has sung to great acclaim in St. Louis, Boston, and Adelaide. This season Mr. Walker sang Ottone/*Agrippina* at New York City Opera, Holofernes in Vivaldi's rarity *Juditha Triumphans* with Antony Walker's Pinchgut Opera, and concert performances of Petitgirard's *The Elephant Man* in Paris. He also sang the US premiere of the piece at Minnesota Opera. Later this season he performs Handel's *Messiah* with Musica Sacra at Carnegie Hall and another Jonathan Dove opera, *Tobias and the Angel*, with Opera Vivente of Baltimore in a production mounted especially for him. Mr. Walker is a regular guest at many leading opera companies, including the Metropolitan Opera, Santa Fe, Glimmerglass, Los Angeles, San Diego, Washington National, Florida Grand, Arizona, Utah, Orlando, Central City, Aspen, Berkshire Opera Festival, and the Boston Early Music Festival. Internationally he has appeared with the Bayerische Staatsoper, L'Opéra National du Rhin, English National Opera, Opera North (UK), the Adelaide Festival of Australia, and the Göttingen Handel Festival. Foremost a Handel specialist, he sings the title role in *Giulio Cesare*, the title role of *Flavio*, Arsamene/*Xerxes*, Bertarido/*Rodelinda*, Athamas/*Semele*, Arsace/*Partenope*, Medoro/*Orlando*, Polinesso/*Ariodante*, the title role of Handel's *Radamisto*, and Goffredo/*Rinaldo*. Additionally, he has sung Nero/*The Coronation of Poppea*, Orfeo in Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, the Sandman/*Hansel and Gretel*, Oberon in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Prince Go-Go in Ligeti's *Le grand macabre*, and the title role in Philip Glass' *Akhmaten*.

### AUDREY LUNA - CONTROLLER

As a resident artist with Pittsburgh Opera, soprano Audrey Luna stepped in last season as the Queen of the Night for the entire run of *The Magic Flute*. Her success with the role will take her to Opera Ontario next October. Future seasons also include Blondchen/*Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and Anne/*A Little Night Music* with Hawaii Opera. This season in Pittsburgh she covered Adina/*The Elixir of Love* and sings Giulietta/*The Capulets & the Montagues* Student Matinee. As an apprentice with Santa Fe Opera, Ms. Luna performed in the scenes program as Zerbinetta/*Ariadne auf Naxos* and Lucia/*Lucia di Lammermoor*. Ms. Luna's other credits include Rosina/*Il barbiere di Siviglia* with the Portland Opera Music Festival and Gilda/*Rigoletto* with Aspen Opera Theater under the baton of Julius Rudel. She recently made her European recital debut at the Bach to Bartók Festival in Imola, Italy. Ms. Luna has been awarded first place in the Altamura/Caruso International Voice Competition and the Eleanor Lieber Awards, an encouragement grant

1/3/2008

from the George London Foundation, and prizes from the Giulio Gari Foundation, Elardo International Opera Competition, Liederkrantz Foundation, Irma Cooper International Voice Competition, Lee Schaenen Foundation, Gerda Lissner Foundation, and Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. Audrey Luna is represented by Herbert Barrett Management.

### **DEBORAH SELIG - TINA**

A native of Washington, DC, Deborah Selig joins Pittsburgh Opera as a first-year resident artist. She made her Pittsburgh Opera mainstage debut as Giannetta/*The Elixir of Love* and sings the High Priestess/*Aida* in the spring. Upcoming engagements include Orff's *Carmina Burana* with the Bridgeport Symphony and Rose/*Street Scene* with Chautauqua Opera. Ms. Selig was educated at the University of Michigan and the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. She trained as a young artist with Santa Fe Opera, Chautauqua Opera, and the Tanglewood Music Center. She has appeared with Central City Opera (*Zerlina/Don Giovanni*); Mobile Opera (*Valencienne/The Merry Widow*); Connecticut Lyric Opera (*Susanna/The Marriage of Figaro*); Dayton Opera (*Adele/Die Fledermaus*; *Amy/Little Women*), and Chautauqua Opera (*Mary Warren/The Crucible*). Her concert appearances include *Messiah* with the Dayton Philharmonic and Cincinnati Baroque; Górecki's *Symphony #3* with the Kentucky Symphony; Haydn's "Lord Nelson" Mass with Harvard Pro Musica; selections from *The Merry Widow* with Cincinnati Symphony; and Ligeti's *Le grand macabre* with the Tanglewood Festival of Contemporary Music. She received the Richard F. Gold Career Grant of the Shoshana Foundation, was a winner of the Southern Ohio district Metropolitan Opera Competition, and won 2nd place in the National Opera Association Competition. Ms. Selig is represented by Wolverton Artists Management.

### **KATHERINE DRAGO - STEWARDESS**

First-year resident artist Katherine Drago (mezzo-soprano) debuted with Pittsburgh Opera as Kate Pinkerton/*Madama Butterfly*. A Chicago native, Ms. Drago holds a Master's degree from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) and a Bachelor's degree from Northwestern University. After a year with the Broadway National Tour of *The Phantom of the Opera*, she was a featured young artist with Chicago Opera Theater, appearing as Venere/*L'incoronazione di Poppea* and French Mother/*Death in Venice*. Other recent appearances include Marquise de Merteuil/*The Dangerous Liaisons* and Dinah/*Trouble in Tahiti* both at CCM; Ruth/*Pirates of Penzance* (Music by the Lake); Orlofsky/*Die Fledermaus* (Rising Star Opera Theater); Hansel/*Hansel and Gretel* (Milwaukee Opera Theater, Opera for the Young). She has also sung with the Lebanon Symphony (OH); Asheville Symphony; Peninsula Music Festival; Cheyenne Symphony, and Berkshire Choral Festival. She has received awards from the National Association of Teachers of Singing, the Bel Canto Foundation, and the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. Upcoming engagements include Romeo/*The Capulets and the Montagues* Student Matinee at Pittsburgh Opera as well as appearing this summer in *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Falstaff*, and the world premiere of *Adriana Mater* as an apprentice artist with Santa Fe Opera.

### **KARIN MUSHEGAIN – MINSKWOMAN**

Hailed for her "resonant mezzo-soprano" and "bright and full" voice, California native Karin Mushegain made her company debut with Pittsburgh Opera as Dryade/*Ariadne auf Naxos*. An alumna of the Pittsburgh Opera Center, she has also performed Second Lady/*The Magic Flute*, Amastre/*Xerxes*, Sicile/*Ormindo*, and Stephano/*Romeo & Juliet* Student Matinee. Other recent debuts include her first Maddalena/*Rigoletto* with Opera Western Reserve. A committed interpreter of American musical theater and opera, Ms. Mushegain performed selections from Ricky Ian Gordon's *My Life With Albertine* at the Hawaiian Performing Arts Festival accompanied by the composer. She also originated the role of Lead Gypsy in the world premiere of Ian Krouse's *Lorca, Child of the Moon* and was recently seen as Maria in Ash Lawn Opera Festival's production of *West Side Story*. As a concert artist, Ms. Mushegain made her Pittsburgh Symphony debut in Mozart's "Coronation" Mass. She joined the PSO again for their 2006 and 2007 Holiday Pops Concerts. Other notable appearances include Handel's *L'allegro, il penseroso ed il moderato* with the Hawaiian



1/3/2008

Performing Arts Festival. Upcoming engagements include performances of *Gianni Schicchi*, *Buoso's Ghost*, and *The Pirates of Penzance* with Lake George Opera Festival.

#### **DEAN KOKANOS - BILL**

Pittsburgh native Dean Kokanos joins Pittsburgh Opera as a first-year resident artist. He appeared in November as Nemorino/*The Elixir of Love Behind the Curtain* and in May sings Tebaldo/*The Capulets & the Montagues* Student Matinee. He first came to Pittsburgh Opera's attention as a member of the chorus for *Dead Man Walking* and has represented the company as a member of the Opera Trunk Presentation Team since 2004. Educated at Duquesne University (BM) and Carnegie Mellon University (MM), Mr. Kokanos recently returned from Italy, where he sang the title role in *L'amico Fritz* with the Opera Theatre of Lucca. Previously he has appeared with Opera Memphis (Remendado/*Carmen*); Opera Theatre of St. Louis (Dr. Wilson/*Street Scene* and covered Devereux/*Gloriana*); Cleveland Opera on Tour (Almaviva/*The Barber of Seville*), and Sarasota Opera (Hadji/*Lakmé*), as well as concerts with the Bach Choir of Pittsburgh and numerous western Pennsylvania organizations. He has been in the young artist training programs of St. Louis Opera (2005 and 2006), Sarasota Opera (2005), and Opera Memphis (2007). In 2006 he received an encouragement award from the Metropolitan Opera Regional Council Competition and was a finalist in the 2004 Palm Beach Opera Competition.

#### **JONATHAN BEYER - STEWARD**

Baritone Jonathan Beyer has performed in mainstage productions with Opera Santa Barbara, Chicago Opera Theater, Chautauqua Opera, Accademia Verdiana, and the Teatro Verdi. He has also appeared with the Indianapolis Symphony and the Châteaueville Foundation. As a first-year resident artist with Pittsburgh Opera, he sang Prince Yamadori/*Madama Butterfly* and Belcore/*The Elixir of Love Behind the Curtain* and appears as Lorenzo/*The Capulets & the Montagues* in May. In November 2007 Mr. Beyer won the prestigious Marian Anderson Prize for Emerging Classical Artists. He was a National Finalist in the 2006 Metropolitan Opera National Council Competition and has taken first prize in the American Opera Society, the Union Civic League Competition, and the grand prize of the Bel Canto Foundation. Prizes have also been awarded to him through the Anna Sosenko Foundation, Mario Lanza Foundation, Irma M. Cooper, Palm Beach Opera, and Neue Stimmen competitions. An avid recitalist, Mr. Beyer has performed in recital with Craig Rutenberg, Mikael Eliassen, and Brian Zeger. He recently completed his studies at the Curtis Institute of Music and earned his Bachelor's and Master's at the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University. He is represented by Columbia Artists Management.

#### **CRAIG VERM - MINSKMAN**

An alumnus of the Pittsburgh Opera Center, baritone Craig Verm has launched his international career. At Pittsburgh Opera he sang the Novice's Friend/*Billy Budd*, Mercutio/*Romeo & Juliet*, Angelotti/*Tosca*, Marullo/*Rigoletto*, Wagner/*Faust*, and the Marchese/*La traviata*, among others. Earlier this season he sang the Count/*Marriage of Figaro* and Falke/*Die Fledermaus* with Opera Theater of Pittsburgh. Later this season he sings Joseph Pitt/*Angels in America* with Fort Worth Opera, Silvio/*Pagliacci* with Saltnote Stageworks, Vaughan Williams' *Five Mystical Songs* with Asheville Symphony, Haydn's *Creation* with the Robert Page Singers in Budapest and Vienna, and returns to Pittsburgh Concert Chorale for Schubert's Mass in G and Brahms' *Liebeslieder Waltzer*. Other future engagements include Papageno/*Die Zauberflöte* with Florentine Opera, Connie Rivers/*The Grapes of Wrath* in a return to Pittsburgh Opera, Ping/*Turandot* with Birmingham Opera, and Marcello/*La bohème* with Austin Lyric Opera. In 2006 he joined the LA Philharmonic for repeat performances of Angelotti at the Hollywood Bowl and the Pittsburgh Symphony for Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on Christmas Carols*. Other concerts include Bach's B-Minor Mass at Portugal's Aviero Music Festival and in Cincinnati, Brahms' Requiem in Cincinnati, and Handel's *Messiah* and Haydn's "Lord Nelson" Mass in Houston. He was a 2006 national semifinalist in the Metropolitan Opera auditions.

1/3/2008

### **LIAM MORAN - IMMIGRATION OFFICER**

Liam Moran began as a first-year resident artist with Pittsburgh Opera after summer engagements with the National Symphony Orchestra (*Zuniga/Carmen*) and the Speaker/*The Magic Flute* and Siroco/*L'étoile* at Wolf Trap Opera. After his mainstage debut here as *The Bonze/Madama Butterfly* and *Dulcamara/The Elixir of Love* Behind the Curtain, he appears as the King/*Aida* and *Capellio/The Capulets & the Montagues* Student Matinee. Mr. Moran returns to Wolf Trap this summer for *Melisso/Alcina* and *Truffaldino/Ariadne auf Naxos*. He has also performed with Florida Grand Opera, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Glimmerglass Opera, San Francisco Opera's Merola Program, and Opera Omaha. His concert work ranges from Monteverdi to Penderecki, and he has been featured with the Palm Beach Symphony, the New World Symphony's "Concerts in Context" series, Los Angeles' Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra, and several recital series. For Glimmerglass in 2006 he created the role of M. Follenvie in the world premiere of Steven Hartke's *The Greater Good*, recorded for Naxos Records. A prize winner in the Florida Grand Opera Competition and Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions/New England region, Mr. Moran completed his studies at McGill University in Montreal and the Yale School of Music.

### **JAMES LOWE - CONDUCTOR**

James Lowe is a versatile conductor and pianist who performs in virtually every musical style, ranging from opera to the avant-garde; from musical theater to rock, blues and country. He is currently the music director/conductor for the US National Tour of Cameron Mackintosh's acclaimed production of *My Fair Lady*, as well as the Music Director for Lyric Opera San Diego, where he has led *La Rondine*, *Don Pasquale*, *Countess Maritza*, and *The Beggar's Opera*. Mr. Lowe recently conducted the First National Tour of *The Light in the Piazza*. For several seasons he was associate conductor at Houston Grand Opera, where he conducted and orchestrated a portion of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala concert with Sir Elton John. In 2004 he led the revival of Rachel Portman's *The Little Prince*, having conducted the world premiere in 2003. At HGO he also conducted *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Carmen*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Jake Heggie's *The End of the Affair* (world premiere), and the HGO Studio production of Copland's *The Tender Land*. He conducted *Sweeney Todd* and led concerts with the Houston Symphony featuring Randy Newman with Wolf Trap Opera. Mr. Lowe conducted Mark Adamo's *Little Women* at Lyric Opera Cleveland and assisted on the world premiere of Adamo's *Lysistrata* at HGO and subsequently at New York City Opera. He has led performances of *The Nutcracker* with Houston Ballet and served as resident conductor at the Ash Lawn Opera Festival and musical director of Blackfriars Theater in Rochester, NY. For five years Mr. Lowe was the keyboardist, rhythm guitarist, lead singer and songwriter for the rock band "Backwash," co-producing the group's compact disc *Goin' To The Mall* and touring the Eastern United States.

### **KRISTINE MCINTYRE – STAGE DIRECTOR**

Director Kristine McIntyre returns to the Pittsburgh Opera Center for the third time, having previously directed *The Return of Ulysses* in 2004 and *La clemenza di Tito* in 2003. Since her directorial debut in 1994, she has staged numerous operas and theater works, as well as several ballets, and she has assisted in the direction of scores of productions principally in the United States. She is on the directing staff of the Metropolitan Opera, where she has since regularly returned to direct revivals and assist in various productions including *Les Troyens* (Zambello), *Luisa Miller* (Moshinsky), *Salome* (Flinn), *Un ballo in Maschera* (Faggioni/Feldman), *Doktor Faust* (Mussbach), and *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Cox/Pappas). Ms. McIntyre's own productions include *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *La traviata* for Portland Opera, *Iolanthe*, *The Mikado* and *Patience* for Mock's Crest Productions, *Dialogues of the Carmelites* for Berkeley Opera, Nicolai's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, also for Mock Crest Productions, *La cenerentola* for Sugar Creek Symphony & Song, *Viva La Mamma* for Tacoma Opera, and *The Turn of the Screw* for Lyric Opera of Kansas City. Upcoming projects include *Beatrice et Bénédict* for Tacoma Opera, *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* for Portland Opera Studio, *Hansel and Gretel* for Skylight Opera, and *The Pirates of Penzance* for Mock's Crest Productions. She returns to Lyric Opera of Kansas City to direct Jake Heggie's acclaimed opera *The End of the Affair*.

1/3/2008

### **CAROL BAILEY – SET DESIGNER**

Returning to Pittsburgh Opera for her fourth production, Carol Bailey has designed sets and costumes for Opera Center productions of *La clemenza di Tito* in 2003, *The Return of Ulysses* in 2004, and last season's mainstage production of *Romeo & Juliet*. Her designs for scenery and costumes have been commissioned by various opera companies including Spoleto USA Festival in Charleston, South Carolina; Royal Danish Opera; New York City Opera; Glimmerglass Opera; Opera Zuid, Maastricht, the Netherlands; San Francisco Opera Center; Skylight Opera Theater, Milwaukee, WI; Wolf Trap Opera; Long Beach Opera; Gotham Opera, NY; Julliard School, NY; L'Opéra Français de New York; American Opera Projects, NY. She also designs for theater and dance. She was the recipient of the TCG/NEA Design Fellowship in 2000, exhibited in the World Stage Design 2005 Competition, and has sculpture in the permanent collection of the Nordenfjeldske Kunstinstrimuseet, Trondheim, Norway. She holds MFA degrees from New York University in design for the theater and the University of Pennsylvania in sculpture.

### **ALLEN HAHN – LIGHTING DESIGNER**

Allen Hahn has designed lighting for productions at New York City Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, and the Spoleto USA Festival and internationally at the Royal Danish Opera, Opera Zuid (The Netherlands) and in Bilbao, Spain for OLBE-ABAO. He designed the world premieres of Lowell Liebermann's *Miss Lonelyhearts* for the Juilliard Opera Center and for Poul Ruders' opera *Kafka's Trial* at the Royal Danish Opera. He had several productions selected for the 2007 Prague Quadrennial, including operas for Chicago Opera Theater and Gotham Chamber Opera. Harmonia Mundi recently released a DVD of the widely acclaimed production of *Giulio Cesare* starring Andreas Scholl, which Allen designed in Copenhagen in 2003. Allen has been affiliated with The Builders Association, an internationally heralded cross-media performance company, since its inception in 1994. He contributed to the company's Obie-winning piece *Alladeen* and was the co-designer of *Super Vision*. In 2005, he collaborated with artist Tony Oursler on museum installations at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art and at the ARoS Kunstmuseum in Aarhus, Denmark. Allen Hahn has been designing lighting professionally since graduating from Carnegie Mellon University in 1991. He is currently a faculty member there.

***FOR MORE INFO including full synopsis, production photos, and background articles, see <http://www.pittsburghopera.org>***

Pittsburgh Opera, celebrating 69 years of opera in southwestern Pennsylvania, is a member of OPERA America, the national organization for opera companies, and the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council. Pittsburgh Opera's performances are supported, in part, by the National Endowment for the Arts, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, the PA Department of Community and Economic Development, and Allegheny Regional Asset District. The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* and WQED-FM are season media sponsors.

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