

Good Country

An Opera By Keith Allegretti & Cecelia Raker

LOLA

LOCAL OPERA LOCAL ARTISTS

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Welcome to Good Country

Welcome to *Good Country*! We are pleased to bring you this piece as our return to in-person performances. We first experienced this opera as part of the University of Texas's Cohen New Works Festival in 2019. It was immediately evident to us, composer Keith Allegretti and librettist Cecelia Raker are true collaborators and had crafted a high-quality and compelling work. It has been our pleasure working with Keith and Cecelia in developing this opera and assembling the extraordinary team you'll be hearing today. Thank you for choosing to spend time with LOLA, *Good Country*, and opera.

Enjoy the show!
Liz and Rebecca



Liz Cass
LOLA Executive Producer



Rebecca Herman
LOLA Artistic Producer

Synopsis

It's December 1879 in Northern California. Stagecoach driver Charley Parkhurst, a tobacco-chewin' bandit-shootin' local celebrity, has just died. As a lone Barmaid reads about him in the paper, Charley's ghost revisits her saloon, remembering a night his secret almost got out, many years ago.

Early that evening back in 1861, the pregnant Barmaid stands up to her abusive husband: they need to be saving money. Ever since he lost his job at the mines, he's been catawomptiously unfriendly and jealous of her successful restaurant business. Charley's stagecoach arrives, having just escaped the notorious bandit Sugarfoot by the skin of their teeth. The passengers, including a medical doctor and a young lady, celebrate Charley's courage while he admits how conflicted he feels about killing Sugarfoot. The Barmaid in turn shares her anger about her husband's cruelty, and Charley drunkenly insists that the Barmaid could go it alone. After all, it's a good country for women out west.

The Barmaid and her husband offer Charley a bench as his bed for the night. When the Barmaid's husband helps the inebriated driver settle in, he finds Charley is wearing a corset and accuses him of immoral behavior. Hearing their fight, the Barmaid emerges with a gun. In the ensuing tussle, the Barmaid kills her husband in self defense after he knocks her in the stomach.

But this exacerbates the bleeding she's been seeing for a week, and she's suddenly in the midst of a miscarriage, which she assumes will kill her: it was how her mother died too. To her surprise, instead of fleeing the scene, Charley reveals that he miscarried a child before he came West. He shares the story so that she won't feel as alone as he did, telling her how he escaped an orphanage dressed in boy's clothes, how he lost his lover and became a stagecoach driver. They concoct a lie to keep the secret of how she killed her husband, allowing her to dream of keeping the eatery. He expects her to spread the word that he is "a woman" and ruin his career, but to his shock, she accepts him with compassion.

Flashing forward, in 1879 the Barmaid and Charley's ghost share a drink, grateful for that moment of solidarity that changed both of their lives. They dream of a time when this will be a good country for folks like them, folks who don't fit what their world thinks of as proper. And until then, they promise to keep each other's secrets.

Composer's Note

I've always been fascinated by the California Gold Rush. When I was planning to compose an opera back in early 2018, it struck me as the ideal setting for the kind of story I wanted to tell: quintessentially American, with a mixed bag of people with different racial, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds. All were lured in by the promise—and the scam—of the American Dream.

When Cecelia Raker introduced me to Charley Parkhurst, a transmasculine stagecoach driver from the Gold Rush, I saw a character who fit into that narrative perfectly while allowing us to explore opera's rich history of gender-bending stories. In our portrayal, Charley not only challenges his era's prevailing notions of what's "proper," but he also reaps the real rewards of the Gold Rush. Along with the many women of color like the Barmaid, he becomes a proverbial shovel seller—a winner in the game, at least when it comes to wealth and notoriety.

On paper, that all sounds great. Marginalized people score an unexpected win in a game that's rigged against them! But there's still something about Charley and the Barmaid's story that makes me sad. It's a good—but not perfect—country for them in California in 1861. Nor does a time machine to the present day live up to their hopes and dreams. Maybe someday, we'll live in a country that does.



Keith Allegretti
Composer

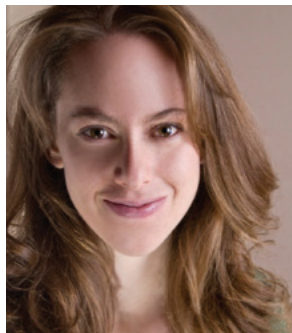
Librettist's Note

When Keith approached me about collaborating on an opera set during the Gold Rush, I was thrilled. I'd been carrying around the story of Charley Parkhurst since reading a version of it in a children's book years ago, wishing I could help add to the mix of ways Charley's life gets spoken about. I knew of books, movies, historical plaques, wikipedia articles—and they all portrayed Charley as a badass early feminist icon in men's clothes. First woman to vote in California! Horse girl who lived her dreams despite the odds! And maybe that's exactly how Charley identified; we can't ever really know, from here in the 21st Century. But looking at how Charley lived as a man from the age of eleven until his death, I'd always wished there was a version of his story that imagined him as a trans man.

It's been a catawomptiously enjoyable honor to work with the incredible array of trans and genderqueer artists who've helped us imagine Charley's inner world, shared their insights into how gender transition and professional opera technique intersect, and brought Charley to life onstage.

New work is always a vulnerable risk; all the more so when it's breaking historic barriers in its medium: we're one of the first teams to write an opera specifically in collaboration with trans and nonbinary singers, tailoring the content and the music to the nuances of their voices and experiences. That's a humbling undertaking, and we are always looking for feedback about our process and the piece, so please reach out if you have thoughts!

We're particularly grateful to LOLA for giving us the opportunity to hear this newly expanded score for a mezzo Charley, and to all y'all in our audience for helping nurture this piece to its next level. We've learned so much from this workshop, and we can't wait to bring *Good Country* to life again soon!



Cecelia Raker
Librettist

Artistic Producer & Stage Director's Note

This workshop has been a long time coming for LOLA. Liz and I have been fans of the piece since we saw a previous iteration a few years back at the UT New works festival and we are so thrilled to be collaborating with two creative artists on this piece.

I find the workshop space quite liberating and exciting. Keith and Cecelia are able to hear their new orchestration, new ensemble pieces, and see how one might put a few of those scenes on their feet as well as get some recordings to boot.

We hope that you will find moments of vulnerability, honesty, and humanity as you watch and listen to our amazing singers and musicians. The week has flown by and I could not be more thrilled to be a part of bringing new works and new voices into the opera repertoire.

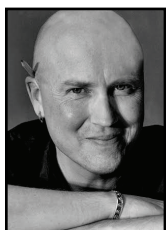


Rebecca Herman
Artistic Producer & Stage Director

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Keith Allegretti (Composer) A native of Santa Fe, New Mexico, Keith Allegretti (b. 1989) is a composer and pianist who enjoys working comfortably in many genres, including chamber, orchestral, vocal, and electronic music. Recognitions include Really Spicy Opera's Quarantine Opera Scenes Initiative, Latitude 49's Bagatelles project, second place in the American Prize in Composition, and finalist in the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards. An active performer and teacher, Keith enjoys playing piano in almost any sized ensemble. He has recently performed with Austin's concert series Density 512, as well as the University of Texas New Music Ensemble, and he was featured as a conductor in the University of Texas Cohen New Works Festival. He currently lives in Austin, Texas, where he composes, performs, and maintains a private studio of piano and composition students.



Brent Baldwin (Conductor) Brent Baldwin is an award-winning conductor, multi-instrumentalist, vocalist, arranger, and composer. He holds a Master's degree in conducting from the University of Texas at Austin and performs throughout the U.S., Europe, South America, and Asia. Baldwin's deep passion for adventurous art-making and unexpected partnerships have yielded an intensely broad array of collaborations, including those with Roomful of Teeth, Roky Erickson, Alejandro Escovedo, Austin Symphony Orchestra, Kronos Quartet, M. Ward, REM's Peter Buck & Mike Mills, Inversion Ensemble, Mobley, Austin Soundwaves, Trail of Dead, Convergence, New Music Co-op, Panoramic Voices, and Golden Hornet Project. A fierce advocate of contemporary music, Brent has directed innumerable world premiere performances, including works by Glenn Kotche (Wilco), Todd Reynolds (Bang on a Can), Petra Haden, Steve Parker, Adrian Quesada (Black Pumas), Kitty Xiao, Carlos Cordero, Caleb Berhans, Donald Grantham, Steve Parker, and Pulitzer Prize-winning composers Shulamit Ran and Caroline Shaw. The Baldwin-directed *Mozart Requiem Undead* topped the Austin Critics Table Awards list in 2014 and 2016 (ultimately winning "Best Choral Performance" and "Best Vocal Soloist"). In the past decade, he has been featured on the cover of the national music magazine, *The Voice*, performed with Noise Revival Orchestra for 50,000 music fans at Taiwan's Taichung Jazz Festival, received the accolade "Best Choral Wrangler" in the Austin Chronicle "Best

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of” awards, co-created two critically acclaimed Austin music series: *Indie Orchestra Night* (ION) and *Holiday Mixtape at the Blanton*, and served as mentor for many young artists on-the-rise. More recently, he has served as assistant conductor for Victoria Bach Festival, Music Curator for Blanton Museum of Art, guest conductor for Austin Classical Guitar, and featured conductor/pianist for Big Star Third. His projects and affiliated ensembles continue to garner awards and nominations from the ACTA and beyond.



Liz Cass (Executive Producer) Liz Cass is an active operatic performer, founder and the Executive Producer of the award-winning LOLA – Local Opera Local Artists and she holds the position of Executive Director of the Armstrong Community Music School. In addition, Ms. Cass serves as the President of the Seagle Festival Alumni Association board, Secretary on the board of the Austin Classical Guitar, and a member of the KMFA Community Advisory Board. Recent performance highlights: Soloist on Chorus Austin’s “Southwest Voices” program of all female composed music on KLRU, Soloist and creator of “Divas and Drinks” an operatic event at the opening of KMFA’s new “Draylen Mason Studio”, Featured regular performer on the YouTube variety show, “My Talented Friends Live”, Giovanna in *Rigoletto* with Austin Opera, “Schumann-Cass Cabaret” with the Austin Chamber Music Festival, Mezzo soloist in Beethoven’s *Missa Solmenis* with the Georgetown Festival of the Arts, Dinah LeFarge in LOLA’s *Lardo Weeping*, by Peter Stopschinski and Terry Galloway, and Mezzo soloist in Graham Reynold’s opera *Pancho Villa; From a Safe Distance* for which she was awarded for excellence in singing by the Austin Critics Table. In addition to producing this workshop of *Good Country*, upcoming projects include: *Chansons de Madécasses* with the Austin Chamber Music Center, Dinah LeFarge in the full production of *Lardo Weeping* slated for summer of 2022.



Henna Chou (Cello) Henna Chou is a musician in Austin, TX. She is a volunteer with COTFG and company member of Salvage Vanguard Theater. Chou has contributed music for community theater in Austin, TX and has performed in a number of Austin based and touring ensembles as a keyboardist, cellist, guitarist, or sound artist.

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Scott Clark (Husband) American Baritone Scott Clark is already becoming known as an interpreter of new work. He created the role of F. Scott Fitzgerald in the new opera *The Ghosts of Gatsby* by Evan Mack and Joshua McGuire. He also starred as Homecoming Soldier in Seagle's production *The Falling and the Rising* by Zach Redler and Jerre Dye. Scott recently was a Resident Artist with the Opera Columbus and Capital University joint program, where he performed the role of Marco in *Gianni Schicchi*. Clark was also an emerging artist at Seagle Music Colony for two summers; there, he performed the roles of Belcore in *L'elisir d'amore* and Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte*. He has been a young artist with Houston Grand Opera's "Opera to Go" program singing the role of Belcore in *The Elixir of Love*. Other Notable credits include Don Giovanni in Spotlight on Opera's Virtual *Don Giovanni*, Eugene Onegin in Russian Opera Workshop's production of *Eugene Onegin*, Didier in Lone Star Lyric's *Madeleine*. Mr. Clark has also engaged in concert work as the Bass Soloist in Händel's *Messiah* with Houston Masterworks Chorus, and soloist for Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* with First United Methodist Church Houston. The Texas native holds his Master of Music, and Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance from Baylor University.



Robert Colley (Violin II) Robert Colley grew up in Abilene, Texas and started playing violin and guitar in middle school at the age of 11. Robert is classically trained in violin, with a degree in Violin Performance from Hardin-Simmons University, and is a self-taught guitarist. While at Hardin-Simmons, Robert studied under Dr. Peter Isaccson and had the opportunity to take masterclasses with Stephen Clapp, Rachel Barton Pine, Micheal Shih, Timothy Ying and attend a masterclass of Giora Schmidt's. Robert is an avid violin and viola instructor with former students currently attending Belmont University, Boston Conservatory, Texas State, and Colorado Christian University. Robert has performed with various bands/artists including Kansas, Micheal Martin Murphy, Barage8, Hot Club of Cow Town, Mark O'Connor, and the Quebe Sisters to name a few. Robert has played with Revolution Strings, a high school string performing program based in Abilene Texas, for nearly 15 years. Revolution Strings has toured China, Europe, and Canada, also performing on the Grand Ole Opry, and was featured on the radio program 'From the Top.'

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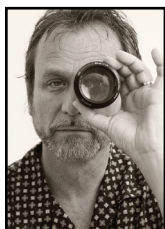
Robert has also played in numerous musical productions and operas in the 'Big Country.' Robert recently moved to Austin, with his wife Ashley, continuing his career in music.



Phil Davidson (Violin I) Phil Davidson began playing violin at the age of 6 as a Suzuki kid, and went on to major in music at Drake University where he was concertmaster of the university symphony as well as a member of the Des Moines Symphony and Des Moines Metro Opera orchestra. Since moving to Austin in 2002, Phil teaches a full studio of violin, viola, and fiddle students, including adult beginners, middle and high schoolers in the Eanes and Pflugerville schools, and Suzuki kids as young as age 4. Phil performs regularly throughout the US and Canada with The Invincible Czars, presenting their own new scores to classic silent films. When in Austin he plays with guitarist Tim Bond, songwriter Andrew Nolte, and various groups from classical to bluegrass to heavy metal to world music. His recent recording credits include Flamenco Symphony, Muppettone, and Proud Peasant.



Andy Fleming (Doctor) Andy Fleming has performed regularly around Austin, both before and after completing his MM in Vocal Performance at UT's Butler School of Music. He can often be seen performing with the Austin Opera Chorus, One Ounce Opera, and Gilbert and Sullivan Austin. Recent highlights include: Frampton in *The Stranger* (One Ounce Opera), Grosvenor in *Patience* (Gilbert and Sullivan Austin), The Defendant in *Trial by Jury* (Gilbert and Sullivan Austin), and Belmonte [cover]/Gorn in *Star Trek: Abduction from the Seraglio* (Opera Piccola). Andy also serves as the Assistant Conductor and Chorus Master for Gilbert and Sullivan Austin.



Eric Graham (Videographer) A native of Pittsburgh, PA, Director/Cinematographer Eric Graham has been making film and video in Austin and beyond since before Clayton Williams made his fateful joke about the weather. His music video for Standing Waves' "Vertigo" was the first Austin-produced video to run in rotation on MTV. Over the years, he's worked on many different

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types of video/film projects – hundreds of TV commercials, unscripted TV series (from House Hunters to Hillbilly Handfishin’), documentaries (PBS, Oxygen and others), corporate communications (SpaceX, School-Connect, LBJ School of Public Affairs), feature films, and lots of arts-related efforts. He was the Director of Photography for three seasons of comedy series StandUp Empire. He’s worked with Cirque du Soliel, Dave Chapelle, and countless musical artists from Snoop Dogg and Kacey Musgraves to Paul Simon and David Byrne. He’s been a member of the Austin City Limits camera team since 2010. In the local performance community, he’s collaborated with Andrea Ariel Dance Theatre, Forklift Danceworks, Austin Opera, Blue Lapis Light, Hyde Park Theatre, Austin Shakespeare, Natalie George Productions, and many others. His work on Paper Chairs’ 2016 production “Art/Model Show: Subject” was nominated for a B. Iden Payne award for Best Media Design. His many collaborations with LOLA also began in 2016 with their production of “La Femme Boheme.” During the recent pandemic, he’s directed or directed the photography on dozens of livestream performances by musicians and theatre artists, including LOLA’s recent presentation of “Lardo Weeping.” And he’s very excited to be part of the team bringing “Good Country” to life.



Rebecca Herman (Artistic Producer & Stage Director)

Rebecca Herman is Artistic Producer of LOLA, Local Opera Local Artists in Austin, TX as well as an operatic stage director. Following the Pandemic, Rebecca is thrilled to be back in theaters. She is especially excited to be Associate Director for Tomer Zvulun’s new production of *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* at Austin Opera, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, and Atlanta Opera in Spring 2022 and return to Queen City Opera to direct *Fidellio*. Last spring, she was the assistant director for Austin Opera’s production of *Tosca* at the Formula One Race Track’s Circuit of the America’s amphitheater and their Fall 2021 production of *Le Nozze di Figaro*. LOLA also got back into production in Fall of 2021 workshoping and recording two new operas: *Lardo Weeping* by Stopschinski, Galloway, & Nuud and *Good Country* by Allegretti & Raker. Pre-pandemic highlights include: *Dido and Aeneas* (Dir), LOLA & Panoramic voices; *La Finta Giardiniera* (AD), Portland Opera; *The Magic Bullets* (Dir) & *Die Walküre, Act I* (Dir),

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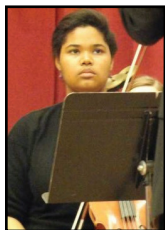
Queen City Opera; *Otello* (Dir), *Don Giovanni* (Dir) & *The Daughter of the Regiment* (Dir), Austin Opera. For the past 3 seasons she has directed Queer Opera's weeklong workshops at Portland State University as well as their recent productions of *The Old Maid and the Thief* and *The Breasts of Tiresias*. Rebecca received an M.M. in Opera Direction from The University of Texas at Austin and both a B.A. in English Literature and a B.M. in Opera/Vocal Studies from Lawrence University.



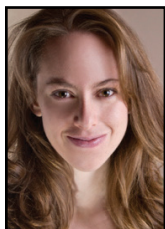
Melina Jaharis (Charley Parkhurst) Heralded by the Chicago Tribune for their “rich” voice, Melina Jaharis is a Greek-American mezzo soprano. They are thrilled to perform as Charley in *Good Country* with LOLA Austin this fall 2021. In 2020 they performed Hannah after (*As One*) with the Carolina Performing Arts in Chapel Hill, NC. Soon after they would have covered Leonore (*Fidelio*) with the Oxford Philharmonic [covid cancellation] and they would have made their European debut performing *As One* in Lisbon, Portugal [covid]. Recent role studies and performances include Gertrude, Donna Anna with MIOpera, Mimì and Contessa Almaviva with ISOFOM, Anna Murrant (*Street Scene*) with Mannes Opera and Fiordiligi (*Così Fan Tutte*) with the Martina Arroyo Role Prep Class. In 2018, they were a Studio Artist at the Wolf Trap Opera Company where they performed the role of the Contessa di Ceprano (*Rigoletto*) and covered Maddalena. They have recently been seen as or prepared the following roles: Alcina, Vitellia (*La Clemenza di Tito*), Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*), Maurya (*Riders to the Sea*) and Ma Moss (*The Tender Land*). Melina is also known for their “dark, resonant” voice. They graduated in 2020 with an AD from Mannes, in 2018 with an MM from Northwestern University under the tutelage of W. Stephen Smith and in 2015 with a BM from Lawrence University. Equally comfortable speaking German and English, they studied in Vienna, Austria at the Konservatorium Prayner in the year before their graduate studies.

Carli Kerr (Stage & Production Manager) Carli is thrilled to be back working another production with LOLA. Her past credits with the company include production manager for the most recent workshop of *Lardo Weeping*, stage manager for *Dido and Aeneas*, and stage manager for the previous workshop of *Lardo Weeping*.

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Meagan Peaco (Viola) A native of Ellicott City, Maryland, Meagan began studying viola in 3rd grade. She went on to Carnegie Mellon University where she double majored in Viola Performance and Biology. After graduating, she chose to follow her passion, earning her Master of Music in Viola Performance at UT Austin. Loving the warmth and the amazing music scene, Meagan decided to stay and begin teaching violin and viola. She was a teacher for the UT Austin String Project and has used that background to build a teaching program focusing on the overall growth of her students, primarily based on the Suzuki methodology.



Cecelia Raker (Librettist) Cecelia is a playwright and librettist from Santa Fe, NM. As a queer, observantly Jewish artist, she's excited by the power of fantastical imagination, and by stories of people at the margins who don't neatly fit into their dominant culture's boxes. Current projects include a virtual-interactive challah-baking solo performance piece, a YA novel that mashes up Chasidic shtetl life with a shapeshifting fairytale, a play about sisterhood and bog butter, and a binary-busting TYA mermaid adventure. Awards and productions include the Kennedy Center's Darrel Ayers TYA Playwriting Awards (1st place 2019 for *Webbed Hands*, 2nd place 2018 for *La Llorona*), the 2016 Princess Grace Award (runner up), the 2016 Kilroys List (honorable mention), and a 2017-2018 Massachusetts Cultural Council Artist Fellowship. Her work has been developed and produced with Fresh Ink Theatre, Cohesion Theatre, Venus Theatre, the Boston Playwrights' Theatre, the Boston Theater Marathon, the Great Plains Theater Conference, the ART's Loeb Ex, and a variety of other venues. MFA Michener Center for Writers/UT Austin, 2020. www.ceceliaraker.weebly.com



Mary Schani (Clarinet) Mary McKinney Schani plays bass clarinet with the Austin Lyric Opera Orchestra and extra clarinet/Eb/bass clarinetist with the Austin and San Antonio Symphonies in addition to maintaining a very successful teaching studio. A versatile musician, she has performed on every kind of clarinet with numerous groups including Austin Opera, Austin Symphony, San Antonio

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Symphony, Victoria Bach Festival, Austin Chamber Music Center, Victoria Symphony, the International Clarinet Society ClarFest and the Mid-West Clinic International Band and Orchestra Conference. As principal clarinetist with the Mid-Texas Symphony she appeared twice as a soloist performing Weber's Clarinet Concerto No. 1 and Strauss' Duo Concertante for Clarinet and Bassoon. With extensive teaching experience from beginner to college level she is in demand as a clarinet teacher, chamber music coach and master class clinician. Her students consistently win concerto and solo competitions, chamber music competitions, young artist competitions and earn placement in the Texas All-State ensembles. For LOLA's performances she will be playing the rarely heard Bassett Horn which Mozart used in many of his compositions.



Janani Sridhar (Barmaid) Raved as having the “loveliest of voices,” Singaporean soprano Janani Sridhar is equally at home in opera and on the concert stage. The first Singaporean to win the top prize at the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod, she has performed with renowned companies including Singapore Lyric Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, Toledo Opera, Fort Worth Opera, and Salt Marsh Opera. Her operatic roles include Ortlinde (*Die Walküre*), Micaëla (*Carmen*), Alice (*Falstaff*), Rusalka (*Rusalka*), Nella (*Gianni Schicchi*), Musetta (*La Bohème*), Adina (*L’Elisir d’Amore*), Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*), Violetta (*La Traviata*), and Antonia (*Les Contes d’Hoffmann*). Janani’s international concert performances have included Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9, Schubert’s Mass No. 2, Mahler’s Symphony No. 8, Bach’s Cantata No. 140, Rutter’s Gloria, and Mahler’s Symphony No. 4. She has collaborated with orchestras in Asia, America, and Europe, including the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Chinese Orchestra, Toledo Symphony Orchestra, Stony Brook Baroque Players, Shreveport Symphony Orchestra, and Des Moines Metro Opera Festival Orchestra. A passionate proponent of contemporary music, Janani has premiered works by American and Singaporean composers. She had the honor of working with composers Jake Heggie and Libby Larsen, and was selected to be a part of Fort Worth Opera’s Frontiers festival which showcases new operatic works. Janani also had the privilege of creating the role of the Manager in the world premiere of the crossover opera *Yeltsin in Texas!* by Evan Mack and Joshua McGuire. www.JananiSridhar.com

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Ben Tibbetts (Piano) Ben Tibbetts is a professional pianist and composer working in the area of Austin, Texas. As a piano accompanist, Ben specializes in both collaborative performance and high-level improvisation. He worked at UMass Amherst as an accompanist from 2016-2020. Every semester he performed with students there on dozens of recitals, classes, masterclasses, and private lessons. He also worked as a pianist at Orchard Covenant Church in Springfield, Massachusetts, where he wrote and performed original arrangements and accompanied weekly church services. As an active composer, arranger, and audio producer, Ben's work has been featured in films, video games, and broadcast radio performances. For more information about Ben's music visit www.bentibbetts.net. There you will find a large library of original creative content including audio, sheet music, interviews, podcasts, and other media.



Siwei Zhang (Lady) Lauded for her “commanding and regal” voice (*Houston Press*), Chinese soprano Siwei Zhang is gaining recognition as a captivating performer on the operatic stage. Recent performances include Ninetta in *La finta Semplice*, Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*, Diana in *Orpheus in the Underworld*, Contessa Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and Bodessa in *Suor Angelica* with Moores Opera Center and Peabody Opera, among others. She has been the recipient of many awards and honors, such as First Place in the voice division of the Moores School of Music Concerto Competition in 2020 and Second Place in the voice division of the 12th Asian Music Competition (China Western Division) in 2016, where she also received an excellence award in the piano division. Zhang holds a Certificate in Music Performance from the University of Houston Moores School of Music, a Master of Music in Vocal Performance from Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University, and a Bachelor of Music in Music Education from Xi'an Conservatory of Music, where she specialized in both voice and piano. She is currently based in Houston, TX.

Special Thanks

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