12-3-2022

University Singers and University Chorale - Winter Concert

John J. Cali School of Music
FEATURING

Montclair State University Singers
Montclair State University Chorale
Dr. Heather J. Buchanan, conductor
Steven W. Ryan, accompanist

GUEST ARTISTS
Merynda Adams, harp
Gavin Ard, Baroque trumpet
Vincent Carr, organ
Julian Dippolito, percussion
Mario Correa, Baroque trumpet
Taylor Goodson, timpani
Tim Nuzzetti, percussion
Jack Powers, percussion
Max Tripodi, percussion
Cali Brass Ensemble

SATURDAY | DECEMBER 3 | 8PM
ALEXANDER KASSER THEATER
ABOUT THE PROGRAM:
This season, the choral program emphasis is rebuilding all ensembles to the high standards of artistic performance that characterized our work in the ‘beforetimes.’ In addition to Alexander Kasser Theater concerts, we are honored to accept three professional-level collaborations with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra (NJSO) for their highly anticipated Centennial Season: Messiah (University Singers), Mahler Symphony No. 3 (Prima Voce), and the Fauré Requiem (Chorale). We hope you will join us at NJPAC, the State Theater, Richardson Auditorium (Princeton), and the Cathedral Basilica (Newark) for these performances - challenging and exquisite repertoire that will elevate our students. Vocal Accord, our extracurricular chamber choir has also returned, performing with VOCES8 and Rhiannon Giddens this semester, and featuring prominently in the April 2023 Choral Spring Concert that will also include a University Singers Alumni Choir! ('save-the-date': Saturday, April 29, 2023).

Tonight’s concert serves the dual function of ‘building block’ and ‘destination.’ It has been three years since University Singers performed Messiah in its entirety with the NJSO. A tradition since Fall 2014, this beloved masterwork is a virtuosic undertaking and rite-of-passage for our students. With only a handful of choir members possessing the requisite experience, performing experience with select movements has been crucial in our preparation this semester. Highlights from Messiah focuses on movements from Part I (the Christmas portion) featuring graduate student soloists from within the choir, deftly accompanied by Steven W. Ryan. Concluding with “Hallelujah” is always appropriate and masked audience members are welcome to stand in their seats and sing with the choir!

Chorale’s repertoire is themed around psalm settings by master composers, and features repertoire from the Romantic, 20th, and 21st centuries encompassing four languages: German, English, Hebrew, and Ecclesiastical Latin. Psalms is an Old Testament book comprising sacred songs or poems intended to be “sung.” In the Hebrew Bible, Psalms begins the third and last section of the biblical canon, known as the Writings (Hebrew Ketuvin). The book of Psalms contains 150 poems subdivided into five books, ranging in mood and expressions of faith from joyous celebration to solemn hymn and bitter protest. Throughout the centuries, Psalms were an integral part of the ritualized activities within the Hebrew and Christian communities. Psalm 150 serves as a doxology for the entire collection.

Mendelssohn’s a cappella anthem Richtemich, Gott was written for the Berlin Cathedral Choir and is a beautiful representation of the composer’s synthesis of Classical era tonal clarity and the lush harmonies characteristic of 19th century Romanticism. Mendelssohn’s inspiration from Venetian polychoral writing, Handelian choruses, and Bach’s counterpoint is clearly in evidence, with the sonorous, rich harmonies his Hallmark.

Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks is one of the great cathedral anthems from the Anglican (English) tradition. Howells’ impeccable craft earned him widespread respect within the Church of England and beyond for his anthems and service music. Composed in a single day (January 8, 1941) during WWII, the exceptional poetic beauty of Psalm 42, vv. 1-3 and its expression of longing for spiritual sustenance is eloquently conveyed in this exquisite setting for choir and organ.
The centerpiece of Chorale’s repertoire is *Chichester Psalms*. Commissioned by the Very Rev. Walter Hussey, Dean of Chichester Cathedral in Sussex, UK, for the 1965 *Three Choirs Festival*, Leonard Bernstein’s three-movement work is an eclectic and clever work, but most importantly a testament to the composer’s commitment to humanity and breaking down barriers. Choosing texts with words of peace and reconciliation as the overriding message, sung in Sephardic Hebrew, written for English-speaking choristers, and exploring infectious Broadway dance rhythms, Bernstein’s musical language at the time (insistent dissonance contrasting with exquisite lyricism) was bold. *Chichester Psalms* has stood the test of time and it’s closing message rings as true today as it did 57 years ago at the work’s inception: “Behold how good, and how pleasant it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity. Amen.”

The exuberant *Jubilate Deo* by American composer, arranger, and conductor Mack J. Wilberg is the first movement from his *Tres Cantus Laudendi* (*Three Songs of Praise*). Written in 1991, this virtuosic setting of Psalm 100, vv. 1-4 for choir, brass ensemble, organ, and percussion is the Chorale’s and our Winter Concert program finale: “Sing, joyfully to God, all the earth... praise His name!”

Whether you are joining us in-person or virtually through the livestream, we thank you for your support of our students and the MSU choral program, and wish you a safe and joyous festive season.
Moscow, Pushkin, and St. Petersburg. An important ensemble in the NJ arts community, the University Singers perform regularly with the NJSO, presenting Handel’s *Messiah* annually since 2014. They have also performed Mozart’s *Requiem* under Jacques Lacombe (2013) and Xian Zhang (2018). In October 2018 they gave the US Premiere performance of *Speak Out!* by Kate Whitley (UK), an inspiring work based on texts by Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala, for the NJSO’s 2018-19 season opening.

The University Singers has also had an exciting performance relationship with renowned composer-artist Meredith Monk beginning with their historic collaboration in December 2006 and continuing with the critically acclaimed March 2009 performances of *Ascension Variations* at the Guggenheim Museum. They recorded the CD *Songs of Ascension* with Meredith Monk and Vocal Ensemble on the prestigious European label ECM Records under the legendary producer Manfred Eicher, released May 2011. This collaboration was included in the Producer of the Year section of the 2012 Grammy nominations. 2019-20 saw the choir return to the NJSO for two *Messiah* performances under the baton of guest conductor Roderick Cox, with an inaugural live broadcast on WQXR hosted by John Schaffer from the Cathedral Basilica, Newark. During the COVID pandemic, the Basilica performance was rebroadcast in December 2020 on WQXR and the National Public Broadcast network. The choir’s first solo CD recording, *I Sing Because*... was released in March 2020 and is also available for digital download on Spotify and iTunes.

During 2020-21, and in the face of the devastating COVID-19 pandemic, the University Singers continued to function in the vanguard of best choral practices, with socially distanced outdoor rehearsals and innovative recording projects. The choir’s activities received widespread regional and national media attention, including TV appearances on *The Today Show, NBC Nightly News, The Kelly Clarkson Show,* and *News 12 NJ* in addition to print and digital media stories. During the Fall 2020 semester, their social media outreach included 99,591+ views. By invitation of the New York Yankees, their video performance of *The Star-Spangled Banner* was performed at Yankee Stadium in June 2021.

2021-22 season highlights included two NYC debut performances: collaborating with the internationally acclaimed UK-based vocal ensemble VOCES8 at Merkin Hall; and the MSU/Cali showcase event in the Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium at The Metropolitan Museum. The choir also commissioned composer Kamala Sankaram *Let My Country Awake* as part of her Cali Immersive Residency. 2022-23 will see the choir return to mainstage performances with the NJSO (*Messiah* and Mahler Symphony No. 3) under principal conductor Xian Zhang, perform the NY metropolitan premier of the new social justice piece *Weather* (Rollo Dilworth) in collaboration with the MSU Wind Symphony (Dr. Thomas McCauley, conductor), and continue their partnership with VOCES8 (February 2023) through the Cali Immersive Residency Program. The University Singers’ performances are broadcast on Cali Live and the Cali YouTube Channel.

**MSU Chorale** is the core choral ensemble and symphonic choir in the John J. Cali School of Music. Currently 135 voices strong it comprises music students majoring in performance (vocal and instrumental), music education, music
therapy, composition, and musical theatre, as well as non-music majors with choral experience. With a focus on masterwork repertoire, the Chorale’s 2018-19 season began with three magnificent performances of Beethoven’s *Ninth Symphony* under the baton of Xian Zhang for the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra’s season opening. It continued with their Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage debut at Carnegie Hall, also performing Beethoven’s *Ninth Symphony* (George Mathew, conductor) in *Beethoven for The Rohingya*, a benefit concert aiding the work of Doctors Without Borders/ Médecins Sans Frontières assisting the Rohingya refugees fleeing genocide in Myanmar. The Chorale’s 18-19 season concluded with *Dona Nobis Pacem* by Ralph Vaughan Williams featuring soloists Karen Driscoll (soprano) and John Hancock (baritone) with chamber orchestra accompaniment including Steven W. Ryan pianist. This concert commemorated the 100th anniversary of the end of WWI and the 200th birthday of America’s great lyric poet Walt Whitman.

The Chorale’s long-standing relationship with the NJSO features a range of masterworks, including Howard Shore’s Academy Award winning *The Lord of the Rings Symphony*, Beethoven’s *Ninth Symphony* (Neeme Järvi and Xian Zhang, conductors), Mahler’s Symphony No. 3, and Verdi’s epic *Messa da Requiem* twice with Neeme Järvi (January 2010) and Jacques Lacombe (April 2014). The Chorale’s highly acclaimed performances of Orff’s *Carmina Burana* and Verdi *Requiem* with Maestro Jacques Lacombe were celebrated with limited edition CD releases in September 2011 and December 2015.

Alexander Kasser Theater performances have included collaborations with professional and alumni soloists and instrumentalists, as well as regional youth choirs Newark Boys Chorus, Children’s Chorus of Sussex County, and the American Boy Choir. Chorale repertoire highlights include an interdisciplinary performance of *Carmina Burana* (Orff) with the department of theatre and dance (April 2017), *Ein Deutsches Requiem* (Brahms), Duruflé *Requiem*, Saint Nicolas (Britten), Fauré *Requiem*, *Chichester Psalms* (Bernstein), the regional premiere of *Parables* (Aldridge) in collaboration with the MSU Symphony Orchestra for the 2011 Crawford Concert, Annelies (Whitbourn) for the April 2015 Holocaust Memorial Concert, and the Tri-state premiere of *Alzheimer’s Stories* (Cohen) for the 2015 Crawford Concert, and the New Jersey premiere performance of *Jubilate Deo* by Dan Forrest (May 2018).

The Chorale’s 2019-20 season featured two semi-staged regional premiere performances of the acclaimed fusion oratorio *Considering Matthew Shepard* (Hella Johnson) for the 2019 Crawford Concert (December 2019). This was their final performance prior to the closure of live performances due to the COVID-19 pandemic. After a semester of online instruction with a focus on pedagogical concepts, the Chorale returned to performing in Spring 2021 with two modalities to accommodate students’ instructional preferences: Virtual Chorale (100% online instruction) and Red Hawk Chorale (starting online and progressing to in-person instruction). With the welcome return to in-person concertizing, the Chorale celebrated the 2021-22 season with regional premiere performances of two exciting extended works by living composers: *The Breath of Life* (Dan Forrest) and *Circlesong* (Bob Chilcott), integrating multi-media and live dance elements.
in both productions. *The Breath of Life* was released as a “live audio” digital download in January 2022. Their 2022-3 season includes *Psalm* settings by Mendelssohn, Howells, and Wilberg with Bernstein’s *Chichester Psalms* the Winter Concert centerpiece. The choir’s spring 2023 focus will be two performances of Fauré’s *Requiem* in collaboration with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra for their Centennial Season.

**DR. HEATHER J. BUCHANAN, CONDUCTOR**

Australian-born conductor Heather J. Buchanan, PhD, is Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Montclair State University (MSU) where she conducts choirs ranging in size from 24 – 165 voices. Choirs under her direction have won critical acclaim for their “heartfelt conviction” “grace and precision,” “vibrant sound,” “eloquence”, and for singing with the “crispness and dexterity of a professional choir.” During her 20-year tenure, MSU choirs have collaborated with a variety of renowned national and international performing artists, perform masterworks regularly with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra (NJSO), and have sung on commercially produced recordings with Meredith Monk (*Songs of Ascension*) and the NJSO (*Carmina Burana* and Verdi *Requiem*). The MSU Singers released their first solo CD recording *I Sing Because*... in March 2020.


Dr. Buchanan holds degrees from the Queensland Conservatorium of Music (Australia), Westminster Choir College of Rider University (USA), and the University of New England (Australia). A licensed Body Mapping Educator since 2002, Dr. Buchanan specializes in the teaching of this neuro-anatomical educational technique that trains musicians to attain freedom of expression through effective movement. In June 2017 she was awarded the *Barbara Conable Teaching Award* by the Association for Body Mapping Education (ABME) in recognition of exemplary teaching, innovative ideas, support to colleagues, active involvement in ABME, & personal growth. A vibrant teacher, dynamic performer, and passionate musicians’ health advocate, Dr. Buchanan is in demand as a guest conductor, somatic educator, and choral clinician in the U.S. and abroad.

**STEVEN W. RYAN,**

**MONTCLAIR STATE ACCOMPANIST**

Steven W. Ryan joined the Cali School faculty in 2006. He has performed as an orchestral keyboardist with most of the major orchestras in New York City, including members of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. He has played celesta with the legendary Berlin Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall; piano, harpsichord, and portative organ with the Dessoff Choirs; and synthesizer with the Moody Blues rock band. He has collaborated with conductors such as Lorin Maazel, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Neeme
Järví, Bernhard Haitink, Gerard Schwarz, and Maxim Shostakovich, among others. Mr. Ryan took first place in the 2001 Concours des Grands Amateurs de Piano. At the close of this international competition, he was engaged to perform Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-Flat Minor at the Sorbonne in Paris. In addition to winning the French competition, Steven took second prize in the 2000 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition for Outstanding Amateurs. In July 2022 he performed Messiaen’s Couleurs de la Cité Céleste with the Wind Symphony (Dr. Thomas McCauley, conductor) in Prague for WASBE Conference. Steven recently performed at Merkin Hall with VOCES8 in their collaboration with Montclair State University’s Vocal Accord.

GUEST ARTIST BIOS
Merynda Adams has been described by the Newark Star-Ledger as “having played the harp with color and great facility,” and a NY Times review stated: “Those four Irish tunes, delicately accompanied...by harpist Merynda Adams, were the highlight of the night.” Performances have taken her to London, France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Canada, and Puerto Rico as well as Carnegie Hall, Avery Fischer Hall and Off-Broadway in “The Fantasticks.” She is founder of Chamber Music for Charity and presented lectures for Frost School of Music(University of Miami), Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, UK and Cap-Ferret Music Festival, France.

Mario Correa is a freelance trumpeter and educator in the Tri-State area. Since graduating Rutgers University Mason Gross School of the Arts in 2012, he has engaged in a wide range of educational and performance experiences. He has become increasingly specialized in historically informed performance practice techniques and instrumentation, performing in various ensembles such as North Carolina Baroque Orchestra, Bach Vespers at Holy Trinity, Tempesta di Mare, Amor Artis and La Fiocco. Mario also enjoys teaching beginning instrumental music in North Arlington Public Schools and working as a freelance audio/video engineer with Bove Audio and Purple Critter Media.

Gavin Ard is originally from St. Petersburg, Florida, and a recent graduate of Montclair State University with a Bachelor’s in Music Performance degree. An avid lover of all styles of music, Gavin can be found playing around the NJ/NYC area in orchestras, jazz ensembles, and pit ensembles. Currently an Artist Diploma student at MSU, Gavin plans to begin graduate studies next fall.

Vincent Carr is an organist, conductor, composer, pedagogue and improviser widely known for his versatility as a performer and collaborative musician. He currently serves as National Councillor for Education for the American Guild of Organists, the world’s largest professional organization for organists and church musicians. He also serves as Director of Sacred Music at the parish of Our Lady of the Lake in Verona, New Jersey. Most recently, he held the post of Associate Professor of Organ and Sacred Music at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. He served on the faculty of the Cali School from 2009-2017 and accompanied Vocal Accord on their tour of the UK with the Richard Alston Dance Company.

Julian Dippolito is a professional percussionist based in Little Falls, New Jersey. Orchestral experience includes the New York Youth
Symphony as both the principal timpanist and principal percussionist, the APEX ensemble, Orchestra 201, Litha Symphony Orchestra, Livingston Symphony Orchestra and the Adelphi Orchestra. In addition, he was the principal percussionist for the WASBE European Tour with the Montclair State Wind Symphony, and appeared on CNN’s 4th of July Special in 2021 with Billy Ray Cyrus as principal percussionist. Julian recorded percussion on the Grammy nominated album “Works by Florence Price, Jessie Montgomery, Valerie Coleman” and received the Outstanding Undergraduate Performance Award at Montclair State University, where he earned his degree in Percussion Performance. During his time there, he founded BOOM Percussion Ensemble, which has performed at several school-wide events. Julian studied with Barry Centanni, Matt Smallcomb, Eric Borghi, and Min Hye Ju, who he gives great thanks to for his journey as a percussionist.

Taylor Goodson (Montclair State University, MA ’13) is active as a freelance percussionist in the New York/New Jersey metropolitan area, participating in performance with members of the Metropolitan Opera, the New York Philharmonic, the New York City Opera, and the Orchestra of St. Luke’s at many notable venues in both New York and New Jersey. He is the principal tympanist of both the Apex Ensemble and the FEA Symphony and he performs regularly with a plethora of ensembles, including the Paragon Ragtime Orchestra and the New Jersey Festival Orchestra. He is also active as a member of the New York Percussion Group, a New York City-based percussion ensemble, and Festival Percussion, an educational percussion quartet in the New York/New Jersey area.

Tim Nuzzetti is a junior music education major with a percussion primary. He studies with Barry Centanni and Minhye Ju. He plays in MSU’s Wind Symphony and performed with them at the WASBE conference in Prague in July 2022. In addition he sings with both the university singers and choral. Tim works as the percussion instructor at Vernon Township high school. Additionally, he is a music instructor teaching drums, piano, guitar, bass, and voice at Bach to Rock in Wayne. He also plays drum set for Jack Flowers and the Petal tones at music venues in the tristate area.

Jack Powers is a senior music education major. He studies percussion with Eric Borghi and Minhye Ju. In his time at the Cali School of Music, he has had the privilege of performing with Dame Evelyn Glennie, performing at the WASBE conference in Prague, and founding the Popular Music Ensemble with Dr. Bryan Powell. Additionally, he teaches with the Cali School’s Extension Division and performs original compositions with his band “Jack Flowers and The Petals Tones”.

Max Tripodi is a junior music education major in the dual certification program with a percussion primary. He studies with Barry Centanni and Minhye Ju. He plays in MSU’s Wind Symphony and performed with them at the WASBE conference in Prague in July 2022. He works as the percussion instructor at Butler high school. Additionally, he is a music instructor teaching drums and piano at Noteworthy Academy of Music and also teaches privately.
STUDENT SOLOIST BIOS

UNIVERSITY SINGERS

Taylor Amato is an operatic lyric soprano who has achieved her bachelors degree with a BM in Music Education from Rowan University. As a member of the Northern Lights Opera Apprenticeship, in 2019 Taylor sang Mrs. Gobineau in Menotti’s The Medium and most recently performed the role of Pamina in Mozart’s The Magic Flute. At present, she is pursuing her Master’s Degree in Vocal Performance at Montclair State University under the guidance of Barbara Dever. Operatic roles since joining MSU Opera Company include: 1st Dame in Mozart’s The Magic Flute and Gianenetta in Donizetti’s L’Elisir d’amore. Taylor is currently a leading member of both Chorale and University Singers as Dr. Heather Buchanan’s Graduate Assistant.

Abigail (Abby) Brodnick, soprano, is a first-year graduate student studying Vocal Performance at the Cali School of Music. She studies under Professor Beth Roberts and is currently preparing her first opera role at the Cali School as Pernille in Dan Shore’s The Beautiful Bridegroom. Abby is involved with University Singers as well as Vocal Accord, where she performed at Merkin Hall with VOCES8 in October of this year. She is from Naperville, Illinois and received her Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance in 2022 with a minor in Musical Theatre at DePauw University’s School of Music in Greencastle, Indiana.

Camryn Dewar is a passionate and versatile soprano from Stony Mountain, Manitoba, Canada. She is currently studying a Master of Music (Vocal Performance) at Montclair State University with Metropolitan Opera’s Barbara Dever. She previously completed a Bachelor of Music (Vocal Performance) on the Dean’s Honour Roll at the University of Manitoba under Mel Braun. A lover of many musical genres, Camryn’s primary passions are opera and musical theatre, with role highlights including Tisbe in Rossini’s La Cenerentola (Northern Lights Music Festival Opera), Suor Dolcina in Puccini’s Suor Angelica (Bel Canto in Tuscany), and Anna Gomez in Menotti’s The Consul (Opera NUOVA).

Mitchell Hernandez is originally from Canyon, Texas, where he stayed to obtain a B.M. in Vocal Performance from West Texas A&M University, and he is pursuing an M.A. in Music Composition from Montclair State University. Mitchell has written pieces for musical theatre/operetta, chamber ensembles, choir, and musique concrete. Mitchell has portrayed theatrical, and operatic roles such as Beast in Beauty and the Beast, Pirelli in Sweeney Todd, George Gibbs in Our Town (opera), Ralph Rackstraw in H.M.S. Pinafore, Doppelgänger in Monstersongs, Monostatos in The Magic Flute, and Marco in The Gondoliers.

Justin McBurney (they/them/their) (Tenor) is a first year master’s student at Montclair State under the tutelage of Jeffrey Gall. As a tenor, their career is just beginning, but their student career as a baritone and in transition has taken them across the country and through several roles. These include Figaro in Mozart’s Le nozze di Figaro (New Jersey Vocal Arts Collaborative), Death in Ullman’s Der Kaiser von Atlantis (Montclair State University), and the Schoolmaster in Martinu’s Comedy on the Bridge (San Francisco Conservatory of Music). After spending 10 years also pursuing a career in oboe and 2 years waylaid by injury, they are excited to be back at Montclair for further vocal study.

CHORALE
Gabrielle Guida is a mezzo-soprano studying under Barbara Dever. She is currently a Junior Voice Performance major. Gabrielle is a member of the Montclair State University Chorale, University Singers, and Vocal Accord. Previous performances include Cherubino in Montclair State University’s production of Le nozze di Figaro as well as Maestro Spinelloccio, Amantio di Nicolao, and the Magistrate in the upcoming productions of Gianni Schicci & Buoso’s Ghost.

Julia Krempasky is a Sophomore Music Education Major studying voice with Dr. Julia Rolwing. She is a member of the University Chorale, University Singers, Vocamotion, and Pep Band. Raised by music educator parents, she chose to study at Montclair State University because of its exciting and diverse performance opportunities and program offerings. She loves singing with the choir and would like to extend a sincere thank you to Dr. Buchanan for her artistry in bringing Chichester Psalms to life, and all of the Cali faculty for their hard work and dedication to our craft.

Nick Scafuto is a New Jersey based multi-instrumental/vocal educator, singer-songwriter, and actor. He is currently pursuing a degree in Music Education at MSU and has studied voice under Jeffrey Gall. This will be his ninth and final semester with MSU Chorale and Singers. Nick has performed in a wide range of musical genres ranging from Punk to Opera, as well as several musical theater productions. Past roles include John Adams (1776), Pippin (Pippin), and he sang the solo, “In Need of Breath” in MSU’s performance of Considering Matthew Shepard in 2019.

Thalia Suleymanov is a soprano and currently a sophomore at Montclair State University. She originally came from Brooklyn, New York, where she discovered her talent for music. It was from her high school years that she has participated in multiple competitions, such as the Lunigiana International Music Festival, in Italy, where she won first place. Adding on, she was chosen by the Metropolitan Opera to be a part of the Virtual High School Choir to sing the Prisoner’s chorus in Fidelio. Her ultimate goal in life is to become a successful opera singer!

Christopher Vehmas is a junior studying piano, voice, and choral conducting at the Cali School of Music. His studio teachers are Dr. Yumi Kim for piano, Dr. Peter Gillis for voice, and Dr. Heather Buchanan for choral conducting. He has been a member of Chorale and University Singers for 4 years. In 2012 Christopher became a member of the Artistic Children’s Chorus at the Metropolitan Opera and has appeared in six operas since then, including La Boheme and Aida in the current season. Christopher won 1st place in the Professional Music Teachers of NJ 2019 Junior piano competition. As a vocalist he won 2nd place in the NATS-NYC college classical category in 2021 and has performed the role of Papageno in Die Zauberflöte. He has recently performed at Carnegie Hall both as a pianist and vocalist.