

VCU OPERA

CELEBRATING 67 YEARS

PRESENTS



MASKED MAYHEM

A GALA OF OPERA SCENES



FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2017 • 7 P.M.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2017 • 4 P.M.

CO-DIRECTORS

MELANIE KOHN DAY & KENNETH WOOD

LIGHTING DESIGNER

CURT BLANKENSHIP

vcuarts

About VCU Opera

Founded in 1950 by L. Wayne Batty, VCU Opera has been directed by Melanie Kohn Day since 1983. In 2008, Dr. Kenneth Wood joined the VCU voice faculty and additionally assumed the position of Stage Director for VCU Opera. Between November 2011 and November 2015, VCU Opera earned four national awards from the NOA-National Opera Association: second place for Humperdinck's *Hansel & Gretel*, first place for Menotti's *The Old Maid & The Thief*, third place in the opera scenes competition for the opening duet of Act IV from Puccini's *La Bohème* and first place for Gilbert & Sullivan's *The Gondoliers*.

VCU Opera has the longest-running tradition of annual full-scale productions in the state of Virginia and is proud of its outstanding reputation as an opera training program. Each year there is a fully staged production of opera scenes as well as a full-scale production featuring scenery and costumes and presented in collaboration with the VCU Symphony.

VCU Opera's mission is to cast undergraduate students in appropriate roles from the mainstream repertoire. We specialize in traditionally styled productions utilizing our extensive collection of costumes, wigs and props.

With a significant emphasis on the holistic training of the complete "singer-actor," VCU Opera has prepared numerous students for scholarships to the nation's finest conservatories and university graduate programs, as well as for prestigious summer festivals in the USA and abroad and for Resident Artist positions with regional opera companies throughout the USA. Many VCU Opera alumni have gone on to enjoy highly successful careers performing in the world's greatest opera houses.



THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Act I Recitative and Trio (performed in English)

Cherubino, THE COUNT'S PAGE
Susanna, THE COUNTESS'S MAID
Count Almaviva
Don Basilio, THE MUSIC TEACHER

Kristen Melzer
Dyson Roy
Alan Chavez
Connor Terrell

DON PASQUALE

Gaetano Donizetti (1797-1848)

Act III Recitative and Duet (performed in Italian)

Don Pasquale, AN ELDERLY BACHELOR
Norina, A YOUNG WIDOW

Shyheim Hinnant
Jasmin Ward

DIE ENTFÜHRUNG AUS DEM SERAIL

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Act II Quartet (performed in German)

Konstanze, A SPANISH NOBLEWOMAN
Belmonte, A SPANISH NOBLEMAN
Pedrillo, BELMONTE'S SERVANT
Blonde, KONSTANZE'S MAID

Tess Ottinger
Evan Heiter
Micah Baldwin
Christianna Casey

PAGLIACCI

Ruggero Leoncavallo (1857-1919)

Act I Duet (performed in Italian)

Silvio, A VILLAGER
Nedda, CANIO'S WIFE

Alan Chavez
Emily Nesbitt

DIE FLEDERMAUS

Johann Strauss II (1825-1899)

Act I Duet (performed in English)

Dr. Falke, A NOTARY
Gabriel von Eisenstein, A WEALTHY BUSINESSMAN

Kevin Mann
Micah Baldwin

DIE FLEDERMAUS

Johann Strauss II
Act I Trio (performed in English)

Alfred, AN ITALIAN OPERA SINGER
Rosalinde, EISENSTEIN'S WIFE
Frank, A PRISON WARDEN

DeVonté Saunders
Kate Juliana
Trevor White

THE SECRET MARRIAGE

Domenico Cimarosa (1749-1801)
Act I Quartet (performed in English)

Count Robinson, AN ENGLISHMAN
Elisetta, DAUGHTER OF GERONIMO
Carolina, DAUGHTER OF GERONIMO
Fidalma, SISTER OF GERONIMO

Noah Smith
Savannah Whittenburg
Minh Vy Duong
Kristen Melzer

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE

W.S. Gilbert (1836-1911) & Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900)
Act II Trio (performed in English)

Frederic, THE PIRATE APPRENTICE
The Pirate King
Ruth, A PIRATICAL MAID OF ALL WORK

Evan Heiter
Shyheim Hinnant
Emily Nesbitt

PRODUCTION CREDITS

DIRECTOR OF VCU OPERA & ACCOMPANIST

Melanie Kohn Day

PRINCIPAL STAGE MANAGER

Tess Ottinger

CO-DIRECTOR/STAGE DIRECTOR OF
VCU OPERA & NARRATOR

Dr. Kenneth Wood

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
FOR "DIE ENTFÜHRUNG AUS DEM SERAIL"

Minh Vy Duong

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Curt Blankenship

COSTUMES & HAIR/WIGS

Melanie Kohn Day

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

PROPS AND SCENIC CONSTRUCTION

Roland Karnatz

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Dr. James Wiznerowicz; Curt Blankenship; Roland Karnatz; Tess Ottinger, Minh Vy Duong; DeVonté Saunders; Linda Johnston; Anne Marie Dumain; Emerson & Kathy Hughes; Dr. Velimir Luketic; Dr. Sonia Vlahcevic; Francile Bilyeu; Cynthia Donnell; Jesse Beville; Jared Parker & Jesse Castellani - VCU Technology Services.

SUPPORT VCU OPERA

The show must go on – and you can help! VCU Opera is made possible by the generous support of our community. Your tax-deductible financial gifts support scholarship funding, sponsoring guest artists for masterclasses/workshops, costumes, scenic construction and more. To learn about giving to VCU Opera, contact Linda Johnston, Administrative Director for the Department of Music: (804) 827-4541, lsjohnst@vcu.edu.

VCU OPERA ALUMNI NEWS

Zarah Brock performed with the Hawaii Performing Arts Festival and the Stafford Opera Troupe this past summer and continues her graduate studies at the Maryland Opera Studio, where she is currently singing a lead role in Mozart's *La Clemenza di Tito*.

Forrest Glass began his graduate studies in choral conducting at Temple University this fall and has been appointed Assistant Choir Director at First United Methodist Church of Germantown.

Jessica Harika is currently making her NYC directorial debut with ARE Opera. In the 2016-17 season, she was a Resident Artist with Shreveport Opera and in the summer of 2016 she was Assistant Director of the Janiec Opera Company and Stage Director/Acting Instructor for the High School Voice Program at the Brevard Music Center.

Alexander Harper completed his master's in Vocal Performance at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) last May. He subsequently made his professional debut at Dayton Opera with multiple role and cover credits and has returned there this fall as an Artist-in-Residence.

Aaron Todd Jones continues his graduate studies at Arizona State University, where he was awarded the tenor lead his first year in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. Last summer, he sang the tenor lead for Hawaii Performing Arts Festival in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. This fall, Aaron was cast as Le Fils in Poulenc's *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* as well as tenor lead Vasek in Smetana's *The Bartered Bride*. He was additionally selected to sing on a prestigious masterclass with world-acclaimed baritone Sherrill Milnes. Aaron is also part of two new work opera readings with Arizona State University Lyric Opera, which will be conducted by Virginia Opera's own Adam Turner.

Vanessa Naghdi began her residency as a Young Artist with Opera Colorado this fall where she has performed in touring shows and on the mainstage both as a principal artist and cover. Earlier this year, she appeared with both Arizona Opera and Arizona Chamber Opera, and last fall she sang with Annapolis Opera.