

The Maryland Opera Studio & The Artist Partner Program Present
TOWN HALL
A New Work Reading



February 9, 2018 . 7:30PM
GILDENHORN RECITAL HALL
at The Clarice



SCHOOL OF
MUSIC



Welcome to the annual Maryland Opera Studio (MOS) New Work Reading. In collaboration with The Clarice's Artist Partner Program, we've established commissions for annual new work readings written for the MOS 1st year class that address socially relevant issues. Now in the second year of this initiative, we reviewed a combined total of over 85 submissions from composers and librettists from throughout the United States representing every point in their own creative careers.

Thanks to MOS founder Leon Major, a commitment to new work has always been an integral part of our program's identity. I'm particularly interested in creating opportunities to foster new work that connect composers and librettists to our singers throughout the creative process and allows our audience to witness and take part in its creation at each stage. This past fall, our composer and librettist travelled to College Park to meet the singers at the start of the school year. Singers read the libretto with the creative team and workshopped sketches of select scenes. Excerpts of the work were performed at The Clarice's Next Now Festival in early September. This residency created a foundation that allowed the roles to be written for our specific singers - the result of this creative process is tonight's reading.

Maryland Opera Studio's dedication to new work is our own response to the growing need to create opportunities for composers and librettists to explore their creative voices, for our singers to create roles, and for our audiences to experience works for the first time. We're excited to continue these commissions in the years ahead, discovering new compositional voices and introducing new work to the greater opera world!

Craig Kier, Director of Maryland Opera Studio

*The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center,
the University of Maryland School of Music, and
the Maryland Opera Studio present*

TOWN HALL

Music by Theo Popov
Libretto by E.M. Lewis

Performed in English

Program is approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes

***Please join us for a discussion with the composer
and librettist directly following the performance***

CAST:

Annie Entwistle..... Helena Crothers
Charlie Entwistle..... Samuel Keeler
Sarah Palmer.....Zyda Culpepper-Baldwin
Senator Bobby Lane.....Zachary Mallory
Terri Evans.....Amanda Staub
Mina Tran.....Shafali Jalota
Nick Esposito..... Dallas Gray
Jason McCormick..... Andrew Boisvert
Ed Larsen.....Justin Harrison
Coretta Wilkins..... Zarah Brock

Musical Director..... Justina Lee
Stage Director..... Tara Faircloth

In a small town, somewhere in America, a community gathers to ask their senator questions about the politics of the day. But the conversation turns into a heated debate with mortal stakes when a retired librarian takes the event hostage. What are the human costs of political decisions? Is there such a thing as the common good? Is what's best for our country the same as what's best for its people?

"We must all hang together, or most assuredly
we shall all hang separately."

-Benjamin Franklin

It doesn't feel as if we are hanging together in America today. The ugly political battles of the last few years have polarized us. But maybe we were polarized already. Tinder waiting for a match.

When the Affordable Care Act was under discussion last year, we watched several of the Town Halls that were being held by lawmakers back in their home districts, all across America, live-streamed on the internet. Town Halls are such a wonderfully personal means of communication in our digital age. People gather together with their neighbors to talk about what matters to them at Town Halls. We were deeply moved by the raw emotion we witnessed, particularly as people discussed health care. As freelance artists, whose only healthcare option comes from the ACA, we felt great empathy for those people who were arguing their case in front of their senators and representatives. When Maryland Opera Studio asked for proposals for "current socially relevant" operas, we knew right away what we wanted to write about.

We were excited to conceive and develop dramatic and musical characters specifically for the ten talented singers in the MOS, whom we met in person in September. They became our town. They were a pleasure to write for. We encourage you to listen for the specific motives in both music and text which identify each character.

-Theo Popov and E.M. Lewis



Theo Popov, *composer*, began his formal compositional training by studying electronic music with Paul Lansky and musical geometry with Dmitri Tymoczko. His first opera, *NERO ARTIFEX*, was fully-staged at Princeton University to enthusiastic acclaim in March 2010. A three-act drama in Classical Latin with libretto by Mariah Min and Veronica Shi, the opera presented one of history's most notorious emperors as a well-meaning but incapable ruler, a gullible dreamer and unfortunate artist. In May 2012, his second opera *Once Upon the Wind*, based on the Russian folktale, "*The Soldier Who Captured Death*," premiered at the American Lyric Theater. The opera was selected as a winner in the company's inaugural Composers Competition. He has returned to the American Lyric Theater to develop the opera *The Halloween Tree*, based on a Ray Bradbury novella, with librettist Tony Asaro. In addition, Theo has written two puppet shows, several choral and orchestral pieces, art songs, chamber music, and electronic music. Popov completed his composition degree at Princeton University, where he studied with Steve Mackey, Peter Westergaard, Bill Whelan, Barbara White, Paul Muldoon, and Kofi Agawu. He has also studied theremin with Lydia Kavina, voice with David Kellett, piano with Edmund Niemann, and dramaturgy with Cori Ellison. Popov has also been a resident at Yaddo.



E.M. Lewis, *librettist*, E. M. Lewis is an award-winning playwright, teacher, and librettist. She received the Steinberg Award for *Song of Extinction* and the Primus Prize for *Heads* from the American Theater Critics Association, the Ted Schmitt Award from the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle, a Hodder Fellowship from Princeton University, and the 2016 Oregon Literary Fellowship in Drama. Her play *Now Comes the Night* was part of the Women's Voices Theater Festival in Washington DC, and was published in the anthology *Best Plays from Theater Festivals 2016*. *The Gun Show* premiered in Chicago in 2014, and has since been produced in over a dozen theaters across the country. Lewis' newest play called *Magellanica*, had its world premiere at Artists Repertory Theater in 2016. Her other plays include: *Infinite Black Suitcase*, *The Study* (aka *Reading to Vegetables*), *True Story*, and *You Can See All the Stars* (a play for college students commissioned by the Kennedy Center). Lewis is currently working on a family-friendly opera commissioned by American Lyric Theater called *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Fallen Giant*, and a political play set in Oregon called *The Great Divide*. She is a proud member of LineStorm Playwrights, ASCAP, and the Dramatists Guild.



Justina Lee, *musical director*, has served as assistant conductor, pianist, and coach in such venues as the Metropolitan Opera, Washington National Opera, Seattle Opera, the Glimmerglass Festival, the Wolf Trap Opera Company and the Castleton Festival. Internationally, she has worked with the International Opera Performing Experience and is on faculty with the Prague Summer Nights Music Festival. In recital, Lee has accompanied acclaimed tenor Lawrence Brownlee, also appearing with him on NPR's Tiny Desk Concert series. She has also collaborated in recital with other artists including Dimitri Pittas, Alex Richardson, Alyson Cambridge, and Linda Mabbs. She has appeared under the auspices of the Marilyn Horne Foundation residency program, and on such recital series as *On Wings of Song*, the Harriman-Jewell Series, and most recently, Renée Fleming's VOICES recital series. Lee is an alumna of the distinguished Lindemann Young Artist Development Program at the Metropolitan Opera, and holds degrees from the University of California, Los Angeles, and the Manhattan School of Music. She joined the University of Maryland faculty in 2008 where she currently serves as principal coach of the Maryland Opera Studio.



Tara Faircloth, *stage director*, has had her work seen in opera houses around the nation. She directed two world premieres with the Houston Grand Opera's East+West series (*The Bricklayer* and *Her Name Means The Sea*) and has a thriving career in regional houses such as Wolf Trap Opera, Utah Opera, Arizona Opera, Atlanta Opera, and Tulsa Opera (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Rigoletto*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Hänsel & Gretel*, etc.). The 2017-18 season finds Faircloth working on productions new and old: *Tosca*, *Carmen*, *Agrippina*, *Gianni Schicchi*, *Pagliacci*, and a mixed media collaboration exploring the life and loves of Clara Schumann entitled *Loving Clara*, which premieres in January 2018 with Mercury: The Orchestra. Following last year's season, which included new productions of *Giulio Cesare*, *Fidelio*, *Hansel & Gretel*, *L'enfant et les sortilèges* and Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Faircloth is in demand as an interpreter for familiar works and those that are more obscure. Faircloth has worked extensively on directing staff at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Houston Grand Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera and Central City Opera. She has a private coaching studio in Houston, Texas, and regularly works with the talented singers in the Houston Grand Opera Studio and Rice University.



Zarah Brock (Fredericksburg, VA) *Coretta Wilkins, soprano*, recently performed the role of Annio/*La clemenza di Tito* with MOS in November and Zerlina/*Don Giovanni* with the Hawaii Performing Arts Festival. Brock earned her Bachelor of Music degree from Virginia Commonwealth University and performed various roles while there, including Casilda/*The Gondoliers*, Hanna Glawari/*The Merry Widow*, and First Spirit/*Die Zauberflöte*. Brock also trained at the late Lorin Maazel's Castleton Festival and had the opportunity to travel abroad to Oman to perform in *La bohème* with the festival. She looks forward to performing Soeur Constance/*Dialogues des Carmélites* with the studio in the Spring. She is a student of Delores Ziegler and a 2nd year member of the Maryland Opera Studio.



Andrew Boisvert (Needham, MA) *Jason McCormick, bass*, is a first year at the Maryland Opera Studio, studying with Kevin Short. He is a recent graduate of the Hartt School at the University of Hartford, where he studied with Wayne Rivera. While attending, he had the pleasure of performing the roles of Carl Olsen/*Street Scene*, Balthazar/*Amahl and the Night Visitors*, Sarastro/*The Magic Flute*, Mars/*Orpheus in the Underworld*, and Harašta/*The Cunning Little Vixen*. With Opera Connecticut, he performed the role of Betto/*Gianni Schicchi*. He has also taken part in Longwood Opera's Summer Concert Series.



Helena Crothers (Portland, ME) *Annie Entwistle, mezzo-soprano*, is a first-year graduate student in the Maryland Opera Studio studying with Delores Ziegler. Crothers completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Southern Maine where she studied with Ellen Chickering. Her recent roles include Frau Reich/*The Merry Wives of Windsor* with the USM Department of Theater and Ottavia/*L'incoronazione di Poppea* with the USM Opera Workshop. Also, with the USM Opera Workshop, she was seen as Dorabella/*Così fan tutte* and Augusta/*The Ballad of Baby Doe*. Crothers has received numerous awards in the Portland area including the first prize in the Barbara C. Littlefield Vocal Competition in 2017.



Zyda Culpepper-Baldwin (Birmingham, AL) *Sarah Palmer, soprano*, is a first-year member of the Maryland Opera Studio and studies with Martha Randall. Culpepper-Baldwin is a recent graduate of the University of Alabama where she pursued a Bachelor of Music degree and was a student of Dr. David Tayloe. Roles performed with the University of Alabama Opera Theatre include Anna Fenton/*Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor*, Caroline in the world premiere of *Freedom and Fire! A Civil War Story*, Zerlina/*Don Giovanni*, Emma Jones/*Street Scene*, and Sandman/*Hansel and Gretel*. She sang the role Angelina/*Trial by Jury* with Greensboro Light Opera and Song. Her scene work includes selections of *Bess/Porgy and Bess*, *Laetitia/The Old Maid and the Thief*, as well as *Clorinda/La Cenerentola* and *Lisette/La Rondine* performed at the Bassi Brugnattelli Symposium in Robbiate, Italy. Culpepper-Baldwin covered the role of Servilia in Maryland Opera Studio's *La clemenza di Tito* in November.



Dallas Gray (Nederland, TX) *Nick Esposito, tenor*, is a first year at the Maryland Opera Studio and a recent graduate of DePauw University, where he earned the Bachelor of Music Degree in Vocal Performance. His most recent roles have included Sam/*Street Scene* and Laurie/*Little Women*, as well as roles in *The Coronation of Poppea* and *Parade*. He also sang Monty Navarro/*A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* in a scene that won first place in the National Opera Association's Collegiate Scenes Competition. Additionally, he was a two-time winner in the annual Concerto Competition, was awarded the Performance Certificate, and was a first-place winner in the Great Lakes Regional NATS competition. Gray was an intern with the renowned vocal ensemble Voces8 with whom he spent three weeks touring Germany before returning to Great Britain for their two summer programs at Ardingly College and Milton Abbey. He is currently studying with Gran Wilson.



Justin Harrison (Bowie, MD) *Ed Larsen, baritone*, is a first year at the Maryland Opera Studio and a recent graduate of Morgan State University. In 2015, he participated in the Bethesda Summer Music Festival and performed the role of Krusina/*The Bartered Bride*. He is a 2017 Sue Goetz Student Competition for Voice third place recipient, 2016 Sue Goetz Student Competition for Voice Honors Award recipient, and the recipient of the 2016 Morgan State University Music Department Voice Excellence Award. In 2015, he was the first-place winner of the College Sophomore Mens Category of the National Association of Teachers of Singing Mid-Atlantic Regional Student Auditions, as well as the Favorite Male Voice Prize Recipient. He has travelled and sung in Argentina, Cuba, Spain and Portugal. He currently studies with Kevin Short.



Shafali Jalota (Silver Spring, MD) *Mina Tran, soprano*, is a first year in the UMD Opera Studio. Classical Voice of North Carolina has praised her “full and rich voice,” and she has worked with distinguished artists including Christine Goerke, Lori Laitman, and Arlene Shrut. Most recently, she performed the role of Dido/*Dido and Aeneas* with UNC Opera and the role of Susanna/*Le nozze di Figaro* in Maiori, Italy. She made her debut with the Durham Symphony Orchestra in April 2017. She has appeared as a soloist with the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra, the UNC Baroque Ensemble, UNC’s Carolina Choir, and various other local orchestras and choruses. She has placed first (region and state) in the NATS Auditions, where she won the Reid Alexander Brown Scholarship for Outstanding College Woman. Jalota received a BM degree from UNC-Chapel Hill, where she was a Robertson Scholar and studied with Dr. Louise Toppin.



Samual Keeler (Santa Clara, CA) *Charlie Entwistle*, tenor, is a first year at the Maryland Opera Studio and a recent graduate of the Bachelor's Degree Vocal Performance program at the University of Maryland. Here he also obtained his B.A. in Italian Language from UMD and continues to study with Gran Wilson. He has had the pleasure to work with the In Series on multiple occasions, where he appeared as Ferrando (Randy)/*Così fan Tutte Goes Hollywood* as well as the Defendant/*Trial by Jury*. Other performances include *Benedict/Beatrice and Benedict* with the Shakespeare Opera Theatre, *Don Ottavio/Don Giovanni*, and most recently as Tamino/*Die Zauberflöte*, the latter two with Opera AACC. In addition, he has appeared in productions with Lyric Opera Baltimore, Baltimore Concert Opera, and Opera Nova. He has been featured as tenor soloist in works such as the Bach *Magnificat*, Handel's *Messiah*, and Berlioz's *Te Deum*.



Zachary Mallory (Litchfield, NH) *Senator Bobby Lane*, bass-baritone, is a first year at the Maryland Opera Studio and a recent graduate of The Boston Conservatory. He was most recently seen as part of Opera in the Ozarks summer season as Il Commendatore/*Don Giovanni*, Superintendent Budd/*Albert Herring*, and Il Talpa/*Il tabarro*. While studying for his undergraduate degree, Mallory performed as Father Trulove/*The Rake's Progress* and Minskman/*Dove's Flight*. In addition, Mallory appeared as Minister of the Sanctuary in the Conservatory's concert production of Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride*, and as a chorister in *La bohème*, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *L'italiana in Algeri*, and *Le nozze di Figaro*. An active member of the arts scene in Boston, Mallory recently directed a production of *The Mikado* with the Harvard Radcliffe Gilbert and Sullivan Society. Mallory currently studies with Kevin Short.



Amanda Staub (Adamstown, MD) *Terri Evans, mezzo-soprano*, graduated from the University of Maryland in 2016 with degrees in voice performance and music education. Staub has sung the roles of *Belinda/Dido and Aeneas* and *Mme. Silberklang/Der Schauspieldirektor* with OperaTerps, a student run opera company where she also served as its associate artistic director. She also appeared as a chorus member in The Young Victorian Theatre's production of *Iolanthe*. As a member of the University of Maryland Chamber Singers, she has performed with the National Symphony Orchestra, and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. Recently, she appeared in Bel Cantati Opera's production of *Cendrillon* (Viardot) as *Armelinde*. Staub covered the role of *Annio* in Maryland Opera Studio's fall production of *La clemenza di Tito*. Staub is currently studying with Delores Ziegler.

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Isabelle Anderson, *Mask* • Carmen Balthrop, *Opera Repertory*
 Mark Jaster, *Mime* • Naomi Jacobson, *Improvisation*
 Craig Kier, *Director of MOS, Conductor & Coach*
 Marsha LeBoeuf, *Costume and Period Clothing Instruction*
 Justina Lee, *Principal Coach* • Linda Mabbs, *English Diction*
 Jenny Male, *Stage Combat* • Ashley Pollard, *Studio Manager*
 Martha Randall, *Vocal Pedagogy* • Kevin Short, *Italian Diction*
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 Linda Mabbs, *Soprano* • Edward Maclary, *Director of Choirs*
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 Kevin Short, *Bass-Baritone* • Gran Wilson, *Tenor*
 Delores Ziegler, *Mezzo-Soprano*

UPCOMING MARYLAND OPERA STUDIO EVENTS

Please join us in April for

Francis Poulenc's

DIALOGUES DES CARMÉLITES

Premiered in 1957, Poulenc's opera explores religious devotion and self-sacrifice through the story of Blanche de la Force, a young aristocratic woman who joins the Carmelite Order to escape the violence of the French Revolution's Reign of Terror.

And come before the April 22nd matinee for Opera Resonates! A pre-show discussion led by Maestro Craig Kier.

1:30PM MSPAL Piano Archives

SATURDAY, APRIL 14 . 7:30PM

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18 . 7:30PM

FRIDAY, APRIL 20 . 7:30PM

SUNDAY, APRIL 22 . 3:00PM

TAMARA WILSON, SOPRANO

WEIGHTLESS DREAMS

FRIDAY, APRIL 27, 2018. 8PM

A 2017-18 University of Maryland School of Music Artist in Residence and 2016 Richard Tucker Award Winner, soprano Tamara Wilson appears in recital with pianist Justina Lee. Ms. Wilson explores the works of Fanny Mendelssohn, Marx, Debussy, Fauré, Copland, and Barber in the premiere of her song recital program, "Weightless Dreams."

OPERA SCENE STUDY

THURSDAY, MAY 3, 2018 . 7:30PM

FRIDAY, MAY 4, 2018 . 7:30PM

After a year of deconstructing their craft and sculpting it from the ground up, Maryland Opera Studio first-year students are paired in operatic scenes from a wide variety of repertory. Accompanied only by piano and minimal props, these performances give our young artists a chance to shine in the purest of forms.

UMD SCHOOL OF MUSIC: ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

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J. LAWRENCE WITZLEBEN

Coordinator of World Music Ensembles