

A FEW HIGHLIGHTS:

Vanessa Naghdi, currently completing her graduate studies at Arizona State University, recently sang the lead role of Belinda in ASU's production of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. She was also cast as Guadalupe in Offenbach's *La Périchole* for ASU Opera. For regional company Arizona Opera, she recently covered the roles of Musetta in *La Bohème* and Norina in *Don Pasquale*.

Jessica Harika graduated in 2014 from The New England Conservatory of Music where she sang Arnalta in a production of Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* and also the alto solos in Beethoven's 9th Symphony with the NEC Philharmonia. She was then invited to be a Gerdine Young Artist for The Opera Theatre of St. Louis and recently moved to NYC.

May 2015 graduate **Alex Harper** was one of 12 singers chosen internationally to participate in the 2014 Atlantic Music Festival in Maine. While there, he performed multiple opera scenes, aria galas, and song recitals. Last summer, he was invited to sing for three weeks with the Oregon Bach Festival. He has begun his graduate studies with a large scholarship at The Cincinnati Conservatory of Music (he was accepted to all 5 of the graduate programs to which he applied, with scholarships to all.)

May 2015 graduate **Aaron Jones** attended the Harrower Opera Institute in Atlanta summer of 2014 where he sang the role of Snout in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Following the Harrower program, he attended the Crittendon Opera Institute in Washington, DC, where he performed opera scenes. In addition to singing solos with the Richmond Symphony and Richmond Symphony Chorus, Aaron was also accepted to the prestigious Oberlin in Italy program for summer 2015---while there, he performed Don Basilio in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* and studied Italian, acting, and voice. He recently performed the tenor solos in Rossini's *La petite messe solennelle* for the Alexander Paley Festival with the Richmond Symphony Chorus.

2015 graduate **Zarah Brock** returned for her third season in 2014 at the late Lorin Maazel's Castleton Festival where she covered the role of Zerlina in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and performed opera and Broadway scenes. Last summer, she attended the highly competitive Atlantic Music Festival in Maine, where she performed chamber music concerts, masterclasses, and scenes from *The Magic Flute*. She also attended the Harrower Institute in Atlanta, portraying the First Noble Orphan in *Der Rosenkavalier* by Richard Strauss and scenes from Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*. Zarah sings soprano in the Richmond Symphony Chorus.

Current students **Forrest Glass** and **DeVonte Saunders** were accepted and awarded scholarships to The University of Vienna in Austria last summer in order to study German.

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

VCU OPERA
CELEBRATING 65 YEARS!

presents

MOSTLY MAGIC **A GALA of OPERA SCENES**

co-directed by
MELANIE KOHN DAY & KENNETH WOOD

light design by
CURT BLANKENSHIP

Saturday, November 21, 2015 | 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, November 22, 2015 | 4 p.m.

Sonia Vlahcevic Concert Hall
W. E. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts
922 Park Avenue | Richmond, Virginia

arts.vcu.edu/music



MOSTLY MAGIC

Saturday, November 21, 2015 | 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, November 22, 2015 | 4 p.m.

Sonia Vlahcevic Concert Hall

La Cenerentola (Cinderella)Gioacchino Rossini (1792-1868)

Duet and Quartet from Act I Finale (sung in Italian)

Prince Ramiro: **DeVontè Saunders**

Clorinda: **Tess Ottinger**

Dandini: **Forrest Glass**

Thisbe: **Margaret Taylor**, guest artist

The Marriage of FigaroWolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Act I Recitative and Duet (sung in English)

Marcellina: **Catherine Pelletier**

Susanna: **Emma-Claire Polich**

The Consul..... Gian-Carlo Menotti (1911-2007)

Act I, scene 2-The Consulate

The Secretary: **Margaret Mayes**

Mr. Kofner: **Forrest Glass**

Foreign Woman: **Tylahr Dawes**

Magda Sorel: **Emily Nesbitt**

Magician: **Collier Phillips**

Vera Boronel: **Ella Mort**

Anna Gomez: **Taylor DaCosta** (Sat.),

Savannah Whittenburg (Sun.)

Così fan tutte Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Act II, Recitative and Duet (sung in Italian)

Fiordiligi: **Brenna Miller**

Dorabella: **Jaylin Brown**

Roméo et Juliette..... Charles Gounod (1818-1893)

Act IV Duet-The chamber of Juliette (sung in French)

Stage Directed by Ms. Brock and Mr. Jones

Juliette: **Zarah Brock**

Roméo: **Aaron Jones**

A Midsummer Night's Dream.....Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Act II scene-The wood, dark night

Assistant Stage Director:

Catherine Pelletier

Bottom: **Alan Chavez**

Tytania: **Paige Reisenfeld**

Peaseblossom: **Taylor DaCosta**

Cobweb: **Savannah Whittenburg**

Moth: **Emma-Claire Polich**

Mustardseed: **Ella Mort**

Rigoletto.....Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

Act IV Quartet (sung in Italian)

The Duke of Mantua: **DeVontè Saunders**

Maddalena: **Margaret Mayes**

Gilda: **Tess Ottinger**

Rigoletto: **Evan Coldiron**

Please silence all electronic devices.

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Melanie Kohn Day, *Artistic Director, VCU Opera & Accompanist*

Dr. Kenneth Wood, *Co-Director/Stage Director, VCU Opera & Narrator*

Curt Blankenship, *Lighting Designer*

Roland Karnatz, *Technical Director/Props Construction*

Zarah Brock (B.M. 2015) and Aaron Jones (B.M. 2015), *Stage Managers*

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Dr. Darryl Harper

Dr. Sonia Vlahcevic

Joe Wilkerson

Curt Blankenship

Amy Sheets

Emerson & Kathy Hughes

Roland Karnatz

Anne-Marie Dumain

Michelle Harman-Gulick

Margaret Taylor

George Harvey

Le Lew

Linda Johnston

Dr. Justin Alexander

Dr. Velimir Luketic

Jason Chan

ABOUT AWARD-WINNING VCU OPERA

Founded in 1950 by L. Wayne Batty, VCU Opera has been directed by Melanie Kohn Day since 1983. In 2008, Dr. Ken Wood joined the VCU voice faculty and also assumed the position of Stage Director.

VCU Opera has the longest-running tradition of annual full-scale productions in the state of Virginia. We produce a fully-staged gala of opera scenes and arias in the fall and in the spring, VCU Opera presents a full-scale production with scenery and costumes in collaboration with the VCU Symphony.

VCU Opera is proud of its long-term relationship with Virginia Opera, which includes regular field trips, workshops and master classes with staff and artists.

With a significant emphasis on the holistic training of the complete "singer-actor," VCU Opera has prepared numerous students who have been awarded significant scholarships to The Manhattan School of Music; Peabody Conservatory; Eastman School of Music; New England Conservatory; The Curtis Institute of Music; The University of Maryland; Boston University; Cincinnati Conservatory of Music and others. VCU Opera has an impressive history of alumni career success stories! Our alumni are singing in opera houses all over the world!