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LETTER FROM OUR GENERAL DIRECTOR

DEAR FRIENDS,

Welcome back to the intimate Pittsburgh CAPA Theater, the ideal venue for a Baroque opera. *Alcina* is our fourth George Frideric Handel opera here in the past ten years, and our first since 2017’s *Richard the Lionheart*. We enjoy presenting works by this magnificent composer, whose music has stood the test of time.

Our cast features both first-year and second-year Resident Artists, plus a recent alumna. Our first-year artists are Natasha Wilson, who made her mainstage debut with us last fall in *Florence en el Amazonas*, and tenor Angel Romero, who makes his Pittsburgh Opera debut in these performances. Second-year sensations Caitlin Gotimer, Antonia Botti-Lodovico, and Tyler Zimmerman join returning alumna Laurel Semerdjian, who we are delighted to welcome back to our stage.

We couldn’t be happier to have our friends from Chatham Baroque in the pit with us for these performances. Their virtuosity on authentic period instruments always adds an extra level of historical realism to our Baroque performances.

I sincerely hope that you will join us at our headquarters in the Strip District next month for the first-ever Pittsburgh production of *The Last American Hammer*. This heartfelt contemporary satire features conspiracy theories, kitschy Americana, and an ode to the culinary wonders of sauerkraut balls. If you don’t have your tickets yet, don’t delay!

Warmest regards,

CHRISTOPHER HAHN
General Director
Every day, the arts inspire us all.

The performing arts play an integral role in making our community a more vibrant place. We’re proud to support the Pittsburgh Opera.

pnc.com

The artistic team:

Conductor
Antony Walker

Stage Director
Matthew Haney*

Set Designer
Sarah Delaney Boyle

Costume Designer
Jason Bray

Lighting Design
Nate Wheatley

Wig & Makeup Designer
Nicole Pagano

Head of Music
Glenn Lewis

Director of Musical Studies
Mark Trawka

Associate Coach/Pianist
James Lesnia

Stage Manager
Cindy Knight

Scenery, props, and costumes constructed by Pittsburgh Opera

* Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist
** Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist alumn

Cast subject to change without notice.
SYNOPSIS

PART ONE

Bradamante, disguised as her brother Ricciardo, and her tutor Melisso have come to Alcina’s island in search of Bradamante’s love, Ruggiero. They meet Morgana, Alcina’s sister, who falls in love with the disguised Bradamante and promises to take them to the Queen. Alcina is revealed, surrounded by her court, including Ruggiero. Bradamante confronts Ruggiero, who recognizes her as Ricciardo but denies any interest in Ricciardo’s sister—he is the faithful lover of Alcina. He runs off to find her. Oronte, rightly suspecting the constancy of Morgana, whom he loves, charges Bradamante with having stolen Morgana’s love. Morgana defends Bradamante and insults Oronte. Bradamante tries to calm their mutual recriminations. Oronte, coming upon Ruggiero, who is sighing for the absent Alcina, decides to alleviate his own jealousy by making Ruggiero jealous too, and concocts a tale that Alcina now loves “Ricciardo” and will no doubt soon add Ruggiero to her collection of discarded and transformed lovers. Ruggiero believes him and heaps reproaches on the puzzled Alcina, who assures him that her feelings are unchanged. Bradamante accuses Ruggiero of disloyalty, but he retaliates with defiance, accusing her, as Ricciardo, of having stolen Alcina’s love. Bradamante discloses her identity, but Melisso, worried that Ruggiero is not yet ready for this information, convinces him that she is not really Bradamante. Morgana warns Bradamante that Ruggiero has persuaded Alcina to change her into a wild beast, so Bradamante tells Morgana to assure Ruggiero that she does not love Alcina, but rather Morgana herself...

Melisso, disguised as Ruggiero’s tutor Atlante, reproaches him with having abandoned the path of glory and gives him a magic ring that brings him to his senses. Ruggiero regrets his faithlessness to Bradamante and wishes to send a message of defiance to Alcina, but Melisso advises him to pretend that he still loves her and make his escape on the pretext of going hunting. Bradamante again reveals her identity, only to have Ruggiero reject this revelation as another of Alcina’s deceptions. Alcina is preparing to change Ricciardo into a wild beast to appease Ruggiero, while Morgana tries to dissuade her and Ruggiero assures her that he is no longer jealous, so drastic measures are no longer necessary. Alcina notices that Ruggiero is not in his usual spirits and he suggests a hunt as a restorative. She consents and he departs. Oronte brings the news that Ruggiero is planning to flee. The heartbroken Alcina prepares to foil this plan.

SYNOPSIS continued on next page
PART TWO

Oronte tells Morgana that her new love is about to leave her, but she refuses to believe this and departs scornfully, leaving him to lament her power over him. Ruggiero is at last convinced that Bradamante is really herself. Morgana discovers them embracing, reproaches her for being a faithless guest and Ruggiero with betraying Alcina. Ruggiero looks forward to the ending of the enchantments. Alcina begins to make spells to bind Ruggiero to her, but realizes her powers have deserted her. Morgana tries to ingratiate herself with Oronte, who pretends indifference, but has to admit to himself that he still loves her. Alcina upbraids Ruggiero for trying to leave her. He tells her that his betrothed Bradamante now has his love. Alcina threatens vengeance, though unable to obliterate her tender feelings for him. Bradamante and Melisso join Ruggiero to plan their campaign. Melisso tells them that the island is surrounded by Alcina’s enchanted monsters. Although worried at leaving his beloved, Ruggiero sets off, followed by Melisso and Bradamante, who vows to free those lying under enchantment. Oronte announces to Alcina the complete defeat of her forces and she laments her cruel fate.

Ruggiero and Bradamante confront Alcina, each advising the other not to be taken in by her deceptions. She tries both pleading and threats in vain. Ruggiero smashes the orb that holds Alcina’s secret power. All her spells are broken, and all are transformed. Ruggiero, Bradamante, and Melisso leave the broken-hearted Alcina alone with her grief.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

ALCINA

ANTONIA BOTTI-LODOVICO: RUGGIERO

Antonia Botti-Lodovico is a second-year Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist in 2019-20. She performed Zerlina/Don Giovanni and is scheduled to perform Dee Dee Reyes/The Last American Hammer, and Mercédès/Carmen and the Carmen Student Matinee. In the 2018-19 season she performed Kate Pinkerton/Madama Butterfly, Hansel in the Hansel & Gretel Student Matinee Performance, and Idamante/afterWARds - Mozart’s Idomeneo Reimagined.

Ms. Botti-Lodovico is a graduate of Roosevelt University, where she received her Master of Music. Her credits at Roosevelt include: Papagena in Mozart’s Die Zauberflöte and Madame Herz/Der Schauspieldirektor. In 2016 and 2017, she was an Apprentice Artist with the Des Moines Metro Opera. As an Apprentice Artist she performed the role of Rosette/Manon and covered the role of Petra/A Little Night Music. Additionally, she performed partial roles in their Young Artist Scenes Program, including Idamante/Mozart’s Idomeneo, Mélisande/Pelléas et Mélisande, Stewardess/Flight, Hermia/A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Annio/La clemenza di Tito, Rosina/Il barbiere di Siviglia, Suzuki/Madama Butterfly, and Zerlina/Don Giovanni. She also performed in the ensemble with Des Moines Metro Opera for Maria de Buenos Aires, Turandot, and Orphée et Eurydice.

Ms. Botti-Lodovico has also performed with Undercroft Opera, covering the role of Pamina in Die Zauberflöte in 2014. Her previous engagements also include performances with the Tuscia Opera Festival, where she sang the role of Despina/Cosi fan tutte and Nursing Sister/Suor Angelica.

Ms. Botti-Lodovico’s residency is generously sponsored by Hans and Leslie Fleischner.

SPECIAL THANKS

Christopher A. Howard, CAPA Theater Manager
CAPA technical students for working on the running crew
ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

CAITLIN GOTIMER: ALCINA

Caitlin Gotimer is a second-year Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist in 2019-20. She is scheduled to perform Tink Enraught/The Last American Hammer, Micaëla/the Carmen Student Matinee, and Clotilda/Norma. In the 2018-19 season, she performed Sandman and Dew Fairy/Hansel & Gretel, Elettra/afterWARds - Mozart’s Idomeneo Reimagined, and Older Alyce in Tom Cipullo’s Glory Denied.

She completed an Artist Diploma in Opera at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where she also received a Master of Music in Voice in 2017. While attending CCM, Ms. Gotimer sang Dalinda/Ariodante, Suor Angelica/Suor Angelica, and Anne Sexton in Conrad Sousa’s Transformations. Ms. Gotimer has been seen previously with Crested Butte Opera Studio, where she recently sang the role of Lauretta/Gianni Schicchi. She debuted with the company in 2016 singing Musetta/La bohème and sang scenes in Carmen as Micaëla. Ms. Gotimer also performed scenes of Street Scene as Rose with the Chautauqua Institution in 2014. On the concert stage, Ms. Gotimer has been a soloist in Mozart’s Requiem at the Song d’été in Quebec, and in Bach’s Missa Brevis with Binghamton University.

Ms. Gotimer has been the recipient of several awards and honors, including being the recipient of one of the top prizes in CCM’s annual Corbett Competition, the Italo Tajo Award. She won the Audience Favorite Award and Second Prize in the Opera Guild of Dayton Competition and was a recipient of an Encouragement Award at the Cincinnati Metropolitan Opera National Councils in 2016. In 2015, Ms. Gotimer won first place in the National Biennial Collegiate Voice Competition and was selected to be a Binghamton University Summer Scholar and Artist before attending the first of two summers at the Chautauqua Institute School of Music.

Ms. Gotimer’s residency is generously sponsored by Robert J. and Sharon E. Sclabassi.

YAZID GRAY: ATTENDANT

Yazid Gray is a first-year Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist in 2019-20. He is scheduled to perform Moralès/Carmen and the Carmen Student Matinee.

In the 2018-2019 season, Mr. Gray sang the role of Bello/La Fanciulla del West with Maryland Lyric Opera. He then went on to join Opera Santa Barbara as a member of their Chrisman Studio Artist program. During his time there, he performed the roles of Schaunard/La bohème, Zaretski and the Captain/Eugene Onegin, Le Podestat/Le docteur Miracle, and Thomas Putnam/The Crucible.

Mr. Gray is a graduate of University of Michigan, where he received his Master of Music. His credits at Michigan include: Oliver Jordan in the Michigan premiere of William Bolcom’s Dinner at Eight, Mercutio/Roméo et Juliette, and Demetrius/A Midsummer’s Night Dream. The summer after graduating, Mr. Gray performed the role of Charlie/Three Decembers with Opera Maine.

Other notable roles for Mr. Gray include: Silvio/Pagliacci, Sid/Albert Herring, and Hermann/Les Contes D’Hoffmann with Opera in the Ozarks, and the Undertaker and Frazier/Porgy and Bess with the University Musical Society. Mr. Gray received his Bachelor of Music from DePauw University, where he performed several roles in operas and musicals.

Mr. Gray’s residency is generously sponsored by John and Virginia DiPucci and Alice V. Gelormino.
ANGEL ROMERO: ORONTE
Angel Romero is a first-year Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist in 2019-20. He is scheduled to perform Oronte/Carmen and the Carmen Student Matinee, and Flavio/Norma. A native of Houston, Texas, Mr. Romero holds a BA in Music from Houston Baptist University and a MM from Yale University. While attending Yale University, he performed the roles of Tamino/Die Zauberflöte, Triquet/Eugene Onegin, and The Fisherman in Le Rossignol.

In 2018, Mr. Romero was seen at Central City Opera as an apprentice artist, performing the roles of Monostatos/Die Zauberflöte and Ruiz/Il trovatore. This past summer Mr. Romero was a Young Artist at Santa Fe Opera and covered the role of The Prune Man in La bohème. In concert, Mr. Romero was the tenor soloist in Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony with the Yale Philharmonia under the baton of Marin Alsop. Along with being awarded the Irving S. Gilmore Fellowship and Annie DeLoache Scholarship in both 2017 and 2018 from Yale University, Mr. Romero was a finalist in the prestigious Eleanor McCollum Competition.

Mr. Romero’s residency is generously sponsored by John and Nancy Traina.

LAUREL SEMERDJIAN: BRADAMANTE
Former Resident Artist Laurel Semerdjian returns to our stage, most recently seen as Suzuki/Madama Butterfly (2018) and Mother Goose/The Rake’s Progress (2016). In the 2015-16 season, she also appeared as Fenena/Nabucco, Meg/Little Women, and Gertrude Stein/27. In 2014-15, she was seen as Emilia/Otello, Eudige/Rodelinda, and Asakir/Sumeida’s Song. Thus far in the 2019-2020 season, she rejoined the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra as the alto soloist in Bruckner’s Te Deum, and made her Opera Southwest debut as Morgiana in the modern American premiere of Giovanni Bottesini’s Ali Baba. This coming spring she will make her role and company debut with Florentine Opera in the title role of Le Tragédie de Carmen, return to Resonance Works to debut the role of Maddalena/Rigoletto, and return to Symphony Tacoma as the alto soloist in Mozart’s Requiem. In the 2018–19 season, she rejoined Tacoma Opera for her debut in the title role of The Rape of Lucretia, and performed with Syracuse’s Symphony as the mezzo soloist in Haydn’s Mass in Time of War and Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9. She also sang the title role in the workshop of Mohammed Fairouz’s new opera, Bhutto, a co-commission with Beth Morrison Projects and Pittsburgh Opera. In the 2018–19 season, she returned to both Sarasota Opera, as Suzuki/Madama Butterfly, Flora/La traviata, and Syracuse Opera, as Suzuki/Madama Butterfly. She made company debuts with St. Petersburg Opera (Florida) as Dritte Dame/Die Zauberflöte, Pittsburgh’s Resonance Works as Ježibaba/Rusalka, and Washington Concert Opera as a guest soloist in their Opera’s Greatest Heroines gala concert. Throughout the 2016–17 season she made her Westmoreland Symphony Orchestra debut with her first performances of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9. In her return to Bellevue City Opera she performed her first Dorabella/Cosi fan tutte, and in October 2016 she made her Syracuse Opera debut as Tisbe/La cenerentola. In Summer 2015, Ms. Semerdjian made her Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra debut as part of Three Rivers Arts Festival and portrayed Cherubino/Le nozze di Figaro (Bellevue City Opera). Ms. Semerdjian was born in San Diego, CA and raised in Tacoma, WA. She holds a Master of Music in Vocal Performance from the University of North Texas and a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Arts with a Minor in Music Industry from the University of Southern California.
ANTONY WALKER: CONDUCTOR
Music Director Antony Walker celebrates his fourteenth season at Pittsburgh Opera in 2019-20. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut in 2011 with Gluck’s Orfeo ed Euridice, and has returned to The Met since then to conduct Il barbiere di Siviglia, The Pearl Fishers, and The Magic Flute. Maestro Walker enjoys superlative reviews not only for his Pittsburgh Opera productions, but also his recent concert performances of Donizetti’s rarely-performed Maria di Rohan, Massenet’s Hérodiade, and Beethoven’s Leonore at Washington Concert Opera. In 2010, Maestro Walker made debuts at English National Opera in Lucia di Lammermoor, at Canadian Opera Company in Maria Stuarda, and at The Santa Fe Opera in Madama Butterfly. In 2016 Maestro Walker was proud to conduct Rossini’s monumental Semiramide in Florence, Italy, where the operatic art was born. Maestro Walker currently serves as Artistic Director of Washington Concert Opera in Washington D.C., founding Artistic Director and Conductor Emeritus of Pinchgut Opera in Australia, and was Music Director of Cantillation and the Orchestra of the Antipodes for almost two decades. He was Chorus Master and Staff Conductor for Welsh National Opera from 1998–2002 and Musical Director of Sydney Philharmonia Choirs from 1992–97. Since his conducting debut in 1991, Maestro Walker has led nearly 200 operas, large-scale choral and orchestral works, and numerous symphonic and chamber works with companies in Europe, North America, and Australia. His extraordinary career includes engagements with Opera Australia, Welsh National Opera, New York City Opera, Teatro Comunale Bologna, Orchestre Colonne (Paris), Wolf Trap Opera, Merola Program at the San Francisco Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Glimmerglass Festival, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Vancouver Opera, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, and Sydney Opera House Orchestra.

MATTHEW HANEY: STAGE DIRECTOR
Matthew Haney is a second-year Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist in 2019-20. He assistant directed Don Giovanni and Florencia en el Amazonas and is scheduled to assist direct Carmen and Norma. He is scheduled to direct: The Last American Hammer. In the 2018-19 season, he assistant directed Madame Butterfly, Hansel & Gretel, La bohème, Don Pasquale, and afterWARds-Mozart’s Idomeneo Reimagined. He directed the Hansel & Gretel Student Matinee Performance and Glory Denied. Most recently Mr. Haney was seen at Marble City Opera, where he directed both Verdi’s La traviata and the world premiere of Follow Suit. Mr. Haney has also stage directed for Winter Opera St. Louis, working on productions of La traviata, Carmen, La cenerentola, and L’amico Fritz. Prior to his time in St. Louis, Mr. Haney served as the Rimrock Opera principal stage director for three seasons. Other directing engagements for Mr. Haney have included productions with University of Kansas, University of Central Missouri, William Jewel College, and Lawrence Opera Theater. Mr. Haney has been an assistant director for San Antonio Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Central City Opera, Opera Omaha, Tulsa Opera, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Mobile Opera, and University of Kansas.

Mr. Haney’s residency is generously sponsored by Dr. Athan Georgiades and Dr. Lydia Contis.
NICOLE PAGANO: WIG & MAKE-UP DESIGNER
Nicole Pagano returns to Pittsburgh Opera, this time as Wig and Makeup Artist, after having worked ten seasons here as Assistant to the Wig and Makeup Designer. A native of Southwest Pennsylvania, Ms. Pagano has also been the Wig and Makeup Supervisor at The McCarter Theatre of Princeton University for five years. Ms. Pagano is a graduate of the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where she received her BFA in Wig and Makeup Design.

JASON BRAY: COSTUME DESIGNER
This is Mr. Bray’s third season with Pittsburgh Opera, and he is Costume Designer for Alcina and The Last American Hammer. Last season, he also served as Costume Designer for afterWARds and Glory Denied. He began his costume studies and career at University of Hawaii Manoa and has a Bachelor’s in Apparel Design from The Art Institute of Portland. He has worked as Assistant Costume Shop Manager and Assistant Costume Designer for Portland Opera. Before coming to Pittsburgh Opera to assume the role of Costume Shop Manager, he was working for Theatrical Designer Michael Curry as a Project Manager and Fabricator of costume and puppetry—most notably working on the opening gala concert for the new Shanghai Disney theme park and shows for The Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Universal Studios in Osaka, Japan. Mr. Bray made his independent design debut in 2008 designing and creating puppets for Boxcar Children’s Theatre in San Francisco (Where the Sidewalk Ends). Other credits include costumes for Quintessence Language and Imagination Theatre (Jane Austen’s Persuasion, 2012), Oregon Children’s Theatre (James and the Giant Peach, 2016), and In Sequins Productions (a la Liberace). In his spare time he designs and creates custom costumes and clothing for private clientele.

LIGHTING DESIGN: NATE WHEATLEY
Nate Wheatley (Lighting Designer), Kansas City, MO. Selected credits include Candide, Rusalka, As One, Maria de Buenos Aires, A Little Night Music, Orphée et Eurydice (Des Moines Metro Opera), Juliet Letters, L’Italiana in Algeri (Lyric Opera of Kansas City), Sweeney Todd (Arizona Broadway Theatre), Carmen (NC Opera & Mill City Opera), Elizabeth Cree, Dog Days, Cunning Little Vixen, Eugene Onegin, Marriage of Figaro (LSU Opera), Ain’t Misbehavin’ (BRTKC), Don Giovanni and Frida (Florida Grand Opera). Upcoming engagements include Manon (LSU Opera), and Platée (Des Moines Metro Opera).
GLENN LEWIS: ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR
Glenn Lewis, a native of Rochester, New York, has worked as Pittsburgh Opera Head of Music since January 2008. He has served as pianist, vocal coach, and assistant conductor primarily to Music Director Antony Walker on most of the main stage productions of the past several seasons. These include Tosca, Eugene Onegin, Samson & Dalila, Rigoletto, Don Giovanni, The Grapes of Wrath, Orphée, and Aida. Mr. Lewis made his conducting debut in 2009 with the Resident Artist production of Don Pasquale and has since conducted Little Women, Dark Sisters, and Hänsel und Gretel, among others. In April 2018, he made his debut with Syracuse Opera conducting Madama Butterfly. In February 2017 he conducted The Abduction from the Seraglio with Dayton Opera. In the spring of 2016, he was in Washington, D.C. at the Kennedy Center working as an assistant conductor for the Wagner Ring Cycle at the Washington National Opera. For 17 seasons he has been on the staff of the Santa Fe Opera. There he has worked on productions including Wozzeck and Salome with Maestro David Robertson and Peter Grimes with Maestro Alan Gilbert. Mr. Lewis worked for 11 years in the opera houses in Cologne and Düsseldorf, Germany, where he conducted productions of La cenerentola, Orpheus in the Underworld, Zar und Zimmermann, and My Fair Lady. While there, he assisted Maestri James Conlon, John Fiore, Donald Runnicles, among others, on works including Elektra, The Makropulos Case, Der Rosenkavalier, and Meistersinger von Nürnberg. Past engagements include the Metropolitan Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago. He is a frequent recitalist in solo, chamber, and vocal repertoire. He holds degrees in piano performance from Ithaca College, Northwestern University, and an Artist Diploma in Opera Coaching and Conducting from Cincinnati Conservatory of Music.

MARK TRAWKA: HARPSCILDHORD CONTINUO
Mark Trawka joined Pittsburgh Opera as Director of Musical Studies for the prestigious Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist Training Program in the 2003-04 season. In the 2006-07 season, he also took on the position of Chorus Master. Mr. Trawka coaches and performs with the Resident Artists and has also accompanied renowned mezzo-soprano Marianne Cornetti in her Pittsburgh recital appearances. He has been a member of the music staff at Houston Grand Opera, Dallas Opera, and Portland Opera (Oregon), where he was principal pianist and assistant chorus master. Mr. Trawka served as coach/accompanist at Chautauqua Opera and at Glimmerglass Festival for many summer seasons. In the summer of 2006, he was director of the resident artist program at Berkshire Opera. He was music director at the Tyrolean Opera Program in the summer of 2014. Mr. Trawka has been a member of the coaching faculty at Songfest in Los Angeles for the last five summer seasons. He made his opera conducting debut at Pittsburgh Opera with the Resident Artist production of Ricky Ian Gordon’s 27. Educated at the Eastman School of Music and the University of Southern California, Mr. Trawka began his operatic career in the Houston Opera Studio and in San Francisco Opera’s Merola Program.

Mark Trawka’s faculty position is generously sponsored by Eileen and John Olmsted and co-sponsored by the Hollinshead Family in memory of Sylvia Hollinshead and the glorious Pittsburgh Opera Chorus.
DIRECTOR’S NOTES

ALCINA
By Matthew Haney

I’ve heard of her power and her beauty.

Welcome, friends, to the island of Alcina. In the first scene, Bradamante describes Alcina as powerful and beautiful, a dangerous combination. These first lines sparked the inspiration for our entire concept. Inherently, Alcina embodies an interesting contrast. She is a beautiful queen who brutally turns those who displease her into inanimate objects, essentially killing them.

Our theme of beauty and brutality is expressed in a mixture of luxurious baroque details amidst a brutalist underground setting, featuring large piles of discarded, decaying armor left by the thousands of knights who have lost their lives to the angry queen. Alcina herself, while dressed in period finery, employs a large dagger as her wand, symbolic of her savagery.

The island is home to more than just enslaved knights. Alcina’s sister, Morgana, and Morgana’s lover, Oronte, also play a part in these evil deeds. These three magical beings are represented by three distinct elements, which are manifested in the costumes as symbols of Alchemy. Alcina represents air, Morgana water, and Oronte earth. Alcina is searching not only for a lover and equal, but also a knight worthy of transforming into the fourth missing element, fire.

It seems at long last Alcina has found her mate in Ruggiero and his given him a crown of fire. Before his transformation is complete, Ruggiero betrays her. The broken-hearted Alcina goes through a transformation of her own. You will see her realize that she truly loved Ruggiero and that through his betrayal, she is bereft of her powers and her beauty fades.

In this story, there are not clear protagonists and antagonists. Yes, Alcina and Morgana lure men to their deaths, but the seemingly heroic characters, Bradamante and Ruggiero, also lie and do hurtful things. This piece ends with the chorus singing about transformation. This process has been interesting as we’ve learned how each of these characters truly transforms throughout the show and what they have gained or lost through during their sojourn on the island of Alcina.
CONTINUO
Patricia Halverson
Viola da Gamba
Chatham Baroque
Scott Pauley
Theorbo
Chatham Baroque
Mark Trawka, Harpsichord

BASSOON
Linda Morton Fisher
Principal

HORN
Stephanie Blaha
Acting Principal
Matthew Litterini

LIBRARIAN
Eleanor Cameron

PERSONNEL MANAGER
Robert Boldin
The orchestra musicians employed in this production are members of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada.

VIOLIN
Andrew Fouts
Chatham Baroque
Rachel Stegeman
Assistant Concertmaster
Kate M. Black
Jennifer Madge
Maureen Conlon-Gutierrez
Anne Moskal

VIOLIN II
Mary Beth Schotting
Acting Principal Second
Sara Schaft
Rochelle Agnew
Jennifer Cowles

VIOLA
Jennifer Gerhard
Principal
Louise Farbman

CELLO
Kathleen Melucci
Principal
Paula Tuttle

BASS
Andrew Kohn
Acting Principal

OBOE
Robert Driscoll, Jr.
Principal
Cynthia Anderson

RECORDER
Robert Driscoll, Jr.
Cynthia Anderson

SUPERNUMERARY
John Rushford
The Principal Artists, Choristers, and Production Staff employed in this production are members of the American Guild of Musical Artists.

About Chatham Baroque
Since its founding in 1990, Chatham Baroque has become “One of the country’s most distinguished period ensembles” (Palisadian Post), and “One of Pittsburgh’s greatest treasures” (Pittsburgh Post-Gazette). The current ensemble consists of Artistic Directors Andrew Fouts (violin); Patricia Halverson (viola da gamba); and Scott Pauley (theorbo) who are known for their excellent, nuanced technique and lively interpretations of baroque music. The artistically nimble trio invites the finest guest artists to perform with them throughout the season, allowing for repertoire ranging from well-known masterpieces to obscure gems. They present their Pittsburgh Concert Series each season, tour nationally and internationally, release critically acclaimed recordings, present numerous early childhood and community outreach programs, and frequently collaborate with other organizations such as Pittsburgh Opera, Quantum Theatre, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Attack Theatre, and Pittsburgh Camerata.

In the summer of 2018, Chatham Baroque, Inc. acquired Renaissance & Baroque, an early music presenting organization with a 50-year history of introducing national and international touring artists to Pittsburgh audiences. The new, combined organization now delivers the finest early music programming spanning the entire spectrum of the genre. For more information: chathambaroque.org

AFRICAN AMERICAN ART
IN THE 20TH CENTURY
February 16 – May 10, 2020
Organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C., this traveling exhibition presents forty-five works dating from the 1930s through the 1990s by thirty-four black artists from the Smithsonian American Art Museum’s collection.

SAAM
Smithsonian American Art Museum

African American Art in the 20th Century is organized by the Smithsonian American Art Museum.


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Chatham Baroque

The Art of the Trio
Vivaldi, Buxtehude, de Visée, Marais, & Erlebach
Chatham Baroque’s annual trio program celebrating the collective virtuosity, talent, and teamwork of its three artistic directors, Andrew Fouts (violin), Patricia Halverson (viola da gamba), and Scott Pauley (theorbo).

February 14, 15, & 16
Upper St. Clair – East Liberty – Shadyside

Baroque Concertos
Vivaldi and the Apotheosis of the Concerto in the 18th Century
Originating from the hometown of Antonio Vivaldi, Venice Baroque Orchestra comes to Pittsburgh with a blockbuster program of six concertos and a sinfonia by Vivaldi himself, including his famous double concerto for two cellos (RV 531).

Saturday, February 29, 8 PM
Carnegie Music Hall, Oakland

Hamsa
Music from Andalusia, the Ottoman Empire, North Africa, and the Sephardic Diaspora
New York-based ensemble East of the River performs music from the Near East from Jewish and Ottoman traditions of the 13th–18th centuries.

Saturday, March 14, 8 PM
Hicks Memorial Chapel, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, East Liberty

Advance Door
General Admission $30 $35
Seniors (65+) $25 $30
30 & Under $15 $20
Student (full time) $10 $15
Active US Military $10 $15

For tickets and more information visit www.chathambaroque.org

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LETTER FROM OUR GENERAL DIRECTOR

DEAR FRIENDS,

Welcome to Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters! We are pleased that you’re joining us for this season’s Second Stage production. As you know, there is much more to opera than massive epics in opulent concert halls. We are fortunate to be living in an age of unprecedented creation of new operatic works, including small-scale chamber pieces such as this one.

Like their forbears, some contemporary operas are comedic, some are tragic, and some are touchingly poignant. The Last American Hammer is all three. UrbanArias, which commissioned the piece, describes it as "a satirical but heartfelt examination of the fallout that occurs when the American Dream fails to materialize." We believe you’ll agree, and that in turn you’ll empathize with each of the three complex, nuanced characters in this story.

Our cast features second-year Resident Artists Caitlin Gotimer and Antonia Botti-Lodovico, both of whom sang most recently in our Baroque opera Alcina, and Resident Artist alum Timothy Mix, who also sang the role of Milcom in The Last American Hammer’s 2018 world premiere. It is a rare treat to be able to watch and hear these three gifted artists in such an intimate venue.

Speaking of ‘massive epics in opulent concert halls’, I hope that you will join us next month at the Benedum Center for Bizet’s irresistible Carmen. It’s the perfect introduction to opera, so please bring a friend!

Warmest regards,

CHRISTOPHER HAHN
General Director

Pittsburgh Opera presents The Last American Hammer, first performed at Atlas Performing Arts Center in Washington, D.C. on September 22, 2018. These performances mark the first production of The Last American Hammer at Pittsburgh Opera. Opera in one act.

Sung in English with English texts projected above the stage.

Estimated performance time: 1 hour, 30 minutes with no intermission.

Pittsburgh Opera offers an Audio Commentary service for patrons with visual impairments during Tuesday performances. To pick up an Assistive Listening Device, simply present an ID at the Audio Commentary table in the lobby. Braille and Large-Print programs are also available at each performance.

Season Sponsor:

This production is sponsored by The Alice M. Ditson Fund of Columbia University.

Tuesday Night Sponsor:

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Scenery, props, and costumes constructed by Pittsburgh Opera.

The Last American Hammer is presented through special arrangement with the authors. www.hilliardandboresi.com

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Composed by Peter Hilliard

Libretto by Matt Boresi

IN ORDER OF VOCAL APPEARANCE:

Milcom Negley
Tink Enraught
Dee Dee Reyes

Timothy Mix**
Caitlin Gotimer*
Antonia Botti-Lodovico*

THE ARTISTIC TEAM:

Conductor Glenn Lewis
Stage Director Matthew Haney*
Set Designer BinhAn Nguyen
Costume Designer Jason Bray
Lighting Designer Todd Nonn
Stage Manager Alex Seidel

* Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist
** Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist alum
Cast subject to change without notice.

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THE LAST AMERICAN HAMMER

The opera opens on Milcom Negley, a conspiracy theorist, militia man and unemployed hammersmith. He has occupied The National Toby Jug Museum, a cozy gallery full of Toby Jugs, which are antique ceramic pitchers shaped like people. At Milcom’s request, the museum’s curator Tink Enraught has called the sheriff, who has alerted the Joint Terrorism Task Force. While the two wait for the authorities to arrive, they lament the hard times their town has fallen on.

When law enforcement finally arrives, Milcom is dismayed to discover that his demands have not been taken seriously. Instead of SWAT teams with armored vehicles and helicopters, they’ve sent young rookie FBI Agent Dee Dee Reyes. Her partner has holed up in a local diner eating sauerkraut balls, leaving her to deal with this ‘unarmed, non-hostage situation’ by herself. Agent Reyes is also dismayed, realizing that what she thought could be her ‘big chance’ for an important assignment is essentially rookie hazing.

Tink invites Agent Reyes to join her for tea and cookies as Milcom launches into his conspiracy theory on the Thirteenth Amendment, a would-be amendment that negates the authority of the federal government. In Milcom’s impassioned ranting, he expresses outrage over the fact that the little Toby Jug Museum is the only place left in his dilapidated and failed town to receive federal funding.

The Museum receives a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts for the upkeep of a rare 17th-century British jug known as “Sir Oswyn,” which is the crown jewel in the Museum’s collection and the only jug of its kind still in existence. Milcom calls this an “insulting waste of taxman’s plunder” and a “federally funded heap of prissy elitist crap.” Deeply offended, Tink launches into a touching soliloquy where she defends her quaint museum and praises the intrinsic value of “delicate things.”

Annoyed that Milcom and Tink are wasting her time, Agent Reyes starts to leave. Stopping her, Milcom reveals the content of the case he has been carrying—a steel hammer with a curved hickory handle. This is the last American hammer made at the now-closed factory where Milcom used to work, “a product of freedom and muscle and sweat… by an underpaid, and overlooked, and doomed American man.”

SYNOPSIS continued on next page
Milcom then launches into a tirade against Agent Reyes, berating her for enforcing the rules of The Man, citing a long list of perceived governmental outrages against its citizens. In reply, Agent Reyes explains that she tries not to make assumptions about people and situations before having all the facts, and she wishes that Milcom would give her the same courtesy.

Agent Reyes asks Tink how she managed to get wrapped up in all of this. Tink reveals that she was a political revolutionary in her younger years. She wants Milcom to share his grievances with authorities because she can empathize with his passion, even if she thinks he's misguided.

Meanwhile, Milcom has arranged a number of Toby Jugs in a mock courtroom scene. He intends to put the corrupt, dishonest US government on trial, and is using the jugs as jurors and court officers. He himself is the prosecutor. The precious Sir Oswyn jug is the defendant. Tink grows increasingly concerned for the jugs' safety. Milcom makes Tink and Agent Reyes take the stand and answer his questions. Milcom presents an enraged closing argument for the prosecution, accusing America of abandoning its people and closing factories like his down, while spending money to fund trinkets like the Toby Jugs.

Milcom then has Agent Reyes make a closing statement on behalf of the government, but it does nothing to change his mind. He announces that the jury has found the defendant guilty on charges of tyranny, illegitimate power, and corruption of values. The sentence is destruction… “by thirty-two ounces of Bethlehem steel.” Milcom destroys the Sir Oswyn jug with his hammer, as Tink and Reyes watch in horror. Milcom drops the hammer. Tink removes the other jugs from the table. Agent Reyes places the hammer back in its case and announces the sheriff will be coming. She thanks Tink for the tea, takes one last cookie, and exits. Tink sadly sweeps up the shattered remains of the prized jug, while Milcom watches with guilt.

- Courtesy of Pittsburgh Opera
ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

THE LAST AMERICAN HAMMER

ANTONIA BOTTI-LODOVICO:
AGENT DEE DEE REYES

Antonia Botti-Lodovico is a second-year Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist in 2019-20. She performed Ruggiero/Alcina, Zerlina/Don Giovanni and is scheduled to perform Mercedes/Carmen and the Carmen Student Matinee. In the 2018-19 season she performed Kate Pinkerton/Madama Butterfly, Hansel in the Hansel & Gretel Student Matinee Performance, and Idamante/afterWARds - Mozart’s Idomeneo Reimagined.

Ms. Botti-Lodovico is a graduate of Roosevelt University, where she received her Master of Music. Her credits at Roosevelt include: Papagena in Mozart’s Die Zauberflöte and Madame Herz/Der Schauspieldirektor. In 2016 and 2017, she was an Apprentice Artist with the Des Moines Metro Opera. As an Apprentice Artist she performed the role of Rosette/Manon and covered the role of Petra/A Little Night Music. Additionally, she performed partial roles in their Young Artist Scenes Program, including Idamante/Mozart’s Idomeneo, Mélisande/Pelléas et Mélisande, Stewardess/Flight, Hermia/A Midsummer Night's Dream, Annio/La clemenza di Tito, Rosina/Il barbiere di Siviglia, Suzuki/Madama Butterfly, and Zerlina/Don Giovanni. She also performed in the ensemble with Des Moines Metro Opera for Maria de Buenos Aires, Turandot, and Orphée et Eurydice.

Ms. Botti-Lodovico has also performed with Undercroft Opera, covering the role of Pamina in Die Zauberflöte in 2014. Her previous engagements also include performances with the Tuscia Opera Festival, where she sang the role of Despina/Cosi fan tutte and Nursing Sister/Suor Angelica.

Ms. Botti-Lodovico’s residency is generously sponsored by Hans and Leslie Fleischner.
CAITLIN GOTIMER: TINK ENRAUGHT

Caitlin Gotimer is a second-year Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist in 2019-20. She performed Alcina/Alcina and is scheduled to perform Micaëla/the Carmen Student Matinee, and Clotilda/Norma. In the 2018-19 season, she performed Sandman and Dew Fairy/Hansel & Gretel, Elektra/afterWARds - Mozart’s Idomeneo Reimagined, and Older Alyce in Tom Cipullo’s Glory Denied.

She completed an Artist Diploma in Opera at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where she also received a Master of Music in Voice in 2017. While attending CCM, Ms. Gotimer sang Dalinda/Ariodante, Suor Angelica/Suor Angelica, and Anne Sexton in Conrad Susa’s Transformations. Ms. Gotimer has been seen previously with Crested Butte Opera Studio, where she recently sang the role of Lauretta/Gianni Schicchi. She debuted with the company in 2016 singing Musetta/La bohème and sang scenes in Carmen as Micaëla. Ms. Gotimer also performed scenes of Street Scene as Rose with the Chautauqua Institution in 2014. On the concert stage, Ms. Gotimer has been a soloist in Mozart’s Requiem at the Song d’été in Quebec, and in Bach’s Missa Brevis with Binghamton University.

Ms. Gotimer has been the recipient of several awards and honors, including being the recipient of one of the top prizes in CCM’s annual Corbett Competition, the Italo Tajo Award. She won the Audience Favorite Award and Second Prize in the Opera Guild of Dayton Competition and was a recipient of an Encouragement Award at the Cincinnati Metropolitan Opera National Councils in 2016. In 2015, Ms. Gotimer won first place in the National Biennial Collegiate Voice Competition and was selected to be a Binghamton University Summer Scholar and Artist before attending the first of two summers at the Chautauqua Institute School of Music.

Ms. Gotimer’s residency is generously sponsored by Robert J. and Sharon E. Scabassi.

TIMOTHY MIX: MILCOM NEGLEY

Finnish-American baritone Timothy Mix begins the 2019-20 season with his return to San Francisco Opera in the role of Count Capulet/Romeo et Juliette, then travels to Annapolis Opera to sing the role of Scarpia/Tosca. He returns to Urban Arias for performances as Older Thompson/Glory Denied in Washington D.C., where last season he performed the world premiere of Peter Hilliard and Matt Boresi’s The Last American Hammer. At Opera San Antonio he sings the role of Monterone/Rigoletto.

Last season’s highlights included an American premiere of Alexander Zhurbin’s song cycle TSVETAEVA with the Russian Chamber Art Society, and Mr. Mix joined Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra to sing Caliban/The Tempest in Swedish. Mr. Mix travelled to Bergen National Opera to appear as Albert/Werther and finished the season as Joseph De Rocher/Dead Man Walking at Opera Delaware with great success.

Appearing at the prestigious summer festival Santa Fe Opera, Mr. Mix’s debut in 2016 as Count Capulet/Romeo et Juliette under the direction of Stephen Lawless was the first of several engagements there; he returned the following season to jump into the role of Tsar Dodon/Le Coq d’Or, and most recently sang the role of Jack Hubbard/Dr Atomic. His San Francisco Opera appearances include Le Bret/Cyrano de Bergerac in 2010, Elder Ott/Blitch/Susannah in 2014, and de Brétigny/Manon in 2017. At Opera Colorado he sang Enrico/Lucia di Lammermoor, Belcore/L’elisir d’Amore (also at Virginia Opera), and Escamillo/Carmen.
GLENN LEWIS: CONDUCTOR
Glenn Lewis, a native of Rochester, New York, has worked as Pittsburgh Opera Head of Music since January 2008. He has served as pianist, vocal coach, and assistant conductor primarily to Music Director Antony Walker on most of the main stage productions of the past several seasons. These include Tosca, Eugene Onegin, Samson & Dalila, Rigoletto, Don Giovanni, The Grapes of Wrath, Orphée, and Aida. Mr. Lewis made his conducting debut in 2009 with the Resident Artist production of Don Pasquale and has since conducted Little Women, Dark Sisters, and Hänsel und Gretel, among others. In April 2018, he made his debut with Syracuse Opera conducting Madama Butterfly. In February 2017 he conducted The Abduction from the Seraglio with Dayton Opera. In the spring of 2016, he was in Washington, D.C. at the Kennedy Center working as an assistant conductor for the Wagner Ring Cycle at the Washington National Opera. For 17 seasons he has been on the staff of the Santa Fe Opera. There he has worked on productions including Wozzeck and Salome with Maestro David Robertson and Peter Grimes with Maestro Alan Gilbert. Mr. Lewis worked for 11 years in the opera houses in Cologne and Düsseldorf, Germany, where he conducted productions of La cenerentola, Orpheus in the Underworld, Zar und Zimmermann, and My Fair Lady. While there, he assisted Maestri James Conlon, John Fiore, Donald Runnicles, among others, on works including Elektra, The Makropulos Case, Der Rosenkavalier, and Meistersinger von Nürnberg. Past engagements include the Metropolitan Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago. He is a frequent recitalist in solo, chamber, and vocal repertoire. He holds degrees in piano performance from Ithaca College, Northwestern University, and an Artist Diploma in Opera Coaching and Conducting from Cincinnati Conservatory of Music.

MATTHEW HANEY: STAGE DIRECTOR
Matthew Haney is a second-year Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist in 2019-20. He assistant directed Don Giovanni and Florencia en al Amazonas and is scheduled to assistant direct Carmen and Norma. He directed Alcina.

In the 2018-19 season, he assistant directed Madama Butterfly, Hansel & Gretel, La bohème, Don Pasquale, and afterWARds-Mozart’s Idomeneo Reimagined. He directed the Hansel & Gretel Student Matinee Performance and Glory Denied. Most recently Mr. Haney was seen at Marble City Opera, where he directed both Verdi’s La traviata and the world premiere of Follow Suit. Mr. Haney has also stage directed for Winter Opera St. Louis, working on productions of La traviata, Carmen, La cenerentola, and L’amico Fritz. Prior to his time in St. Louis, Mr. Haney served as the Rimrock Opera principal stage director for three seasons. Other directing engagements for Mr. Haney have included productions with University of Kansas, University of Central Missouri, William Jewel College, and Lawrence Opera Theater. Mr. Haney has been an assistant director for San Antonio Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Central City Opera, Opera Omaha, Tulsa Opera, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Mobile Opera, and University of Kansas.

Mr. Haney’s residency is generously sponsored by Dr. Athan Georgiades and Dr. Lydia Contis.
NICOLE PAGANO: WIG & MAKE-UP DESIGNER
Nicole Pagano returns to Pittsburgh Opera, this time as Wig and Makeup Artist, after having worked ten seasons here as Assistant to the Wig and Makeup Designer. A native of Southwest Pennsylvania, Ms. Pagano has also been the Wig and Makeup Supervisor at The McCarter Theatre of Princeton University for five years. Ms. Pagano is a graduate of the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where she received her BFA in Wig and Makeup Design.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES, continued

PETER HILLIARD AND MATT BORESI: CREATORS
Hilliard and Boresi are nationally-recognized writers of operas specializing in timely, often comic, audience-accessible opera. Their operas, including The Last American Hammer, Blue Viola, The Filthy Habit, and others, have been programmed by Pittsburgh Opera, Urban Arias, Memphis Opera, Carnegie Mellon Opera, Manhattan Opera Theatre, Lyric Opera of the North, The Tanglewood Institute, and many others. 2020 will see the premiere of new work with Resonance Works Pittsburgh, Lyric Opera of the North, and San Francisco Girls Chorus. Hilliard and Boresi met and began working together in the Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program at NYU in 2000.

Composer PETER HILLIARD is an Assistant Professor and Music Director at Villanova University. He holds degrees from the San Francisco Conservatory and NYU. His work has received awards and nominations from The National Association of Teachers of Singing, The Ned Rorem Award, The Turner Classic Movies Young Film Composers Competition, Vocalessence, and the Young New Yorker’s Chorus. Upcoming compositions include a new cello concerto and orchestrations for baritone Keith Spencer’s tribute to African American men on Broadway. This Spring Hilliard will conduct Philadelphia’s Savoy Company in Gilbert and Sullivan’s Ruddigore and Sondheim’s Merrily We Roll Along at Villanova.

Librettist MATT BORESI is a member of the Opera Faculty at Carthage College, Director of Theatre at Lake Forest Academy, and Director of Arts Integration at Music Institute of Chicago. He regularly travels to China with his wife, Northwestern University Musical Theatre Voice professor Melissa Foster, to teach Western Lyric Theatre performance workshops. He is also a national award-winning columnist for Chicago Parent magazine and shares his thoughts and tips on parenting in a number of Chicago television programs.

BINHAN NGUYEN: SET DESIGNER
BinhAn Nguyen is currently a student at Carnegie Mellon University studying Scenic Design.
She was born in Vietnam and raised in Orlando, Florida. Currently, she is based in Pittsburgh, PA and working as a designer for theatre, opera, and museum exhibitions. She wishes to create art that seeks to uncover the meaning of the anthropocene’s existence.

Scenic Design: Subtle Asian Traits: LIVE (CMU Playground), Showgirls (CMU Playground), You’ll Thank Me for Everything One Day (CMU Playground), Aida (Timber Creek Thespians). Exhibition Design: Museum Lab (Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh). Prop Work: Twelfth Night, Othello (The Public’s Shakespeare in the Park)

TODD NONN: LIGHTING DESIGNER
Todd Nonn is a designer and technician from Pittsburgh. His Pittsburgh Opera designs include Glory Denied (2019), afterWARds (2019), As One (2017), 27 (2016), and Sumeida’s Song (2015). He also has worked as the Assistant Lighting Designer for most of the Pittsburgh Opera mainstage productions since 2012. Mr. Nonn designs many shows for Pittsburgh Musical Theater, Robert Morris University, Attack Theatre, Lincoln Park Performing Arts Center, CLO, and Bodiography Contemporary Ballet. He also is the Technical Director for Squonk Opera, having built and traveled with four national touring productions with them, and is working on his fifth. Mr. Nonn is the principal designer at BOLD Design inc., his latest endeavor. He has worked and designed shows in many places across the country including NYC, Williamstown Theatre Festival, and countless other companies and venues around the country. When not designing shows he is backstage making the show happen as a proud member of IATSE Local #3.

NICOLE PAGANO: WIG & MAKE-UP DESIGNER
Nicole Pagano returns to Pittsburgh Opera, this time as Wig and Makeup Artist, after having worked ten seasons here as Assistant to the Wig and Makeup Designer. A native of Southwest Pennsylvania, Ms. Pagano has also been the Wig and Makeup Supervisor at The McCarter Theatre of Princeton University for five years. Ms. Pagano is a graduate of the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where she received her BFA in Wig and Makeup Design.
MARK TRAWKA: DIRECTOR OF MUSICAL STUDIES

Mark Trawka joined Pittsburgh Opera as Director of Musical Studies for the prestigious Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist Training Program in the 2003-04 season. In the 2006-07 season, he also took on the position of Chorus Master. Mr. Trawka coaches and performs with the Resident Artists and has also accompanied renowned mezzo-soprano Marianne Cornetti in her Pittsburgh recital appearances. He has been a member of the music staff at Houston Grand Opera, Dallas Opera, and Portland Opera (Oregon), where he was principal pianist and assistant chorus master. Mr. Trawka served as coach/accompanist at Chautauqua Opera and at Glimmerglass Festival for many summer seasons. In the summer of 2006, he was director of the resident artist program at Berkshire Opera. He was music director at the Tyrolean Opera Program in the summer of 2014. Mr. Trawka has been a member of the coaching faculty at Songfest in Los Angeles for the last five summer seasons. He made his opera conducting debut at Pittsburgh Opera with the Resident Artist production of Ricky Ian Gordon’s 27. Educated at the Eastman School of Music and the University of Southern California, Mr. Trawka began his operatic career in the Houston Opera Studio and in San Francisco Opera’s Merola Program.

Mark Trawka’s faculty position is generously sponsored by Eileen and John Olmsted and co-sponsored by the Hollinshead Family in memory of Sylvia Hollinshead and the glorious Pittsburgh Opera Chorus.

JAMES LESNIAK: ASSOCIATE COACH/PIANIST

A native of Kenosha, Wisconsin, James Lesniak joined the Pittsburgh Opera music staff in 2006. After initial studies with Sheila Wiesztort, he received his Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees at Indiana University, where he studied with pianists Menahem Pressler, Karen Shaw, and Evelyne Brancart, with the mentorship and influence of Nicolas Larin. His university credits include music staff work for Mississippi State University and the Indiana University Opera Theatre. Further studies included an apprenticeship with the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program at Washington National Opera for two seasons, where he gave his stage debut in the non-singing/piano playing role of Lazinski in Fedora at the Kennedy Center, accompanying Plácido Domingo in the opera. In addition, Mr. Lesniak has served on the coaching staff of Brevard Music Center, Glimmerglass Opera, Washington National Opera at the Kennedy Center, and the National Symphony. He has been an official pianist for the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, made his conducting debut in 2017 with Pittsburgh Opera’s production of composer Laura Kaminsky’s As One, and conducted Pittsburgh Opera’s production of Tom Cipullo’s Glory Denied. Since 2018, James has served as a coach and accompanist for the vocal students at Slippery Rock University, and for over a decade has been an active member of the Pittsburgh Opera Trunks teaching artist presentation team, participating in engagement programs designed to enlighten and inspire the youth throughout the region. For the summer months, he frequently returns to the music staff of the prestigious Santa Fe Opera, where he has served as Musical Director for their Winter Concert Tour and was on the music staff for the Grammy Award winning production of The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs.

James Lesniak’s faculty position is generously sponsored by the Hollinshead Family in memory of Sylvia Hollinshead and the glorious Pittsburgh Opera Chorus.
DIRECTOR’S NOTES

THE LAST AMERICAN HAMMER
By Matthew Haney

The Truth is rarely pure and never simple.

What is a Toby Jug anyway? I’m glad you asked. The simple answer is that a Toby Jug is a figural beer jug, most typically in the form of a man wearing 18th-century attire and a tricorn hat. One origin theory, of many, is that these jugs get their name from Sir Toby Belch, a character in Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*. They are still eagerly collected, and judging by their price tags, held in high esteem. If one has the yearning for more jugs, there is always the American Toby Jug Museum in Chicago for all your jug needs.

Since Chicago is long journey for many of us just to see some porcelain beer glasses, we have created our own museum right here in Pittsburgh for you to peruse and enjoy. It was important to us that the audience get the impression of wandering through the museum, not only to get a better grasp of what a Toby Jug might look like, but also to connect the audience to these characters through a mutual experience.

One theme of this quirky piece is that while we all come from drastically different backgrounds and belief systems, we are all still motivated by the same basic human emotions. In this case, fear and uncertainty really unite these three characters. Milcom has lost his family and his job. He is desperately trying to take control of his life and has seized an opportunity that he believes will effect change. Tink’s sordid past was motivated by the fear of a governmental system that she found wanting. In a very real way, Reyes’ life is filled with uncertainty. She struggles to shake off the stigma of a woman working in a historically male environment.

We kept coming back to the idea of universality. It was important to show these characters as very distinct individuals who are connected through a shared experience. Their costumes reflect that common thread through color. There is also the element of patriotism. All three characters, while taking very different approaches, are doing (or have done) something that they believe will make our country a better place in the long run. Though we may be different and have different views, it is important for us to reflect on what makes us the same. The celebration of that sameness, not the exploitation of differences, is what can truly unite us and make effective change in this world.

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THE LAST AMERICAN HAMMER
By Matthew Haney

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...OF DARK AND BRIGHT

featuring

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*Jeffrey Turner*, bass

*Caroline Shaw* tO tHe HAnds
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Michael E. Braxton
Director of Development
Rachel Kiczuk
Manager of Individual Giving
Rebekah Diaz
Manager of Special Events
Greg Kettman
Manager of Corporate Giving
Julia Leyzanovich
Manager of Institutional Giving
Jesse Brower
Annual Giving Associate
Anita Sammartino
Monteverdi Society Advisor
Rachel Kingham
Meredith Key Development Interns

PRODUCTION
Robert Rok
Director of Finance and Administration
Howard Austin
Finance Manager/Human Resources
Denka Stavreva
Accounts Payable

MUSIC LIBRARY
Eleanor Cameron
Orchestra Librarian

ARCHIVES
Frank M.C. Fischer
Company Archivist

EDUCATION
Marilyn Michalak Egan, Ph.D.
Director of Education
Mary Ann Graziano
Jan Ban
Ray Beard
Julia Fennell
Donna Phane
Natalie Wallace
Audio Commentary Team
Tommy Lynn Barnes
Rachel Silverstein
Megan Swift
Victoria Touscany
Education interns
Joshua Baringer
Roy Beard
Alex Blue
Athena Biber
Carlo and Jack Brinjak
Lili Cai
Debra Colas
Anne Christensen
Maureen Cirroco
Susan Fair
Deb Frauwolff
Annie Futrell
Ann Giorgi
Roz Gooch
Nathan Hart
Makhuza Isalomva
Thomas James
Cynthia Jankowski
Nolin Klein
Anne Koch
Robert Lee
Nico Lennertz
Victoria Luketic
Cinda Maxwell
Mary Mazziotti
Katy Milger
Donna Piora
Maria Romanelli
Ali Shyadott
Werner Smith
Angela Thompson
Shelby Tucker
Celeste Vitalic
Education Volunteers
Benedum Tour Coordinators
HS Career Connections
Opera on Tap
Volunteer Ushers
Education Volunteer Teams

MARKETING AND PR
Christian D. Cox
Director of Marketing and Communications
Mark Marston
Manager of Audience Services
Regina Connolly
Group Sales Manager
Dana English
Digital Marketing Manager
Tess Alard
Manager of Graphic Design
Mia Bonnewell
Ruian Xun
Mobile Apps Operators
Garrett McCloskey
Marketing Intern

PRODUCTION
Tara E. Kovach
Director of Production
Cindy Knight
Stage Manager - Alcina
Alex W. Seidell
Stage Manager - The Last American Hammer
Jinh Lee
Assistant Stage Manager - Alcina
Katherine Fuss
Intern Assistant to the Director - Alcina
Karen Roche Galey
Stage Manager - The Last American Hammer
Todd Nunn
Assistant Lighting Designer - Alcina
Jonathan Bray
Costume Shop Manager
Roza Martinovic
Head of Costume Shop & Wardrobe
Jancique Wadowski
Assistant Wardrobe/Key Costume Shop
Virginia Phillips
Chris Tribowich
Lisa Leibering
Stitcher
James Geier
Wigmaker/Makeup Designer
Nicole Pagano
Travis Klinger
Assistant to Wigmaker/Makeup Designer
Virginia Pulokowski
Hair and Makeup Coordinator
Roderick Carter
Travis Klinger
Joan Spratt
Hair and Makeup Coordinator
Susan E. West
Head Carpenter
Steve Gogarty
Head Electrician
Michael W. Stack
Head of Properties
Thomas Ankley
Dave Dreier
Zac Dreier
Michael Dreier
West Assistant Carpenters
Kevin Hogan
Kelll Brannigan
Assistant Electricians
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John Michael Bohach
Prop Coordinator
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