

Detroit
Opera

FRI / DEC 30, 2022 / 6:30PM

Alida

in Concert



Detroit Opera

Yuval Sharon, Gary L. Wasserman Artistic Director
Christine Goerke, Associate Artistic Director
Jon Teeuwissen, Artistic Advisor for Dance

2022-2023
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Barbara Kratchman

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**Happy Birthday,
Bunny!**

Love,

Judy, Marilyn, Judy, and Maxine





A message from **Wayne Brown**

Welcome to Detroit Opera!

2022 has been a remarkable and exciting year for Detroit Opera. In February, we ushered in a name change from Michigan Opera Theatre to Detroit Opera, signaling our ongoing commitment to the city of Detroit. We welcomed new audiences at unprecedented levels, launched a collaboration with five U.S. opera companies to present new opera productions, and affirmed our focus on presenting exceptional performances for audiences in the greater Detroit corridor and beyond. We are delighted that the year will culminate with Verdi's *Aida* in concert.

We recently welcomed Roberto Kalb as Detroit Opera's Music Director, who joins the artistic leadership team of Yuval Sharon, Gary L. Wasserman Artistic Director, and Christine Goerke, Associate Artistic Director. Detroit Opera is fortunate to benefit from such an exciting and vibrant artistic leadership team.

Our community has many opportunities to observe moments of celebration and to express gratitude for the many acts of kindness that we witness each day. It is in that spirit that Detroit Opera extends to you and yours the best of the season as we mark the end of a year that has presented enormous challenges but offered many points of light and exhilaration.

As we look forward to the new year, Detroit Opera stands ready to provide more of the ground-breaking, innovative opera and dance presentations that our audiences have come to expect. Upcoming events in the Detroit Opera House include the dance troupe Ballet Preljocaj in February performances of *Swan Lake* (presented in partnership with the University Musical Society), plus Handel's *Xerxes* and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in March, and Golijov's *Fountain of Tears (Ainadamar)* and The State Ballet of Georgia in April.

We wish you and yours the very best for the new year!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wayne S. Brown".

Wayne S. Brown
President & CEO, Detroit Opera

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A message from **Yuval Sharon**

It's all too easy to think of Giuseppe Verdi's *Aida* as a paean to imperialism. "The Empire at Work" is how Edward Said entitles a chapter about the opera in his pioneering study *Culture and Imperialism*: "*Aida*, like the opera form itself, is a hybrid, radically impure work that belongs equally to the history of culture and the historical experience of overseas domination." In his critique of the opera and its attempt to impose European aesthetics on the Arabic city of Cairo, Said naturally lambasts the "egregious appeal" of Act 2's Triumphal March, where everything is permitted on stage, "so long as it is excessive." He relishes a 1986 report about Cincinnati Opera's production that featured 11 live animals, including an armadillo, a Siberian lynx, a cheetah...and, of course, an elephant. It's a celebratory mask for a brutal and archetypal story of conquest and exploitation, where sensitivity to representation seems to get a pass from enthralled spectators.

Presenting *Aida* solely in concert, then, doesn't just let us side-step the uncomfortable imagery that so often accompanies this popular opera. Nor is it solely an economic consideration (although I can't imagine the cleaning bill for all those animals is particularly cheap!) Instead, hearing the music in non-representational form—as "pure" music—brings us closer to the complexity and the humanity of a work that is rarely seen as either complex or humane. A concert de-centers triumphant maximalism and brings us closer to the intimacy and intricacy of the opera's unmonumental core.

Aida is one of Verdi's last operas, and just as in the final two works that followed—*Otello* and *Falstaff*—his mastery is revealed less in the music's opulence and more in its *economy*. The duet between father and daughter, *Aida* and Amneris, is an example of the brevity and brilliance that the elder Verdi spent a lifetime perfecting. The Judgment Scene is a dramatic tour de force for Amneris, who realizes that her own position of authority means nothing within a pitiless political machine. And the final duet—*Aida* and Radamès dying in a sealed-off tomb; Amneris, numb, condemned to joylessness—ends the opera not with blaring fanfares but in *pianissimo*.

This concert, then, allows each audience member a recalibration of their ears to what this work might actually be saying. Your own imagination is now fully responsible for the scenic realization; feel free to populate the theater of your mind with the most exotic animals you've ever seen! But along the way, keep your ears open for the real Verdi.

Yuval Sharon
The Gary L. Wasserman Artistic Director

Thank You!

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Alida

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is generously presented by

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PRODUCTION

Performed in Italian with English supertitles

Performance runs 2 hours and 30 minutes with
one intermission

Music

Giuseppe Verdi

Libretto

Antonio Ghislanzoni

World Premiere

**Khedive Opera House, Cairo, Egypt
on December 24, 1871**

Stage Coordinator

Monika Essen

Lighting Designer

Chelsie McPhilimy

Stage Manager

Ken Saltzman

Chorus Master

Suzanne Mallare Acton

Répétiteur

John Etsell

Assistant Stage Manager

Nan Luchini

Assistant Lighting
Designer

Heather DeFauw

Supertitle Operator

Dee Dorsey

Cast

Conductor Jonathon Heyward*

Aida Angel Blue*

Amneris Christine Goerke

Radamès Riccardo Massi

Amonasro Alfred Walker

Ramfis Morris Robinson

A Priestess Melanie Spector*+

King of Egypt Kenneth Kellogg

A Messenger Leo Williams*+

* Detroit Opera debut

+ Detroit Opera Resident Artist

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Victoria Bigelow
Ann Marie Calvaneso*
Katie Collins
Michelle Drummond
Rebecca Eaddy*
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Adellyn Geenen
Anna Hart*
Abigail
McKay Cherry*
Jessie Neilson*
Iyinoluwa Omishope
Amanda Pennell
Christine Tang
Andrea Tawil
Allison Wamser*
Maitri White*
Olga Yalovenko*
Heidi Bowen Zook*

Alto

Lily Belle Czartorski*
Kristin Danko
Tori Darnell*
Helen Delphia
Michelle Ding
Emily Eichenhorn
Valeria de
Luna-Kent*
Yvonne Friday*
Nina Gojcaj
GeDeane Graham*

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Pelagia Pamel
Katya Powder*
Diane Schoff*
Marisa Sesvold
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Antona Yost*

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Patrick Clampitt
Regis Haynes*
Richard Jackson, Jr.*
Cameron
Barrett Johnson*
Seth Johnson*
David Magumba*
Darryl Mopkins
Ian Pathak*
Cody Pepitone*
David Roberts*

Tenor II

Michael Boettcher
Fred Buchalter*
Brady DelVecchio*
X. Alexander Durden*
Michael Fowler*
Dean Joyce*
Thomas Larner*
Adrian Leskiw*
Patricia Minnick

Baritone

Matthew Daniels*
Benton DeGroot*
Logan Dell'Acqua*
Drew Gale
Matthew Konopacki*
Brandon Langeland*
Lawrence
Mitchell-Matthews*
Dean Moore
Paolo Pacheco*
Gregory Stinson*
Justin Watson*
Will Yeats

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Simone Bonino
Joseph Edmonds*
Kurt Frank*
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Emily Barkakati*

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Horn

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Trumpet

David Ammer*

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Anderson Romero

Trombone

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Tuba

David Zerkel

Timpani

Keith Claeys

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Harp

Maurice Draughn

ACTING PRINCIPAL

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AIDA IN CONCERT SYNOPSIS

Egypt in the time of the Pharaohs.

ACT 1

SCENE 1

Ramfis, the Egyptians' chief priest, tells Radamès that the god Isis has chosen the general who will lead the Egyptian armies into battle against the invading Ethiopians. Radamès hopes that he has been chosen so that he may return victorious to Aida, an enslaved Ethiopian woman, whom he loves. Amneris, Princess of Egypt, secretly loves Radamès but suspects a relationship between him and Aida. The Pharaoh hears reports of the invasion. He announces that Isis has chosen Radamès as Egyptian commander-in-chief and leads everyone in demanding revenge on the Ethiopians. Amneris urges Radamès to return victorious.

Aida, who is actually a princess and the daughter of the Ethiopian king, Amonasro, is torn between her love for her country and for Radamès. In despair, she implores the pity of the gods.

SCENE 2

Ramfis brings Radamès to the altar in the temple, where he receives a sword and the gods' blessing on the campaign.

ACT 2

SCENE 1

Amneris prepares to welcome back Radamès from the war. Amneris tricks Aida, telling her Radamès has been killed in battle. Seeing Aida's reaction, Amneris has confirmed her suspicion that Aida is her romantic rival. After threatening Aida, Amneris departs for the festivities.

SCENE 2

The Egyptians have won the war and a triumphal scene celebrates Radamès's victory. Amneris crowns him victor, and the Pharaoh offers him any reward he may name. Radamès asks for the Ethiopian prisoners to be summoned. Aida recognizes her father, Amonasro, among them; he is in disguise and warns her not to reveal his true identity. Amonasro pleads for his fellow captives' lives, but Ramfis and the priests demand their death.

As his reward, Radamès requests freedom for the Ethiopians. The Pharaoh compromises, retaining Aida and her father as hostages. He then declares Radamès shall marry Amneris and promises that he will one day rule as Pharaoh. Amneris exults at this unexpected turn of fortune, while Radamès and Aida despair.

INTERMISSION

ACT 3

Ramfis takes Amneris to pray in the temple of Isis before the wedding. Aida, nearby, dreams of her homeland while she waits to meet Radamès. Her thoughts are interrupted by her father, Amonasro, who demands that she learn from Radamès what the Egyptians' next attack plan will be.

When Radamès arrives, Aida suggests to him that he does not love her enough to leave Egypt and live with her in Ethiopia. She points out that if she and her father remain in Egypt they will be executed. He agrees to flee with her, and she asks him which route they should take to avoid the Egyptian troops. After he tells her, Amonasro appears and reveals his true identity. Radamès is appalled that he has unwittingly betrayed his country. Amneris and Ramfis emerge from the temple. Amonasro moves to attack Amneris, but Radamès prevents him. Amonasro and Aida escape. Now a traitor, Radamès surrenders to Ramfis.

ACT 4

SCENE 1

Radamès awaits trial. Amneris resolves to try to save him. She begs him to renounce Aida: the price of her intercession on his behalf with the Pharaoh. When he refuses, she dismisses him. The priests condemn him to be entombed alive for treason. Amneris curses them as they leave.

SCENE 2

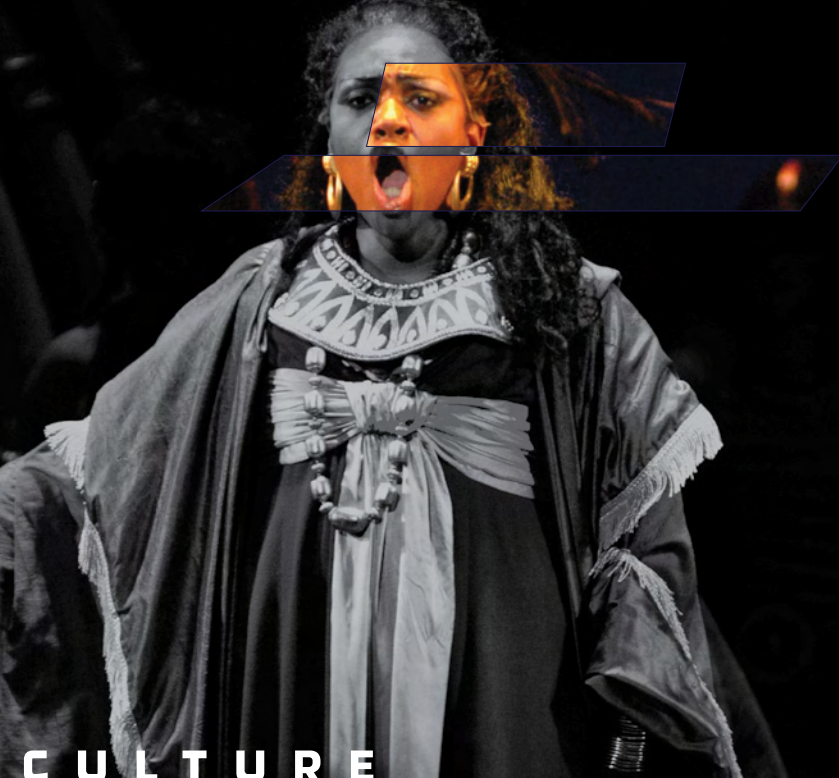
Radamès has been sealed in a tomb, where he discovers Aida hidden inside, waiting for him. They declare their love for each other. Amneris mourns for Radamès as Aida dies in his arms.



D O W N S T A G I N G **Black Voices** A N D A S H A D O W

by Naomi André

Verdi's *Aida* has been one of the most popular, frequently performed operas ever since its world premiere in 1871, in Cairo, Egypt. The role of Aida, the Ethiopian princess captured and enslaved by the Egyptians, has attracted singers including Maria Callas, Margaret Price, Renata Tebaldi, Latonia Moore, Aprile Millo, Grace Bumbry, and Sondra Radvanovsky. Detroit Opera's 2006 performances featured Indra Thomas and Lisa Daltirus alternating in the title role; when the opera returned here in 2013, Latonia Moore and Yannick-Muriel Noah shared the role of Aida. This year we are delighted to welcome as Aida soprano Angel Blue, who has quickly established herself through performances in nearly every major opera house in the world. Leontyne Price is probably the soprano most indelibly associated with the role, which she performed to great acclaim beginning in the late 1950s until her retirement in 1985. In the following excerpt from *Black Opera: History, Power, Engagement*, scholar Naomi André examines what Price's performance as Aida has meant in a country with a history of segregation—one in which Black singers could not sing on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera until 1955.



Lisa Daltirus
as Aida, 2006

CULTURE

The history of Black involvement with opera in the United States can be seen as a shadow culture to the all-white and segregated opera scene existent in the United States through the first half of the 20th century. The dominant culture focuses on stories about Black characters in ways that exoticize the subjects; for example, Verdi's 1871 opera *Aida* is a made-up story by Italians and Frenchmen set in the time of the Pharaohs with little knowledge of the historical Egyptians and Ethiopians and makes no reference to living Egyptians or Ethiopians during the late 19th century. The shadow culture of

opera brings Black perspectives and experiences downstage in our narrative of how the story is told and who is telling and interpreting the story.

Before 1955, Black singers were segregated from the Met. For me, and I suspect many others, [Leontyne] Price's most famous signature role was the title character in Verdi's *Aida*. It was one of her most frequent roles, and it was the one with which she chose to close her career at the Met Opera house in 1985. In the case of Price, the most pristine voice available for the role does not have to don the Blackface

makeup to sing the mythic captive Ethiopian princess. The whole scene comes together and resonates even more powerfully in the Act 3 Nile Scene during her aria “O Patria mia” and the following duet with her father. For many, these moments are when real life and opera life all come together. We see the conflict Aida endures as she has fallen in love with the leader of the Egyptian army (Radamès), her captor. We also know that her father, the Ethiopian king Amonasro, is going to compel her to fight for her country in his attempt to lead a rebellion. In a private moment at night along the banks of the Nile, Aida contemplates suicide as she realizes that her position is completely untenable; there is

repeated several times: “O Patria mia, non ti vedrò mai più” (Oh my beloved country, I will never see you again). The concept of “patria”—homeland, what is familiar, and what is worth dying for—is a featured image in Verdi’s operas throughout his career during the Risorgimento (the Italian unification movement that led to the modern formation of Italy through its first Italian parliament in 1861). Though *Aida* is from 1871, in that first generation of Italian unification, the strength of this movement was still a recent memory for its first Italian audiences, and Aida’s insistence on “O Patria mia” would have had a strong resonance.

“Oh my country, how much you have cost me.”

no way she can both love Radamès and be the daughter her father raised her to be. She is given an impossible situation that has no easy solution. Her aria presents the culmination of her feelings—that she will never see her homeland again; she can never go back, and it will never be recoverable. Her last line is

“Patria” has now transformed from being the thing desired yet unattainable (in her preceding aria, “O Patria mia”), the ideal you choose to follow (“Della mia patria degna sarò”), to the sacrifice you believe in and must make (“O patria... quanto mi costi!”). I find it impossible to watch Leontyne

Indra Thomas
as Aida, 2006



Latonia Moore
as Aida, 2013



Price sing this scene and not feel its momentousness. I watch and hear Price sing Aida throughout her career and feel how real these words are: “Oh my country, how much you have cost me.” It feels like a moment when the drama onstage and the reality offstage crash together. This voice comes out of a body that lived through the end of Jim Crow and segregation, was part of the continuous waves of the Great Migration to the north and west with people searching for safety, a chance to make it, and to thrive. As Price was stepping onto the leading opera stages around the world, people were marching into the burgeoning civil rights movement. Price made her Metropolitan Opera debut in

1961, three years before the Civil Rights Act (1964) was passed and officially outlawed discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Revealed in this voice is the childhood in Mississippi during the 1930s and 1940s; the proud and puzzled receptions of her operatic singing by her family, community, and audiences around the world; the comments she must have endured. As the regal and long-suffering Aida, Price was the African American singer whose voice fit the character perfectly; in this role she proved so many people wrong for their bigotry and violence. And she made so many things right for those of us who have fallen in love with opera.

Excerpted with permission from *Black Opera: History, Power, Engagement* (University of Illinois Press, 2016), by Naomi André. Dr. André is the David G. Frey Distinguished Professor in the Department of Music at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a board member of the Detroit Opera.



Jonathon Heyward

CONDUCTOR

Jonathon Heyward is forging a career as one of the most exciting conductors on the international scene. He currently serves as Music Director Designate of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and will begin his five-year contract in the 2023–24 season. In March 2022, Jonathon made his debut with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra in three performances that included the first-ever performance of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 15. Quickly re-engaged, he returned in April to lead a Benefit Concert for Ukraine at the Meyerhoff.

Currently in his second year as Chief Conductor of the Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie, in summer 2021, Jonathon took part in an intense, two-week residency with the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, which led to a highly acclaimed BBC Proms debut. This season, he debuts with the Musikkollegium Winterthur in Switzerland, Orchestre National Bordeaux Aquitaine in France, Lahti Symphony Orchestra in Finland, MDR-Sinfonieorchester in Germany, and the National Symphony Orchestra in Dublin, Ireland. In his native United States, he returns to the Seattle Symphony and makes debuts with the Houston Symphony and St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, and at Grant Park and Mostly Mozart music Festivals. Equally at home on the opera stage, Jonathon recently made his Royal Opera House debut with Hannah Kendall's *Knife of Dawn*, having also conducted Kurt Weill's *Lost in the Stars* with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra as well as the world premiere of Giorgio Battistelli's new opera *Wake*, in a production by Graham Vick for the Birmingham Opera Company.

Born in Charleston, South Carolina, Jonathon studied conducting at the Boston Conservatory of Music, and received postgraduate lessons at London's Royal Academy of Music. Before leaving the Academy, he was appointed assistant conductor of the Hallé Orchestra, and became Music Director of the Hallé Youth Orchestra.

ARTISTS



Angel Blue

AIDA

Soprano Angel Blue's importance in opera today cannot be overstated. On September 23, 2019, she opened the Metropolitan Opera's 2019–20 season as Bess in a new production of George Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* for which she earned a GRAMMY Award in the Best Opera Recording category. She reprised this role at the Met in autumn 2021, which immediately followed her triumphant role debut as Destiny/Loneliness/Greta in the Met's historic 2021–22 season opener of Terence Blanchard's *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, the first production at the Metropolitan Opera by a Black composer. Additionally, she was the 2020 recipient of the Met's prestigious Beverly Sills Award—the first African American artist to receive this honor—and she was the 2022 Richard Tucker Foundation Awardee. She has been praised for performances in nearly every major opera house in the world, including Teatro alla Scala, the Royal Opera House, Vienna State Opera, Semperoper Dresden, San Francisco Opera, Seattle Opera, Theater an der Wien, Oper Frankfurt, and San Diego Opera.

The 2022–23 season is a display of Angel's immense versatility and virtuosity on operatic and concert stages internationally. Blue opens Houston Grand Opera's season with her house debut as Violetta in Verdi's *La traviata*; she sings Violetta later in the spring of 2023 at the Metropolitan Opera. The California native returns to longtime collaborator LA Opera performing the titular role in Puccini's *Tosca*, and she reprises this role at Santa Fe Opera in early summer 2023. Blue performs in this special one-night-only performance of *Aida* in concert at Detroit Opera, which will be Blue's debut in the title role, alongside Christine Goerke. In spring 2023, Angel appears as Aida at the Royal Opera House.



Christine Goerke

AMNERIS

Soprano Christine Goerke has appeared in many of the most prestigious opera houses of the world including the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Royal Opera House, Paris Opera, Teatro alla Scala, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Teatro Real in Madrid, and the Saito Kinen Festival. She has sung much of the great soprano repertoire, beginning with the Mozart and Handel heroines and now moving into dramatic R. Strauss and Wagner roles. She has also appeared with many leading orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Radio Vara, the BBC Symphony Orchestra at the BBC Proms, and both the Hallé Orchestra and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra at the Edinburgh International Festival.

Christine's recording of Vaughan Williams's *A Sea Symphony* with Robert Spano and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra won the 2003 GRAMMY Award for Best Classical Recording and Best Choral Performance. Her close association with Robert Shaw yielded several recordings, which include of Brahms's *Liebeslieder Waltzes*, Poulenc's *Stabat Mater*, Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater*, and the GRAMMY-nominated recording of Dvořák's *Stabat Mater*. Other recordings include the title role in *Iphigénie en Tauride* for Telarc and Britten's *War Requiem*, which won the 1999 GRAMMY Award for Best Choral Performance.

Christine is the Associate Artistic Director of Detroit Opera (formerly Michigan Opera Theatre). She was the recipient of the 2001 Richard Tucker Award, the 2015 Musical America Vocalist of the Year Award, and the 2017 Opera News Award.

ARTISTS



Riccardo Massi **RADAMÈS**

Riccardo Massi quickly established himself as one of the most in-demand Italian tenors internationally, garnering great success playing the heroes of Puccini and Verdi. A specialist in the art of the use of ancient and medieval weapons, before embarking on a career as an opera singer, he enjoyed a flourishing career as a stuntman. He has participated in various films including Martin Scorsese's *The Gangs of New York*, ABC's miniseries *Empire*, and HBO's series *Rome*.

2009 was the year of Riccardo's operatic debut in Salerno as Radamès in *Aida*. In 2012, he made his debut at New York's Metropolitan Opera in the same role, which he also sang at Houston Grand Opera in 2013. Projects for the 2022–23 season in addition to this performance of *Aida* at Detroit Opera include *Norma* at the Teatro del Liceu in Barcelona, *Tosca* in Toulon and Genoa, *Madama Butterfly* in Bordeaux, and *Hérodiade* in Düsseldorf. Last season, he debuted with *Don Carlo* at the Semperoper in Dresden, sang in *Tosca* at the Royal Opera House, participated in the AIDS Gala at the Deutsche Oper in Berlin, and made his debut at the Teatro Carlo Felice in Genoa with *Manon Lescaut*. He returned to Hamburg with *Aida* and made his debut at the Wiesbaden festival with *Don Carlo*. Other notable appearances in previous seasons include his debut in the role of Gabriele Adorno in *Simon Boccanegra* at the Marseille Opera, Manrico in *Il trovatore* at the Teatro Comunale di Bologna, Cavaradossi in *Tosca* at the Washington National Opera and the Semperoper in Dresden, and Pollione in *Norma* at the Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich.



Alfred Walker

AMONASRO

In the 2022–23 season, Alfred Walker returns to San Francisco Opera as Enobarbus in the world premiere of John Adams’s *Antony and Cleopatra*, joins the Lyric Opera of Chicago as Vater in *Hänsel und Gretel*, returns to the Metropolitan Opera as Masetto in *Don Giovanni*, sings Rachmaninoff’s *The Bells* with the LA Philharmonic, and joins the Boston Philharmonic for Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9. Last season’s credits included Scarpia in *Tosca* (San Francisco Opera); Crown in *Porgy and Bess* (Metropolitan Opera); Mtchll in *It All Falls Down / Written in Stone* (Washington National Opera); Nilakantha in *Lakmé* (Washington Concert Opera); and Tom in *Un ballo in maschera* (Chicago Symphony Orchestra).

Walker’s recent credits include Alfio in *Cavalleria rusticana* (Detroit Opera); Vater in *Hänsel und Gretel* and Orest in *Elektra* (San Francisco Opera); Oroveso in *Norma* (Boston Lyric Opera); the title role in *Der fliegende Holländer* (Theater Basel, Oper Köln, Seattle Opera, Théâtre de Caen, Grand Théâtre de Luxembourg, Boston Lyric Opera, and the Wagner Geneva Festival); Titurel in *Parsifal* and the Speaker in *The Magic Flute* (Metropolitan Opera); Amonasro in *Aida* and Porgy in *Porgy and Bess* (Seattle Opera); Amfortas in *Parsifal* and Amonasro in *Aida* (Theater Basel); the title role of Josh Gibson in the world premiere of Daniel Sonenberg’s *The Player King* (Pittsburgh Opera); and Allazim in Peter Sellars’s production of *Zaide* (Festival d’Aix-en-Provence, Wiener Festwochen, London’s Barbican Centre, and Lincoln Center’s Mostly Mozart Festival).

Walker, a New Orleans native, is a graduate of Dillard University, Loyola University, and the Metropolitan Opera Lindemann Young Artist Program. He is the recipient of awards from the George London Foundation, Palm Beach Opera Competition, Houston Opera Studio’s Eleanor McCollum Competition, and the Sullivan Foundation career grant.

ARTISTS



Morris Robinson RAMFIS

Morris Robinson is considered one of the most interesting and sought-after basses performing today. He regularly appears at the Metropolitan Opera, where he debuted in a production of *Fidelio* and has since appeared as Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* (both in the original production and in the children's English version), Ferrando in *Il trovatore*, the King in *Aida*, and in roles in *Nabucco*, *Tannhäuser*, and the new productions of *Les Troyens* and *Salome*. He has also appeared at the San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Dallas Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, Opera Philadelphia, Seattle Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Cincinnati Opera, Teatro alla Scala, Volksoper Wien, Opera Australia, and the Aix-en-Provence Festival. His many roles include the title role in *Porgy and Bess*, Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, Osmin in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Ramfis in *Aida*, Zaccaria in *Nabucco*, Sparafucile in *Rigoletto*, Commendatore in *Don Giovanni*, Grand Inquisitor in *Don Carlos*, Timur in *Turandot*, the Bonze in *Madama Butterfly*, Padre Guardiano in *La forza del destino*, Ferrando in *Il trovatore*, Fasolt in *Das Rheingold*, and Landgraf in *Tannhäuser*. He is also a prolific concert singer.

This season, Morris debuts two important roles: King Marke in *Tristan und Isolde* at Seattle Opera and Daland in *Der fliegende Holländer* at Santa Fe Opera. He also returns to LA Opera for *Otello* and appears in concert with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Tulsa Opera, and the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional in the Dominican Republic, in addition to this performance with Detroit Opera.

Morris's solo album *Going Home* was released on the Decca label. He also appears as Joe in the DVD of the San Francisco Opera production of *Show Boat*, and in the DVDs of the Metropolitan Opera's production of *Salome* and the Aix-en-Provence Festival's production of Mozart's *Zaide*.



Melanie Spector

A PRIESTESS

Praised for her “beaming soprano” by *Operawire*, Melanie Spector is a coloratura soprano on the rise who was born and raised in New York City, and now based in Detroit where she is a Resident Artist at Detroit Opera for their 2022–23 season. Most recently, she performed Mozart’s “Vorrei spiegarvi, o dio”, K. 418 and as the soprano soloist in Mozart’s Requiem with the Midland Symphony Orchestra; sang the role of Woglinde in Wagner’s *Das Rheingold* at the Miami Music Festival Wagner Institute; and performed Schubert’s “Der Hirt auf dem Felsen” with renowned clarinetist David Shifrin and pianist Gilles Vonsattel as a Festival Artist at the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival. As part of her tenure with Detroit Opera, she sings the High Priestess in this performance of Verdi’s *Aida* and will cover Atalanta in Handel’s *Xerxes* and Nuria in Golijov’s *Fountain of Tears (Ainadamar)*.

In the past year she has performed Königin der Nacht in Mozart’s *Die Zauberflöte* with Eugene Opera, where she “knocked it out of the park” (KLCC), on the Metropolitan Opera Guild’s Access Opera Tour, and with the Stuttgart Philharmonic as part of the second annual Internationale Opernwerkstatt Waiblingen—a new, full-scholarship program created and directed by renowned baritone Thomas Hampson and soprano Melanie Diener. Melanie has received awards from several organizations for her vocal prowess, including the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition (District Winner/Region Finalist 2021, 2022), the Gerda Lissner Foundation, the SAS Performing Arts Company, the National Society of Arts and Letters, and the Camille Coloratura Awards.

In addition to singing, Melanie is a regular panelist on the Toll Brothers Metropolitan Opera Quiz during Saturday matinée broadcasts.

ARTISTS



Kenneth Kellogg **KING OF EGYPT**

Kenneth Kellogg's recent career highlights include his debut at San Francisco Opera as Basilio in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and Dr. Bartolo in *Le nozze di Figaro* at Maryland Lyric Opera following his role debut there as Grand Inquisitor/Philip II in *Don Carlo*. He appeared as Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* at Seattle Opera and returned for the role of Father in *Blue*, and brought the roles of Rocco in *Fidelio* at North Carolina Opera and Raimondo in *Lucia de Lammermoor* at Madison Opera into his repertoire. He traveled to Kraków, Poland for highly lauded performances of Rossini's *Sigismondo* in the two roles of Ulderico and Zenovito with Capella Cracoviensis. In addition to this Detroit Opera performance as Il Re (King of Egypt) in *Aida*, Kenneth Kellogg's other engagements this season include the roles of Ramfis in *Aida* and Sparafucile in *Rigoletto*.

Kenneth created the role of Father in *Blue*, written by Jeanine Tesori and Tazewell Thompson, for Glimmerglass Festival's world premiere, which brought him great acclaim. He recently appeared in the role at Detroit Opera and at Pittsburgh Opera and appeared on the recording made by Washington National Opera; in November 2022, he appeared with the Dutch National Opera in Amsterdam in the European premiere of *Blue*.

Born and raised in Washington, D.C., Kenneth began his formal musical training at the Duke Ellington School of the Performing and Visual Arts. He continued his studies at the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia, and is an Alumnus of the Adler Fellowship at San Francisco Opera and the Domingo-Cafritz Emerging Artist Program at Washington National Opera.



Leo Williams

A MESSENGER

Leo Williams is a proud alumnus of Indiana University and recipient of the Georgina Joshi International Grant, and the Jacobs Premier and the Schmidt Foundation Scholarships. Stage credits at Indiana University include *Don Giovanni*, *La fille du régiment*, *Peter Grimes*, *The Crucible*, *The Consul*, *Rigoletto*, *Les pêcheurs de perles*, *Samson et Dalila*, *It's a Wonderful Life*, and *Lucia di Lammermoor*. He has also had an active performing career overseas spanning five continents appearing in *La bohème*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and *Don Giovanni*. Leo was a 2020 Opera Maya Studio artist, Berlin Opera Academy Principal Artist, and an Opernfest Prague Fellow. Recent debuts include Cavaradossi in *Tosca* for the Sitzprobe with the Naples Philharmonic; Spoletta in *Tosca* for Gulfshore Opera (Naples, Florida); Macduff and Malcom in Verdi's *Macbeth* (Australia); Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* and Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* (Germany). He is a past participant in the UNISA International Voice Competition (South Africa), and a recent soloist with the Key Chorale and Sarasota Ballet singing works of Margaret Bonds. After winning a coveted spot in the nationwide Detroit Opera Resident Artist Program final auditions, he joined the program for the 2022–23 season, where he has been the official cover for Faust in Gounod's *Faust*, and makes his Detroit Opera debut singing the role of Messenger in *Aida* and the role of Torero in *Fountain of Tears* (*Ainadamar*).

An avid lover of world travel and speaker of five languages with years of classical dance training, Leo is well recognized in South Florida's dance and theatrical arts community. He served as Assistant Professor of the IU Soul Revue, acting as vocal coach, teacher, and choreographer. Currently teaching as a private voice instructor, he is also a freelance soloist at the First Church of Christian Science in Fort Lauderdale and Church by the Sea in Bal Harbor.

ARTISTS



Suzanne Mallare Acton **CHORUS MASTER**

Known for her versatility and energy on the podium, Detroit Opera veteran Chorus Master Suzanne Mallare Acton has more than 160 production credits covering seven languages. In addition to her chorus work, Suzanne has conducted over 35 productions for the company, including *West Side Story*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Carmen*, *The Music Man*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *The Mikado*, *Die Fledermaus*, *La traviata*, *A Little Night Music*, a staged version of *Carmina Burana* with members of Cirque du Soleil, *The Medium*, *A View from the Bridge*, *Les pêcheurs de perles*, and *Frida*.

Additional conducting credits include *My Fair Lady* and *La traviata* for Dayton Opera; *The Merry Widow* and *Madama Butterfly* for Artpark; *Tosca* for Augusta Opera; *La traviata*, *L'elisir d'amore*, and *Gianni Schicchi* for Verdi Opera Theatre; and *Frida* for El Paso Opera. Suzanne was guest conductor for the Detroit Chamber Winds and Strings, Birmingham-Bloomfield Symphony Orchestra, Lexington Bach Festival, Rochester Symphony Orchestra, Saginaw Bay Symphony Orchestra, and Dearborn Symphony Orchestra. She premiered *Too Hot To Handel* at the Detroit Opera House, Chicago's Auditorium Theatre, and The Orpheum Theatre in Memphis.

For 25 years, Suzanne was artistic director of Rackham Choir. Under her leadership, the Rackham Choir received the prestigious 2008 Governor's Awards for Arts & Culture for outstanding contributions to arts and culture in Michigan. Suzanne has been recognized by *Corp!* Magazine as one of Michigan's 95 Most Powerful Women. In 2014, she was one of 12 women selected as WJR's Women Who Lead.



Moníka Essen

STAGE COORDINATOR

Moníka Essen is an award-winning, nationally recognized artist, designer, and director. The recipient of the prestigious Lawrence DeVine Award for Outstanding Contribution to Theatre, she studied Interior Architecture and Environmental Design at Parsons School of Design and received her MFA in Scenography from the renowned Hilberry Repertory Company.

Moníka has designed countless productions in theatre, opera, and film. For Detroit Opera she designed their highly acclaimed productions of *Bliss*, *Carmina Burana*, and *The Medium*, as well as their spectacular production of *Frida*. She has just recently directed and designed *La Cenerentola* for Opera Modo in Detroit, with an entirely new concept she devised, which included a new and modern libretto in English. Currently, she is working on a furniture line and an exciting new version of *The Tales of Hoffmann*.

Moníka is an accomplished painter, and creates murals, custom furniture, museum exhibits, interiors, and full sensory, multi-media environments for residential and commercial clients, including the Detroit Zoo. All her work can be viewed at studioepoque.com.

ARTISTS



Chelsie McPhilimy
LIGHTING DESIGNER

Chelsie McPhilimy is thrilled to be joining the creative team of *Aida*. She is a freelance lighting and media designer, and also an Assistant Professor of the Practice in Dance at Wesleyan University.

Recent design credits include *Cartography* (New York City, International Tour), *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (Flint Repertory Theatre, Wilde Award Winner), *Soundstage* (Here Arts, New York City), and *The Balcony* (Marymount Manhattan College, New York City). cmlightingdesign.com

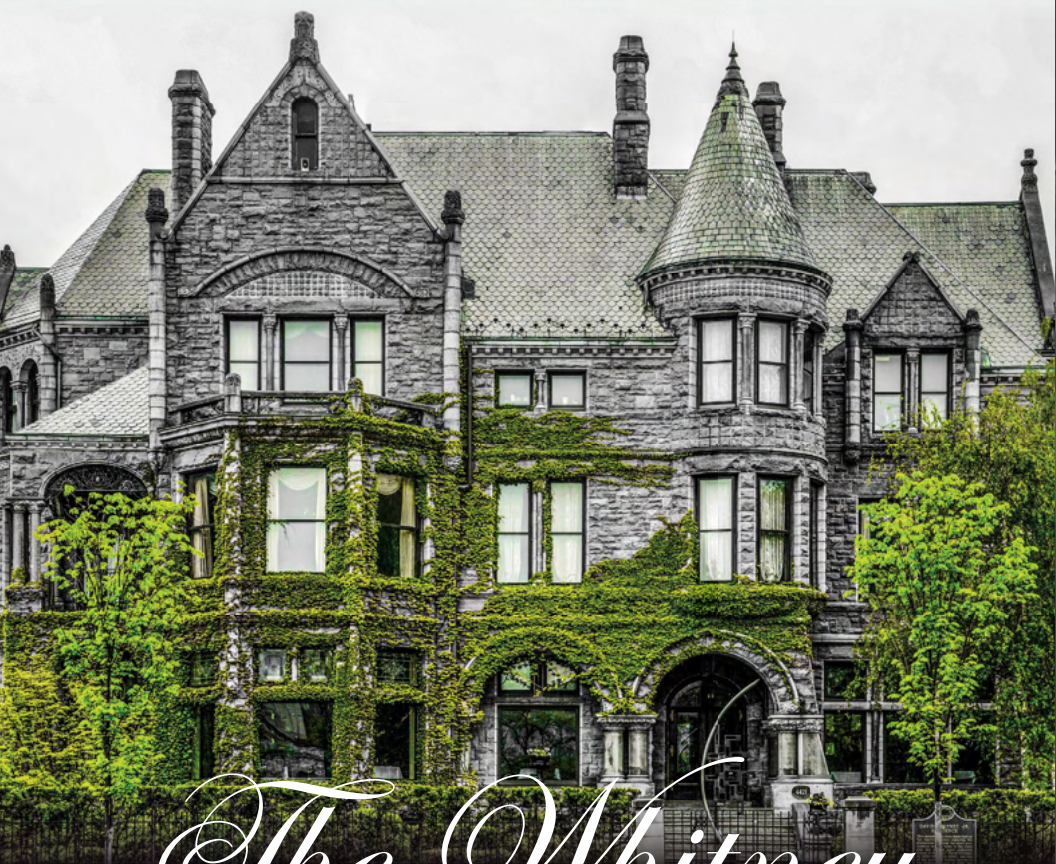
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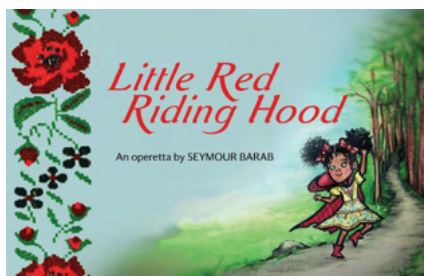
Detroit Opera Touring Ensemble: *Little Red Riding Hood*

Detroit Opera's Touring Ensemble hits the road every year, traveling to schools throughout Michigan! We are currently taking bookings through June 2023, so if you are interested in bringing the Touring Ensemble to your school, please get in touch with our Program Coordinator, Branden Hood (bhood@detroitopera.org). For many young audiences, the performers are often their first introduction to the artform! As last season's cast members explain, this community-based representation is crucial, not only to the mission of Detroit Opera, but to nurture the cultural arts for all Michiganders.

IMANI GROSVENOR, SOPRANO

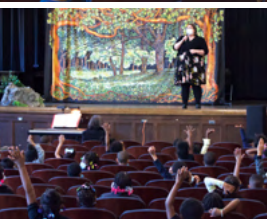
I have always wanted to sing with Detroit Opera. This is my first time with the company! I love that this house is dedicated to serving the community. And the community looks a lot like me. And so, I just thought if I could be part of this company in any way, I wanted to do that.

(We are thrilled to share that Ms. Grosvenor is now a member of the U.S. Army Chorus! The role of Little Red has since been filled by the wonderful Kayla Hill Odera.)



ANDREA SCOBIE, **DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

For a lot of young audiences, it's their first time hearing opera. They respond to a live performance, so they love to see the costumes, they love to see the energy of the performers, they love to laugh, and to be involved—*Little Red Riding Hood* has a lot of call and response and they are always so excited and eager to “talk” with the characters.



KASWANNA KAYINDA, **MEZZO-SOPRANO**

These productions are a way to expose kids to the art form at an early age. I know for me, as far as my imagination of what was possible, it was based on what I could see. If I would have seen someone who looked like me on stage, singing classically, I would have known that that's a possibility, that that's what I can do. Hopefully, when we're building these new operas, or, we're exposing our new audience to these things, we actually are in tune with what they want, and what they need.

(Ms. Kayinda has recently left the touring company to join Fort Worth Opera as a Resident Artist! In our upcoming tour, the role of Grandmother/Mother will be performed by Lily Belle Czartorski.)



DAVID MOAN, **TENOR**

I find this type of opera to be some of the most fulfilling. To get to come into a school like this, or to a small community like we did this past weekend and see these kids' faces light up. The idea that we are starting a journey on the arts, not just opera, but the arts in general, is such an amazing gift that we can give to the community. It's very good for the heart, as well as keeping the mind clear.



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Founded by Karen V. DiChiera, the Department of Education and Community Engagement serves the entire state with quality entertainment and education. With an ever-growing repertoire of productions, an exciting roster of up-and-coming singers, and a circle of experienced and passionate teaching artists, it continues to provide people of all ages with opportunities for access, growth, and learning through the arts.

For more information, or to book programs or workshops, email Director of Education Andrea Scobie at ascobie@detroitopera.org.



A scene from *La bohémé*

Photo: Vesna Zdravkoski



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In remembrance of our founder and long-term general director, The David DiChiera Artistic Fund has been established to support and honor his artistic vision.

This fund enables Detroit Opera to produce compelling opera, present innovative dance, and engage with thousands of students and members of our community through our educational and outreach programs. Most importantly, it allows Detroit Opera to preserve David's legacy and his dedication to the young people of Southeast Michigan and young emerging artists from all over the country.

Detroit Opera gratefully acknowledges the generous corporate, foundation, and individual donors whose gifts to The David DiChiera Artistic Fund were made before March 31, 2022.

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CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE DETROIT OPERA HOUSE

The Detroit Opera Board of Directors began the first phase of fundraising for Detroit Opera House capital improvements in January 2020. This multi-phase capital campaign grew from recommendations identified in the facilities master plan completed by Albert Kahn Associates, Inc. Scheduled facility improvements and upgrades will shape the patron experience at the Opera House for years to come.

We look forward to sharing full details about the capital campaign in the coming months. Until then, we extend heartfelt thanks to the following donors who made contributions that enabled capital improvements to begin.



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The Italian word avanti means "ahead," or "forward." Detroit Opera's Avanti Society represents a designated group of friends who have made plans to include Detroit Opera in their estates—whether by will, trust, insurance, or life income arrangement. We are grateful for the generosity and foresight of those listed below, who have chosen to declare their intentions and join the Avanti Society. *Thank You Avanti Society Members!*

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Please observe the lighted exit signs located throughout the theater. In the event of an emergency, remain calm and walk, do not run, to the nearest exit. Ushers and security personnel are trained to assist. An emergency medical technician (EMT) is onsite during most events. Contact an usher or staff member if you need medical assistance.

GUEST SERVICES – Vincent Lobby

There are a variety of amenities located in guest services for your comfort and use. Wheelchairs, booster seats*, earplugs, assisted listening devices, feminine hygiene products, basic first aid items, and more are complimentary and available for your convenience. Coat check is also available. This area is located on the Madison Street side of the building. **Limited quantity*

PHOTOGRAPHY, RECORDING, AND CELL PHONE USE

Photography and/or recording during any performance is strictly prohibited. Photographs taken in the lobby areas, before or after a performance, and during intermission are welcome. As a courtesy to all guests, please turn off all electronic devices and refrain from use during the performance.

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Women's restrooms are located off the Ford Lobby (Broadway Street entrance) and down the stairs, and on third floor (Madison Street entrance). Men's restrooms are located under the Grand Staircase and on the third floor (Broadway Street side). There are two sets of elevators or stairs available to access all third-floor restrooms. All third-floor restrooms are wheelchair accessible (women's restroom, press 3R in the elevator). There are single-use unisex wheelchair accessible restrooms on the first floor of the Broadway Street side of the building and the Madison Street side of the building. There is also a wheelchair accessible women's restroom on the Broadway Street side of the building.

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The Detroit Opera House is a non-smoking facility. This includes e-cigarettes, vapes, and other "smokeless" products.

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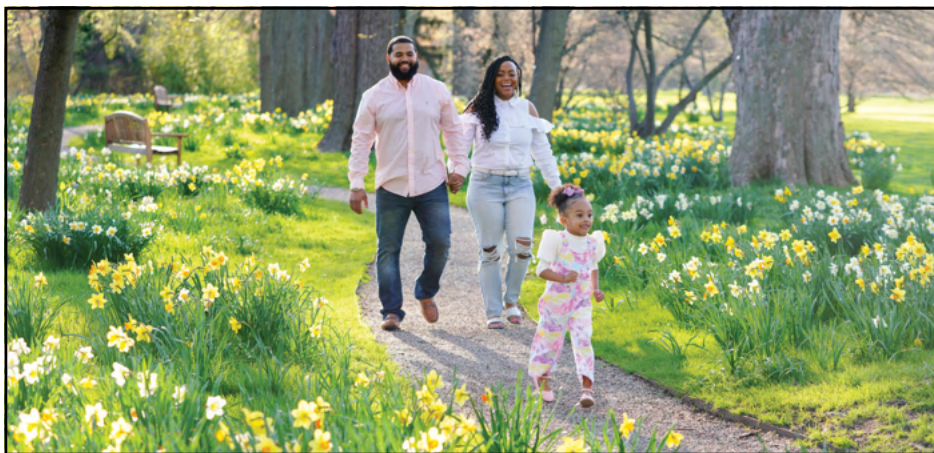
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During the performance, lost and found is located in guest services. Unclaimed items are logged and taken to the Safety and Security office after each performance. To inquire about a misplaced or lost item, please call 313-961-3500. Items left over 30 days will be discarded or donated.

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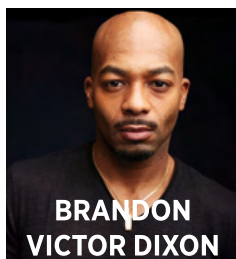
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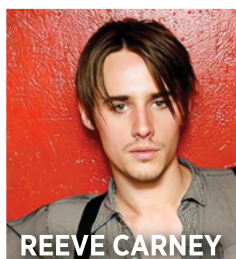
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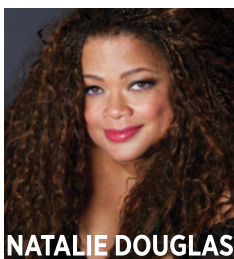
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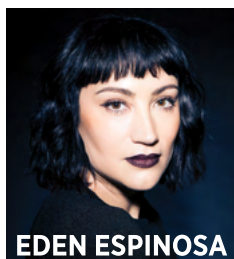
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