



HOUSTON GRAND OPERA

Concert
of **ARIAS**

ELEANOR MCCOLLUM COMPETITION
FOR YOUNG SINGERS

THE HON. THERESA AND
DR. PETER CHANG, CHAIRS



PROGRAM

Jazmine Saunders SOPRANO **"Caro nome"** from *Rigoletto*—Giuseppe Verdi

Sam Dhobhany BASS-BARITONE **"Vous qui faites l'endormie"** from *Faust*—Charles Gounod

Alissa Goretsky SOPRANO **"Morro', ma prima in grazia"** from *Un ballo in maschera*—Giuseppe Verdi

Edwin Jhamaal Davis BASS **"O! wie will ich triumphieren"** from *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*—
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Elizabeth "Hanje" SOPRANO **"Il est doux, il est bon"** from *Hérodiade*—Jules Massenet

Rafael Rojas TENOR **"Una furtiva lagrima"** from *L'elisir d'amore*—Gaetano Donizetti

Jouelle Roberson SOPRANO **"My Man's Gone Now"** from *Porgy and Bess*—George Gershwin and Ira Gershwin

Ziniu Zhao BASS-BARITONE **"La calunnia "** from *Il barbiere di Siviglia*—Gioachino Rossini

Elizabeth "Hanje" SOPRANO **"Ain't it a Pretty Night"** from *Susannah*—Carlisle Floyd

Sam Dhobhany BASS-BARITONE **"O du, mein holder Abendstern"** from *Tannhäuser*—Richard Wagner

Jazmine Saunders SOPRANO **"No word from Tom... Quietly night... I go, I go to him"**
from *The Rake's Progress*—Igor Stravinsky

Rafael Rojas TENOR **"Maria"** from *West Side Story*—Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim

Alissa Goretsky SOPRANO **"Donde lieta uscì"** from *La bohème*—Giacomo Puccini

Ziniu Zhao BASS-BARITONE **"Ves' tabor spit"** from *Aleko*—Sergei Rachmaninoff

Jouelle Roberson SOPRANO **"Du bist der Lenz"** from *Die Walküre*—Richard Wagner

Edwin Jhamaal Davis BASS **"Ol' Man River"** from *Show Boat*—Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein II

INTERMISSION

Text to vote for the Audience Choice Award! See page 6 for details.

BUTLER STUDIO PERFORMANCE

"Sing to Love" from *Die Fledermaus*—Johann Strauss

ANNOUNCEMENT OF WINNERS

CELEBRATION DINNER

FINALISTS

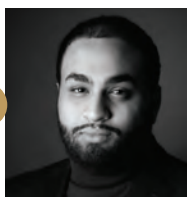
A



Edwin Jhamaal Davis BASS

This season Edwin Jhamaal Davis returns to Carnegie Hall as soloist in Mozart's Requiem. He also makes house debuts in *X: The Life & Times of Malcolm X* with The Metropolitan Opera as Garvey Preacher and Seattle Opera as Bass 2; and debuts the role of Colline in *La bohème* with First Coast Opera, Amelia Island Opera, and Intermountain Opera Bozeman. In summer 2023, Davis joined San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program, where he performed Sarastro in *The Magic Flute*, as well as in excerpts from *Macbeth* as Banquo. In the 2022-23 season, he performed the role of Bass 2 in *X: The Life & Times of Malcolm X* for Opera Omaha, covered Masetto and Il Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* for Atlanta Opera, joined Opera Grand Rapids as the King in *Aida*, performed as the bass soloist in Handel's Messiah for Danbury Symphony, and made his Carnegie Hall debut as soloist in Verdi's Requiem. Davis is a National First Place Winner of the Marian Anderson Vocal Arts Scholarship and a winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions Eastern Region. He holds a master's degree from the Manhattan School of Music.

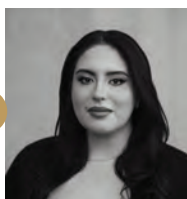
B



Sam Dhobhany BASS-BARITONE

Sam Dhobhany is a senior vocal performance major at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where this winter he sings the role of Figaro in *The Marriage of Figaro*. This spring, he will sing the role of Angelotti in *Tosca* with Dayton Opera. In summer 2023, Dhobhany was an apprentice artist with Santa Fe Opera, where he covered and sang the role of Un Médecin in *Pelléas et Mélisande* and covered 2nd Spirit/5th Pastore in *L'Orfeo*. In the summer of 2021, he joined Wolf Trap Opera's Studio Artist Program, where he covered the role of Doctor Grenvil in *La traviata*. Dhobhany's roles next season include Marchese D'Obigny in *La traviata* and covering Dulcamara in *The Elixir of Love* and The Notary in *Der Rosenkavalier*. Dhobhany was a 2023 winner of the Michigan District in The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition. Next summer, he returns to Santa Fe Opera as an apprentice artist.

C

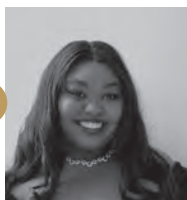


Alissa Goretsky SOPRANO

Alissa Goretsky made her operatic debut as Gismonda in *Ottone* at Caroline Hume Hall under the baton of Corey Jameson in 2019. Her recent roles include Foreign Woman in *The Consul*, Mimì in *La bohème*, Contessa Almaviva in *The Marriage of Figaro*, and Emilia in *Flavio*, as well as covering the roles of Sister Alice and Sister Catherine at San Francisco Opera in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*. Goretsky is the 2022 first-place winner of the Palm Spring Opera Guild Competition, the 2023 winner of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music Concerto Competition, and a 2022 Finalist of the Orpheus Competition. In March 2024 she will perform the role of Ma Zegner in Missy Mazzoli's *Proving Up* at Caroline Hume Hall. Goretsky holds a bachelor's degree in vocal performance and a Master of Music degree from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

FINALISTS

D



Elizabeth "Hanje" SOPRANO

Elizabeth "Hanje" is an alumna of HGO's Young Artist Vocal Academy and the Des Moines Metro Opera Apprentice Program. She is a senior at Oberlin Conservatory, where her roles have included Ernestina in *L'occasione fa il ladro*, Comedian in Matthew Recio's *Puppy Episode*, and Lyra in Melissa Dunphy's *Alice Tierney*, as well as performing in the chorus of *Acis and Galatea*. "Hanje" has sung in masterclasses with director Michael Capasso, soprano Christine Goerke, mezzo-soprano Denyce Graves, and soprano Harolyn Blackwell. She is a winner of the 2023 Duncan Williams Voice Competition and the 2022 George Shirley Vocal Competition. In 2021, she received the Richard Miller Award for Fine Singing and a YoungArts Award.

E



Jouelle Roberson SOPRANO

Jouelle Roberson served in Opera Lucca's 2022 summer program, where she performed the title role in *Suor Angelica*. As a 2021 young artist with the Saratoga Opera, she performed the role of Grisostomo from *Don Quichotte: At Comacho's Wedding*, returning to the company to perform as Maria in the mainstage production of *Man of La Mancha*. She was a studio artist with Atlanta Opera in 2019-20, performing the role of Strawberry Woman in *Porgy and Bess*. With the Bethesda Summer Music Festival, she performed the role of Marenka in *The Bartered Bride*. Roberson was invited to the prestigious 2023 Castleton Festival, and to join the 2024 roster of the Opera Theatre of St. Louis's Gerdine Young Artist Program. She was a finalist in the Vincerò First Italian Worldwide Opera Competition in 2022, where she won both the Renata Tebaldi Award and the Public Award. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in vocal performance at Morgan State University, and continued her training at the Manhattan School of Music.

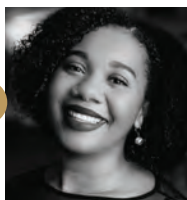
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Rafael Rojas TENOR

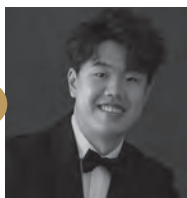
Rafael Rojas began his career as a singer at the age of 16, singing mainly popular and musical repertoire. At the age of 25 he entered the world of opera and has participated in national and international competitions. In 2022 he won the award for Best Male Voice in Zarzuela in the Carlo Morelli Singing Competition. In 2022 and 2023, he was the winner of the Mexico District of the Metropolitan Opera's Laffont Competition. He currently serves as a principal tenor with the Mexico Opera Studio in Monterrey, Mexico, where he has performed the roles of Don José in *Carmen*, Gaston in the Mexican opera *Anita*, and Boy in Carlos Mabarak's *Mass of Six*. He is currently studying with Carlos Conde, Alfredo Portilla, and Andrés Sarre.

G

**Jazmine Saunders** SOPRANO

Jazmine Saunders is an alumna of HGO's 2021 Young Artists' Vocal Academy. She is currently a second-year master's student at The Juilliard School, where she is the recipient of a Kovner Fellowship. This season at Juilliard, Saunders performs as Elaine O'Neill in John Musto's *Later the Same Evening* and covers Vitellia in *La clemenza di Tito*. Last summer, she joined the Wolf Trap Opera Studio, where she covered Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*. As an Emerging Artist at Seagle Festival 2022, Saunders performed as Miss Lightfoot in *Fellow Travelers* and Suor Osmia in *Suor Angelica*. She is a New York District Winner of the 2023 Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition and an Encouragement Award recipient of the Eastern Region. She received her bachelor's degree in voice performance from the Eastman School of Music in 2022.

H

**Ziniu Zhao** BASS-BARITONE

Ziniu Zhao is a member of the Opera Talent Training Program of the China National Arts Foundation. He won the first prize in the Colorado International Music Competition in the United States, the Rossini Singing Award for Best Singing in the Fiorenza Cedolins Opera Competition in Italy, and the Maria Callas Award in the Vincerò International Opera Competition, also in Italy. He has appeared in operas such as *Don Pasquale* (title role), *La bohème* (Colline), and *Così fan tutte* (Don Alfonso). Last year he gave a solo concert in China's Shandong Province. He holds a bachelor's degree from the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, where he received the Outstanding Student Scholarship for four consecutive years.