



The Aria Institute: Mezzo Edition Showcase Performance

Thursday, 10/8, 7 PM – Drake University

featuring

Ann Cravero, mezzo-soprano
Jodi Goble, collaborative pianist

“A Single Chair at a Single Table”
from *How Carmen (Almost) Got Her
Groove Back*

Libretto by Cris Eli Blak
Music by Lauren McCall

“The Suited Suitors”
from *How Carmen (Almost) Got Her
Groove Back*

Libretto by Cris Eli Blak
Music by Maxim Samarov

“No Tea For Me” (Mary’s Lament)
from *Stagecoach Mary*

Music by Emily Boyajian
Libretto by Mona Washington

“Lena’s Aria”
from *Danvers and Luthor: A Supergirl
Opera*

Libretto by Basil Considine
Music by Helena Michelson

“Gardens of Blight”
from *Green Thumbed*

Libretto by Tiffa Foster
Music by Jamey Guzman

“Latisha’s Lament”
from *Love Me Back*

Libretto by Ned Eckhardt
Music by Qianni Lin

“Closer”
from *Now is the Time for Fire*

Libretto by Ned Eckhardt
Music by Stacy Fahrion

“My Name”
from *The Stillwater School Board Spring
Conference*

Libretto by Jesse LaVercombe
Music by Emily Boyajian



About the Pieces

“A Single Chair at a Single Table”
from *How Carmen (Almost) Got Her
Groove Back*

Libretto by Cris Eli Blak
Music by Lauren McCall

Veronica is a young woman struggling with coming to terms with her sexuality. She dreams of becoming an actress, but is afraid that her internal confusion will damage her chances of earning a leading role in a big film. Despite this, she desperately wants to act on what her heart tells her.

In this scene, at the top of Act II, Veronica walks into a speed-dating event, not sure if she is there to meet a man or look for a woman. Her confusion dies when she spots Carmen sitting alone at her table, sipping on a glass of wine. She immediately finds beauty in this older woman, in the way that she sits alone so confidently, not letting anyone on to what she is feeling. She is showing no emotion. She is showing no nerves. *This* is who Veronica wants to be with. Even more than that, this is *who* Veronica wants to be.



“The Suited Suitors”
from *How Carmen (Almost) Got Her
Groove Back*

Libretto by Cris Eli Blak
Music by Maxim Samarov

Carmen Anthony is a 40-something businesswoman, a recent divorcée, and (now) a single mom. She is the owner of her own business: a wellness company specializing in herbs and natural juices (whether those drinks *actually* taste good are debatable). She is smart and head-strong but unsure about being in a relationship, after how her last one ended (her husband slept with her sister *and* her sister’s sister-in-law). Still, she does not let her flaws show. She stands up straight, barely blinks, constantly keeping it professional. Imagine if Meryl Streep’s character from *The Devil Wears Prada* was younger and nicer, but still just as diligent.

In this scene at the end of the Act I, it is 2016: the entire world is changing and so is Carmen’s life. After months confused by her new life, Carmen is convinced by her teenage children and friends to get back in the dating game through various methods, including speed-dating. In this outing, a series of men try to impress Carmen with their careers and personalities (or lack of), not knowing that she herself is probably a more successful professional person than they are.



“No Tea for Me” (Mary’s Lament)
from *Stagecoach Mary*

Music by Emily Boyajian
Libretto by Mona Washington

“**Stagecoach Mary**” **Fields** was a hard-drinking, quick-shooting African American mail carrier in the American West. A legendary figure in her own time, in 1890s Montana, Mary was 60 years old, stood six feet tall, and sported two guns, men’s clothing, and a bad attitude. She fought off wolves and bandits alike, was the only woman allowed into saloons in Cascade, Montana (by special statute), and had numerous adventures.

This opening aria introduces the audience to Mary at sundown in a Montana cowboy bar. It is the 1890s; worn wooden planks and semi-finished walls frame the stage. Two cowboys sit at the bar, talking and drinking their whiskey when Mary strides in.



Lena’s Aria
from *Danvers and Luthor: A Supergirl
Opera*

Libretto by Basil Considine
Music by Helena Michelson

Lena Luthor is the white sheep scion of the notorious Luthor family of wealthy (and usually evil) industrialists and scientific geniuses. For all her wealth, she does not make friends easily, and for years she is unaware that her best friend Kara Danvers is actually Supergirl in disguise.

“Lena’s Aria” is the Act II cliffhanger. At the end of Act I, Lex Luthor disappeared after almost destroying the world and nearly killing Supergirl. Unknown to the rest of the world, this is because Lena confronted and killed her own brother to stop him from killing Supergirl. With his last breath, Lex revealed Supergirl’s secret identity to his sister, causing Lena to question her friendship not just with Kara, but with every other friend she has in the world.

In Act II, an isolated and grieving Lena decides to use her genius to put an end to all violence in the world using mind control technology. As the plan goes forward, she decides to tell Supergirl about how she really feels.



Gardens of Blight
from *Green Thumbed*

Libretto by Tiffa Foster
Music by Jamey Guzman

Lily has always been the best at everything. *Always. At everything. No exceptions.* Well, that was until she had a heart attack and was forced to retire early and take on a more relaxing lifestyle.

Lily is terrible at relaxing and she's driving her friends and family crazy. So they have all convinced her that she should join a local gardening club.

She wasn't very interested in gardening until she saw that there were competitions. And that she found very interesting. Because Lily loves to win. *Always. At everything. No exceptions.*

Lily now has her eyes on usurping the current president of the gardening club and taking home the title of Laketon's Best Gardener. However, three hours before her first garden party, Lily has just discovered that *all* of her plants have something terribly wrong with them.

Her craved title and chances of becoming garden club president are now in serious jeopardy. What is she going to do?



Latisha's Lament
from *Love Me Back*

Libretto by Ned Eckhardt
Music by Qianni Lin

Latisha Jones was raised to respect everyone. After her father was mis-identified as a burglary suspect in a white neighborhood and brutally beaten by the police, she began to change her point of view. Then her mother died of complications from an infected diabetes injection while waiting for a slow responding white EMT crew, and she joined Black Lives Matter.

"Latisha's Lament" finds her in an alley in Charlottesville, Virginia on August 11, 2017. There is a violent demonstration – then gunshots above the yelling and screaming. Chet, a young, white supremacist, staggers into the alley and collapses against the wall. He is dressed in camo pants and a shirt that has the Confederate Flag on it, has been shot in the leg, and is bleeding profusely. Latisha Jones flees from a mob of angry white protestors, taking shelter in the alley. She spots Chet. She is wearing a BLM T-Shirt over another shirt. He is wearing a holster with a gun in it.



“Closer”
from *Now is the Time for Fire*

Libretto by Ned Eckhardt
Music by Stacy Fahrion

Maria DuBois has always been a successful, driven woman. She has succeeded in the tech world, married a “steady” man, raised an eighteen-year-old daughter, and has a passionate young lover.

“Closer” is the finale of a 1-act opera. A meteor is hurtling toward Earth, impacting in just a few hours. Maria’s husband has built a fallout shelter that holds only three. Maria’s daughter has also recently discovered she is pregnant, but Maria made her promise not to reveal this news.

Suddenly, Maria’s lover arrives, confronts her husband, and pleads to be the male in the shelter. After a violent exchange, they agree to give Maria the power to choose which one will live. For Maria, desperate times call for unheard of actions...and a deadly choice.



“My Name”
from *The Stillwater School Board Spring Conference*

Libretto by Jesse LaVercombe
Music by Emily Boyajian

Elissa is a middle-aged mother with a severe stutter who decides to stand up against her corrupt and bullish school board in small town Minnesota in defense of her son. Timid but determined, kind but cunning, Elissa has been made to feel small her whole life, but when her son’s school district fails to accommodate his accessibility needs, she joins the school board and begins the uphill battle for justice.

“My Name” is climax of *The Stillwater School Board Spring Conference*. Elissa’s son has been kept out of school during a year of trials. Now, at the final spring conference, Elissa must face her fear and publicly speak up against the powers that be. Her stutter is always most present when she has to say her own name, and in this aria, she learns to embrace this struggle as she fights on behalf of her son.



About the Aria Institute

The Aria Institute: Mezzo Edition was curated by Tess Altiveros, Basil Considine, and Anne Wieben, in conjunction with artists-in-residence Ann Cravero and Jodi Goble, and composer-in-residence Anthony R. Green. Each piece appearing on today's program was written during a 40-hour period, then refined over 4 additional days. Altogether, the 12 participants Mezzo Edition participants wrote 28 all-new works over a 4-week period. For more information, see: <http://spicyopera.com/seasons/aria-institute-mezzo-edition/>

About the Writers

Cris Eli Blak is a writer for the page, stage and screen, He is the recipient of a Bronze Remi Award and the Christopher Hewitt Award in Fiction, and the Grand Prize in Playwriting from the Clocktower Players, the resident company of the Irvington Town Hall Theatre. He has had poems, essays and stories published by A&U Magazine, Prime Number Magazine, The International Human Rights Arts Festival and I Taught the Law. His plays have been produced, published and/or performed around the world, from Off-Broadway to London.

Emily Boyajian is a composer and pianist living in Minneapolis. She recently moved to the Twin Cities after graduating from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a master's degree in music theory. Apart from writing and playing music, she enjoys playing board games, biking, reading, and pursuing mathematics.

Stacy Fahrion is an alt-classical composer and pianist based in Denver. Fragility and impermanence are two recurring themes in her music that are often tempered by a simmering frustration with the misogyny that continues to plague us. While much of her music is melancholy, it sometimes has a mischievous, sardonic edge. Stacy loves exploring polyrhythms, odd-meter grooves, and unusual scales. Her piano music is published by Piano Pronto Publishing, and includes books such as *Lullabies for Arachnophobes*, *These Are Odd Times*, and *Polyrhythms for Pianists*.

Before writing the Books and Lyrics for his current series of musicals/operas, **Ned Eckhardt** was a documentary maker and teacher. Social issue documentaries were his passion and specialty. Along the way, he has sung in many groups, studied Native American history, been a Division 1 athlete and singles club bartender, survived as a starving writer in New York City, been a Teamster and college professor, and worked on many documentary crews.



Tiffa Foster is a playwright in Saint Paul, Minnesota. She was amazingly fortunate to have her high school drama teacher, Cliff Thomson, also be a chorister for the Washington National Opera. In between classes and rehearsals, he'd sometimes talk about what was going on at the opera and seeing his passion for the opera was always inspiring. But it wasn't until she was in college when she fell in love with opera on her own. She was minding her own business, working backstage for a modern ballet dance troupe when *Carmen's* "Habanera" came on through the speakers and hit her like a ton of bricks. Since then, she has fallen in love many times over, but that was the song that began it all.

Jamey J Guzman is a composer, librettist, flutist, and artist-activist from Sacramento, California. A firm believer in the unmatched power of art to enact social change, she is dedicated to illuminating themes such as female empowerment, racial equity, climate action, gender and sexuality, and mental health in her work. Out of all forms of new music, she has been particularly drawn to contemporary opera, and strives to use its unique power to tell necessary stories of today's world with experimental and innovative techniques. Jamey is also in-demand as a flutist specializing in contemporary chamber music, finding great joy in bringing her fellow composers' premieres to life; she finds this deep exposure to a myriad of musical styles a core inspiration in her own work.

Jesse LaVercombe is a Toronto-based writer and actor. He won the Playwrights Guild of Canada 2019 Emerging Playwright Award for *Hallelujah, It's Holly*. Other current projects include: *G-G-G-Genevieve* (two-act musical with Adrian Shepherd-Gawinski, commissioned by YES Theatre) and *Gilgamesh + Enkidu* (two-act play with music, with Seth Bockley and Ahmed Moneka, developed by The Tarragon in Toronto, The Guthrie in Minneapolis, The Pivot Arts Festival in Chicago, and La MaMa in NYC). His latest short film, *The Things You Think I'm Thinking*, played over seventy festivals and won twelve awards. As an actor, he's performed on stages across Canada and the U.S. including the National Arts Centre of Canada, The Jungle in Minneapolis, and the Marigny Opera House in New Orleans, plus over twenty film and TV productions. www.jesselavercombe.com

Qianni Lin is a rising Chinese young composer pursuing a Doctor Degree in composition at Hartt School of Music University of Hartford, where she is a student of Robert Carl. She holds master's degrees in music composition and music theory at the Manne School of Music, and a bachelor's degree in music composition from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, as a student of Xianglin Zhou.



Qianni began studying piano at the age of 4 and began studying composition at the age of 13. Qianni was previously a student at a middle school affiliated with the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, studying with Ying Ding.

Her electronic piece *Ripple* was performed at the National Student Electronic Music Event at University of North Texas in 2018; and performed on Electronic Music Midwest Festival at Kansas City Community College on September 2019. Her string quartet *Rebound*, commissioned by the Beo String Quartet, was performed at the Charlotte New Music Festival in 2018. Her choral piece *Epitafio para un Poeta* was performed by the C4 choir in The Church of St. Luke in the Fields in New York City in same year. Her chamber music piece *Diamond Unicorn Horn* was commissioned by coMUSICation and performed at Mannes School of Music on June 2019.

Lauren McCall is a composer and educator from Atlanta, Georgia. She studied for her master's degree in music composition at the Vermont College of Fine Arts, and currently she is studying music technology at the Georgia Institute of Technology. Lauren has had compositions performed around North America and in Europe. This includes her piece for piano, *Shake the Earth*, which was performed at Morehead State University's Contemporary Piano Festival, and her graphic score composition *The Fish Wife* which was performed by the ensemble Amis Orgue Montreal. In addition to composing, Lauren teaches at the Georgia Academy of Music.

Raised in Riga, Latvia, **Helena Michelson** is a composer based in the San Francisco-Bay Area. She has been a fellow at numerous festivals including Composers Conference, June in Buffalo, Domaine Forget, and Opera from Scratch. She has also been a participating composer at the Bayou 2019 in Monroe, LA, the 2020 Music by Women Festival in Columbus, Mississippi, and the 2020 N.E.O. Voice Festival in Los Angeles. Her music has been performed by such groups and organizations as Empyrean Ensemble, Nouvel Ensemble Moderne, and Fresh Voices Festival by San Francisco Cabaret Opera. <https://www.helenamichelson.com>

Born in a family of musicians in Moscow, Russia, and educated in Russia, Israel, and the U.S., **Maxim Samarov** is currently the orchestra director at Tulane University, where he also teaches music theory, chamber music, and conducting. He has previously held faculty positions with St. Cloud State University (MN) and Luther College (IA). He has appeared as a guest conductor with orchestras and opera companies in the United States and Europe; in 2016, he co-founded New Orleans Chamber Orchestra, a professional ensemble with a mission to showcase the rich classical music tradition of New Orleans.



As a composer, Maxim Samarov is the author of a symphony, a guitar concerto, a one-act opera *Feast at the Time of Plague*, and a number of song cycles and other chamber works; his cantata *Ars Moriendi*, premiered by New Orleans Chamber Orchestra in June 2018, earned the 2nd place award in The American Prize's Orchestral Division. Among his works-in-progress are the oratorio *Igerot Bar-Kochba* (in collaboration with Israeli poet Yifat Grosman) as well as several operatic projects. He resides in New Orleans with his wife Tanya (a pediatrician) and their son Julian.

Mona R. Washington is an award-winning playwright, author, and activist. She received her BSFS from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, and her JD from Harvard Law School. Recent work and commissions include: a libretto for the opera "The Derrick Bell Project", a love story centered on James Baldwin's life and work, monologues for The Riverton Playground Theatre (Los Angeles), and a radio play for WXPB/The Kelly Writers House at the University of Pennsylvania.

Ms. Washington is a three-time Voices of Our Nations Arts Foundation, Inc. Fellow, a two-time Brown Foundation Fellow at the Dora Maar House in Provence, a Barrymore Nominator, and a Dramatists Guild Member. Completed residencies include The Djerassi Foundation, The Ucross Foundation, and the Jack Kerouac House. Her plays have been performed in Italy and France, as well as the United States.

From 2016-2017, she was the commissioned Playwright/Collaborator in *Philadelphia Assembled* at The Philadelphia Museum of Art, and her plays performed throughout the city. Several of her micro-plays have been published in The Huffington Post.



About the Artists

Ann Belluso Cravero is an acclaimed mezzo-soprano and Associate Professor of Music at Drake University. She has performed on stages in Italy, China, and throughout the United States, including multiple engagements at Weill Recital Hall in Carnegie Hall. She made her debut at Symphony Hall in Chicago as the 2019 Winner of the American Prize in Oratorio, and performed as soloist of Mahler's 2nd Symphony with soprano Michèle Crider for the re-dedication of Hancher Auditorium in Iowa City.

Highly sought after for her interpretation of New Music, Dr. Cravero's "strong" portrayal of Virginia Woolf in the 2016 staged adaptation of *The Diary of*



Virginia Woolf under the direction of Håkan Hagegård, honored Dominick Argento – the composer in attendance (Ordway Center, Source Song Festival). She also coached with the late Stephen Paulus and soloed two performances of his work *To Be Certain of the Dawn*. She premiered and toured commissioned works by the Iowa Composers' Forum with pianist Miko Kominami, and has frequently soloed with the Center for New Music in Iowa City.

In 2019, Dr. Cravero returned to the opera stage to perform the role of Ma in Copland's *The Tender Land* with the American Gothic Performing Arts Festival. Additional performance venues include Teatro Comunale Città Vicenza, San Pancrazio Catedrale Tarquinia, Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra, Rome Festival Orchestra, CA Lyric Symphony Orchestra, IL Bach Festival, Des Moines Civic Center, Heartland Festival Orchestra, the Northland Opera Theatre, apprentice Des Moines Metro Opera.

Dr. Cravero was the recipient of the 2019 Vocal Pedagogy Award from the NATS Foundation. She was previously the district winner of the National Association of Teachers of Singing Artist Award competition, and received honorable mention for the Metropolitan Opera National Council District Audition. She was awarded the Donald Walker Vocal Scholarship for Outstanding Vocal Achievement at the University of Iowa, Outstanding Academic Achievement in the field of Music Education from Bradley University, and 1st place winner of the Bradley University Piano Concerto Competition. She has performed in master classes with Frederica von Stade and Michèle Crider, and coached with Cheryl Studer and Richard Boldrey.

As a stage director, Dr. Cravero's work has been viewed at the Prague Festival where she served as Assistant Director of *Don Giovanni* under the direction of Sherrill Milnes and Maria Zouves, The International Lyric Academy Italy, The City Opera Company of the Quad Cities, and at the University of Iowa under the tutelage of director Sally Stunkel. Likewise, she headed the Drake Opera Theater from 2003-2018, and recently collaborated with Michael Ching on his opera, *Alice Ryley*.

Collaborative pianist and composer **Jodi Goble** is a Senior Lecturer in Voice at Iowa State University, where she coaches singers, music-directs the ISU Opera Studio, and teaches diction and song literature. She received the Iowa State University Award for Early Excellence in Teaching in 2015. Before coming to Iowa, she was Lecturer at the Boston University College of Fine Arts, Senior Vocal Coach and Coordinator of Opera Programs for the Boston University Tanglewood Institute, diction faculty at the Walnut Hill School for the Performing Arts, and the primary rehearsal pianist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra's Tanglewood Festival Chorus.



Ms. Goble collaborates regularly in recital with bass-baritone Simon Estes, both locally and across the United States, and is his official collaborator for the Iowa Roots and Wings Community Concerts, as well as the pianist and artistic director for the Simon Estes Young Artist Concert Series. She has been the official pianist of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions in Iowa since 2009, and is a frequent recitalist with artists associated with Des Moines Metro Opera; recent collaborative partners include tenor Taylor Stayton, baritone Michael Maves, and sopranos Sarah Jane McMahon and Sydney Mansacola.

Ms. Goble's compositions have been performed across the United States and internationally and featured on National Public Radio. Her awards include the 2013 Commission Competition of the Iowa Music Teachers Association and selection as a finalist entry in the 2008 NATS Art Song Competition. Her choral cantata *True Witness* was premiered and recorded in November 2013 by the Claremont College Choirs, the Chamber Singers of the Los Angeles Children's Chorus, and soloists Gwendolyn Lytle and Simon Estes. Other recent commissions include works for *Voices of the Pearl*, the UNCC Operatecture Project, the P.A.L.S. Girlchoir in Boston, and Omaha-based chamber trio *I, the Siren*. Her works have recently received performances at Beijing Central Conservatory, Boston University, Iowa State University, Hunan Women's College, Scripps College, Curry College, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Iowa Composers' Forum, the University of Northern Iowa, the Art Song Preservation Society of New York, the Ames Town and Gown Musicale, the Le Ran Arts Festival in Shanghai, and the ASEAN International Festival of Contemporary Music.



The creative output of **Anthony R. Green** (composer, performer, social justice artist) includes musical and visual creations, interpretations of original works or works in the repertoire, collaborations, educational outreach, and more. Behind all of his artistic endeavors are the ideals of equality and freedom, which manifest themselves in diverse ways in a composition, a performance, a collaboration, or social justice work.

As a composer, his works have been presented in over 20 countries by Gabriela Díaz (violin), Wendy Richman (viola), Ashleigh Gordon (viola), Gregory Williams (viola), Hayk Melikyan (piano), Eunmi Ko (piano), Amanda DeBoer Bartlett (soprano), ALEA III (conducted by Gunther Schuller), The Playground Ensemble, Transient Canvas, Ossia New Music Ensemble, Access Contemporary Music, counter)induction, BLY, NOISE-BRIDGE, Tenth



Intervention, Chartreuse, and Alarm Will Sound, to name a few. He has received commissions from Community Music Works, Make Music Boston, Celebrity Series Boston, the Robert McCormick Percussion Group, and various soloists and ensembles. He has been a resident artist at the Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts (Nebraska), Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, Escape to Create (Florida), Visby International Centre for Composers (Sweden), Space/Time (Scotland), atelier:performance (Germany), and the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts (Nebraska). As a performer, he has appeared at venues in the US, Cyprus, France, the Netherlands, the UK, Israel, Germany, Switzerland, Turkey, and South Korea, working with student and emerging composers, as well as established composers such as David Liptak, Renée C. Baker, Steve Reich, and George Crumb.

Through music and entrepreneurship, Green comments on many issues related to social justice, including immigration (*Earned* - narrator & double string quartet), civil rights (*Dona Nobis Veritatem* - soprano, viola, & piano), the historical links between slavery and current racial injustice in the US (*Oh, Freedom!* - spoken word, voice, flute, viola, cello; *Almost Over* - sax quartet), the contributions of targeted and/or minority groups to humanity (*A Single Voice: Solitary, Unified* - solo alto sax & fixed media), and more. His ongoing opera-project *Alex in Transition* highlights the life of Alex - a trans woman - and her journey to truth and authentic living. This opera has been featured in the Ft. Worth Opera Frontiers Festival, presented by New Fangled Opera and One Ounce Opera, and performed in a concert production at the Israel Conservatory of Music in Tel Aviv.

Green's most important social justice work has been with Castle of our Skins, a concert and education series organization dedicated to celebrating Black artistry through music. As co-founder, associate artistic director, and composer-in-residence, Green's work with Castle of our Skins has included concert/workshop curation and development, community outreach, lecturing about the history and politics concerning Black composers of Classical music, and more.

His main composition teachers have been Theodore Antoniou, Lee Hyla, and Robert Cogan, and he has participated in masterclasses with Laura Schwendinger, Paquito D'Rivera, and the JACK Quartet. His solo and collaborative work has been recognized by grants from Meet the Composer, the Argosy Foundation, New Music USA, and the American Composers Forum as a McKnight Visiting Composer. He is currently a fellow at the Berlin University of the Arts.



About the Co-Directors

Soprano **Tess Altiveros** was praised for her “particularly soulful” (L.A. Times) interpretations and a “captivating combination of skilled singing and magnetic acting” (Pioneer Press). She is equally at home in a wide range of repertoire, performing roles from the 17th century to the 21st, and is a faculty member at Seattle University. Her recent portrayal of Female Soldier in Seattle Opera’s *The Falling and the Rising* was described as “a triumph” (Classical Voice North America) and “enthraling” (Seattle Times), while Opera Magazine described her voice in Pacific MusicWorks’s “Leading Ladies” as “...darker, creamy, sensuous, but she can fill it with so much drama that the stereotyped tropes of a Baroque lament offers a fully rounded portrait of a woman’s pain...sprezzatura personified.”

Other roles include Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Kentucky Opera), E in Seattle Opera’s *O + E*, Clorinda in Seattle Opera’s *The Combat*, Fiordiligi in *Così fan Tutte* (Skylark Opera Theatre), L’enfant in *L’Enfant et les Sortilèges* (Pacific Symphony), Dalila in Handel’s *Samson* (Pacific MusicWorks), Hannah in *The Merry Widow* (Inland Northwest Opera), Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* (Pacific Symphony), Maria in *West Side Story* (Central City Opera/Boulder Philharmonic), Bach *St. Matthew Passion* (Colorado Symphony, staged), Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* (Juneau Lyric Opera), Musetta in *La Bohème* (Colorado Symphony), Carmen in *La Tragédie de Carmen* (Skylark Opera Theatre), Susanna in *The Marriage of Figaro* (Angels & Demons Entertainment), Miss Jessel in *Turn of the Screw* (Eugene Opera). <http://www.tessaltiveros.com/>

Basil Considine is the Artistic Director of Really Spicy Opera. A musicologist turned composer, playwright, and director, he has won numerous awards for both scholarly and artistic pursuits. He founded Really Spicy Opera in 2005, and has led the company through fifteen years of programming and more than two dozen world premieres. He is a graduate of the University of San Diego, where he was a student of the award-winning novelist Sandra Benitez, and Boston University, where he was a student of opera composer Samuel Headrick and the award-winning Broadway playwright Lydia Diamond.

Dr. Considine’s stage works have been featured in numerous festivals around the United States. His play *The Abortion Bomb* premiered at the Plays & Players Theatre in Philadelphia in 2012, and has since been taught at several universities. His comic opera *The Frat Party* was a 2017 Semi-Finalist for the American Prize for Composition in Theatre/Music/Opera, and Dr. Considine was named to *Musical America* magazine’s 2018 list of Top 20 Movers & Shapers. He was a resident fellow at the Winterthur Museum, Garden and Library in 2019, and is a Fulbright Faculty Fellow to Madagascar in 2020–2021. In 2020, he musically directed RSO’s tour to France, including the



second-ever performance of Grétry's opera *Émilie, ou la belle esclave*.

<http://basilconsidine.org/>

Vienna-based soprano **Anne Wieben** has been hailed by critics as a 'true diva' (Kronezeitung Voralberg) with a 'hint of femme fatal in her velvety soprano' (Süddeutschezeitung). She is the founder and creative director of Opera on the Lake, a summer opera festival in her home state of Minnesota.

Recently, Wieben jumped-in as Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus* with Musiktheater Vorarlberg. Reviews praised her as "a radiant diva with dramatic versatility and great coloratura" (Kulturzeitschrift). In July 2019, Anne covered the role of Médée in Cherubini's opera of the same name at the prestigious Salzburger Festspiele. Summer 2019 also saw Anne once more as Rosalinde, first with Oper Rund Um and the Wir Sind Wien festival in June, and then in July with Opera on the Lake.

Wieben performs regularly with Vienna's premier interactive theater ensemble, Nesterval. In October of 2020, Nesterval's innovative and immersive online play "Der Kreisky Test" won the coveted Nestroy Prize (Austrian Theater Prize) for its contribution to the performing arts during the pandemic. Their sold-out show "Das Dorf" was also nominated for the Austrian Theater Prize in 2019 (Nestroy Prize) and named by the Austrian Press as one of the top 5 theater experiences of 2019. <http://www.annewieben.com/>

About the Company

Really Spicy Opera (f. 2005) is an award-winning jewel-box opera company based in Minneapolis, Minnesota. It specializes in creating and producing new musical and dramatic works for the stage, and promotes the increased representation of women in opera through its Women in Opera initiative. More than 150 young artists have jumpstarted their careers on its stages.

In 2017, Really Spicy Opera took to the road for a series of national and international tours, taking it from the shores of Hawaii to the American South, with stops in Canada along the way. Its sold-out world premiere of Deborah Yarchun's *A Pickle* in 2018 received several encore performances, each of which also sold out.

In January 2020, RSO toured France with an itinerary including performances at the Fondation des États-Unis and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, in a tour supported by the U.S. State Department. The company is currently scheduled to visit the Southern Indian Ocean in 2021. <http://spicyopera.com>