

Pittsburgh Opera NEWS RELEASE

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Pittsburgh Opera Center Artists Sweep Jensen Competition

Pittsburgh, PA (May 20, 2008) . . .The top prizes in the ninth annual Jensen Foundation Voice Competition were awarded to three current or former Resident Artists of Pittsburgh Opera Center. Alumna **NaGuanda Nobles**, a lyric soprano seen last season at Pittsburgh Opera as Papagena in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, took the top prize of \$15,000 and a contract with Opera Carolina. Baritone **Jonathan Beyer**, a current Opera Center artist who recently sang Lorenzo in *The Capulets & the Montagues*, took the \$10,000 second prize. Third prize of \$5,000 went to coloratura soprano **Audrey Elizabeth Luna**, who sang the Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute* and this season captivated audiences as the Controller in Jonathan Dove's *Flight*. The competition finals were held on May 17 in New York City.

Pittsburgh Opera's Artistic Director Christopher Hahn commented, "That three of our current and recent artists have swept one of American's most important vocal competitions is testimony to the fact that our program is attracting the highest caliber of young opera talent—equal to that of the major training programs at larger opera companies."

The **Pittsburgh Opera Center** is one of America's premier training centers for young opera singers. Competitively selected from over 500 applicants each year, these Resident Artists are among the nation's most sought-after emerging opera singers. Through performance opportunities, community programming, and coaching with the opera industry's most distinguished professionals, Pittsburgh Opera's Resident Artists are prepared for the world's greatest stages.

Links:

Pittsburgh Opera Center http://www.pittsburghopera.org/opera_center/opera_center_0708artists.shtml

Fritz & Lavinia Jensen Foundation <http://www.jensenfoundation.org/>

NaGuanda Nobles http://www.embraopera.com/artists_naguanda.html

Jonathan Beyer <http://www.cami.com/?webid=1933>

Audrey Elizabeth Luna <http://www.herbertbarrett.com/artist.php?id=aeluna&aview=media>

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. KDKA is the season media sponsor.

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