

M Manhattan
School of Music
GRADUATE OPERA THEATRE



*La
rondine*

APR 25-28, 2024

MSM Opera Theatre productions are made possible in part by the Joseph F. McCrindle Endowment for Opera Productions.

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M Manhattan School of Music

MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC
GRADUATE OPERA THEATRE

La rondine

Music by Giacomo Puccini

Libretto by Giuseppe Adami, Artur Maria Willner,
and Heinz Reichert

Marcello Cormio, Conductor

Katherine M. Carter, Director

THURSDAY, APRIL 25, 2024 | 7:30 PM

FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 2024 | 7:30 PM

SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 2024 | 7:30 PM

SUNDAY, APRIL 28, 2024 | 2 PM

NEIDORFF-KARPATI HALL

This performance is dedicated in loving memory to two cherished colleagues

Marlena Malas (1936–2023)

and

Thomas Muraco (1949–2024)

and to our dedicated Artistic Advisory Council member and donor

Richard Gaddes (1942–2023)

MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC
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La rondine

Music by Giacomo Puccini

Libretto by Giuseppe Adami, Artur Maria Willner, and Heinz Reichert

Marcello Cormio, Conductor

Katherine M. Carter, Director

Brendan Gonzales Boston, Scenic Designer

Rodrigo Muñoz, Costume Designer

Marika Kent, Lighting Designer

Loryn Pretorius, Wig, Hair, and Makeup Designer

Joshua Larrinaga-Yocom, Props Supervisor

Catheryn Hooper, Production Stage Manager

Jackson McKinnon, Chorus Master and Assistant Conductor

Kristen Kemp, Head of Music in Opera for Vocal Arts and Vocal Coach/Pianist

Travis Bloom, Vocal Coach/Pianist

Jeanne-Minette Cilliers, Vocal Coach/Pianist

Stephanie Sutherland, Choreographer and Intimacy Director

Stefano de Peppo, Italian Diction Coach

Ellis Durand, Assistant Director

Laura Valenti, Assistant Scenic Designer

Melissa Gargiulo, Assistant Costumer Designer

Matt Lazarus, Assistant Lighting Designer

Joya Giambone, Associate Wig, Hair, and Makeup Designer

Lauren Linsey, Assistant Stage Manager

Steven Jude Tietjen, Supertitles Author

Performed in Italian

There will be a brief pause after Act I and a 15-minute intermission after Act II.

THE CAST

Magda de Cívry

Lisette, her maid

Ruggero Lastouc

Prunier, a poet

Rambaldo

Périchaud

Gobin

Crébillon

Yvette

Bianca

Adolfo

Georgette

Gabriella

Suzy

Lolette

Rabbonier/

Maggiordomo

APRIL 25 & 27

Seolbin Oh

Sanne Vleugels

Fernando Silva-Gorbea

SeongBeom Choi

ALL PERFORMANCES

Blake Stevenson

KwanSoon Yim

Tom Yulin Wang

Kevin Mann

Abigail Williams

Hailey Hye-In Ji

Wei Ding

Yitian Zhang

Abigail Williams

Grace Verbic

Yuhao Zhang

Graham Rui Guan

APRIL 26 & 28

Seul Lee

Katherine Malone

Isaiah Traylor

Moses Sunghyun Park

Ensemble

Bai Chen

Yixin Chen

Wei Ding

Raine Filbert

Graham Rui Guan

Jennifer Kayner Honan

Hailey Hye-In Ji

Yisheng Lin

Xiangxiang Liu

Kevin Mann

Yuhan Qin

Edvard Sandbakken

Bibi Simons

Grace Verbic

Tom Yulin Wang

Weiyu Wang

Abigail Williams

KwanSoon Yim

Alexander Gustav Young

Kemeng Zhang

Yitian Zhang

Yuhao Zhang

Covers

<i>Ruggero Lastouc</i>	Tom Yulin Wang
<i>Rambaldo</i>	Zhenpeng Zhang
<i>Périchaud</i>	Bai Chen
<i>Gobin</i>	Alexander Gustav Young
<i>Crébillon</i>	Bai Chen
<i>Yvette</i>	Anya Kosachevich
<i>Bianca</i>	Kemeng Zhang
<i>Adolfo</i>	Yisheng Lin
<i>Georgette</i>	Yixin Chen
<i>Gabriella</i>	Bibi Simons
<i>Suzy</i>	Raine Filbert
<i>Lolette</i>	Yuhan Qin
<i>Rabbonier/Maggiordomo</i>	Edvard Sandbakken

Role Study

<i>Magda de Civity</i>	Annelise Burghardt, Laura Woody
<i>Lisette</i>	Hailey Hye-In Ji
<i>Yvette</i>	Jennifer Kayner Honan

SYNOPSIS

Act I

In an elegant Parisian salon at the apartment of Magda de Civry, the poet Prunier entertains the hostess and her friends (Yvette, Bianca, and Suzy) with talk of the latest fashion sweeping Parisian society: romantic love. The ladies mock Prunier—as does the maid Lisette, whose impetuous interruptions aggravate him—but Magda is inclined to consider the poet’s observations more seriously. As Prunier sings a lyric about his latest heroine, Doretta, who has fallen victim to this fashionable epidemic of love, Magda’s wealthy patron Rambaldo Fernandez and his friends (Périchaud, Gobin, and Crébillon) approach to hear the poet’s song. In the song, Doretta dreams of a king who offers her great riches in exchange for her affection, but Doretta refuses. Prunier confesses that he has not yet figured out how the story ends, so Magda resumes the song with a conclusion in which Doretta finds true love in an ardent kiss. Rambaldo declares himself immune to the fantasies of love and pulls from his pocket his secret weapon: an expensive pearl necklace, which he offers to Magda. Lisette bursts in and announces the arrival of the son of Rambaldo’s childhood friend, and Rambaldo bids Lisette invite him in. Magda meanwhile reminisces about a youthful two-hour love affair with an unknown gentleman one night long ago at Bullier’s. Prunier reads Magda’s fortune in her palm, prophesying that “Perhaps, like a swallow, you will migrate beyond the sea to a bright land of dreams, toward the sun, toward Love.” Ruggero Lastouc, the son of Rambaldo’s friend, enters and introduces himself. He admires the twinkling beauty of Paris. The guests discuss where Ruggero should spend his first evening in Paris, and Bullier’s is decided upon. After the guests have taken their leave, Magda informs Lisette that she will be staying in this evening. With Lisette having departed—to Bullier’s with Prunier, who is, in fact, her lover!—Magda now changes her mind. Disguised in the dress of a working-class woman, Magda departs for Bullier’s with the song of Doretta in the air.

Act II

In the intoxicating atmosphere of Bullier’s, students, artists, and lovers gather for an evening of revelry. A group of students flirt with Magda, who escapes their advances only when she notices Ruggero and pretends that she is there to meet him. Magda, whom Ruggero does not recognize, explains and offers to leave him, but Ruggero invites her to stay. The pair dance, and Magda is struck by the romance she felt at Bullier’s all those years ago. Ruggero confesses that, should he love someone, he would remain with that beloved forever. Magda introduces

herself as Paulette, and the pair realize that they have fallen in love. Lisette is surprised to see Magda flirting with Ruggero. Prunier creates a ruse to keep Magda's secret safe. When Rambaldo arrives, Prunier sends Lisette and Ruggero out to the garden to hide. Magda confesses to Rambaldo that she is leaving him for true love. When Ruggero returns, the pair depart to begin a new chapter in their lives.

Act III

Magda and Ruggero have been living in bliss in the South of France at a remote hotel. With no source of income, the bills are mounting. Unaware of Magda's past, Ruggero eagerly awaits his parents' approval of their marriage, knowing that this will allow them to escape the debt they have racked up. Alone, Magda frets over whether she should reveal her past to him. Prunier and Lisette arrive, following Lisette's disastrous singing debut, and the two quarrel. Magda accepts Lisette back into her service, and Prunier, delivering a message from Rambaldo, urges: "You too, Magda, must [...] abandon an illusion which you believe to be true." As Ruggero arrives with a letter from his mother approving the lovers' marriage, Magda admits that she cannot be with him. Ruggero begs her to stay with him, insisting that he does not care about the past, but she is adamant. Magda flies like the swallow back to her old life, leaving the heartbroken Ruggero behind.

PROGRAM NOTE

The years 1911 through 1913 found Giacomo Puccini, at the height of his celebrity, traversing the illustrious cultural hubs of Europe—Rome in summer 1911, Budapest in winter 1912, Monte Carlo and Paris in the spring, Milan in the winter, and Berlin the following spring. The prelude to this grand tour was the premiere of the composer’s “American” opera, *La fanciulla del West* (*The Girl of the Golden West*), at the Metropolitan Opera. By 1907, already a celebrated composer worldwide, Puccini had been anxious to find his next great subject: “The world is expecting an opera from me,” he fretted in a letter to Tito Ricordi (of the famed eponymous publishing house). “We’ve had enough of *Bobème*, *Butterfly*, and co.!” he continued, “I wish to give, and must give, an opera that is sure to be good.” The highly anticipated premiere of *La fanciulla del West* in 1910 was, by all accounts, a resounding success. Yet Puccini and his publishers understood that great operas (and great returns) were not established in the canon on the merit of a successful premiere alone; Puccini’s travel itinerary was therefore intended as a sort of quality-control measure to ensure the opera’s longevity.

These were heady years of travel and fame, yet Puccini, who by disposition was introverted, was preoccupied as ever with thoughts of his next project. He considered and then abandoned no less than four scenarios during this period with a fickleness that endlessly aggravated the tempers (and wallets!) of his collaborators; Puccini abandoned one such subject not long after the rights had been purchased for him at a premium. Puccini was on the hunt for a libretto which could “move the world!” And so it seems curious that when his travels brought him to Vienna in October 1913 and there into the acquaintance of the Karltheater’s directors Siegmund Eibenschütz and Heinrich Berté, the composer blindly accepted a commission for an operetta without first settling the matter of the scenario. But a sizable fee of 200,000 *kronen* was the proverbial carrot dangled before him—and thus it was that the tortuous path of *La rondine* began.

The details of the informal agreement were as follows: Eibenschütz and Berté would arrange for a scenario to be developed and presented to Puccini, who would then have the option of rejecting the proposed subject; if Puccini approved, the scenario would be expanded in Italian by a librettist of the composer’s choosing, after which the libretto would be translated back into German. That this was a convoluted plan, rife with opportunities for miscommunication and unsanctioned alterations was a matter of little concern it seems. By December 1914, Puccini had received a scenario for an operetta (consisting of musical numbers interspersed with dialogue), but the subject was not to his liking, and he rejected it. He also declared that he would not, in fact,

compose an operetta, but rather a through-composed comic opera. By spring 1914, a second scenario had been presented and agreed upon: the contract was signed setting the premiere performance for Vienna's Karltheater; Puccini's chosen librettist, Giuseppe Adami, commenced work on the libretto (taking substantial liberties in his changes to the original sketch); and, not long after, Puccini began composing the first two acts of the score.

The onset of World War I stymied progress on *La rondine* as Puccini navigated a turbulent period of uncertainty. The apolitical Puccini had ardently hoped that Italy's neutrality would allow him (and his opera) to "remain within the shell of my reserve, adhering to the neutrality that our country has imposed," yet such hopes were dashed as both composer and operetta-cum-comic-opera became embroiled in controversy. First, Puccini was the target of a vicious campaign launched by French journalist Léon Daudet attacking the composer for not signing a formal protest condemning Germany's bombardment of Rheims. (Puccini had, in point of fact, never been asked to sign the document.) Not long after, when Italy formally declared war against Austria, its former ally, in May 1915, Puccini found himself in the uncomfortable position of being in contract with "the enemy." The prospect of a Viennese premiere during wartime was dubious, if not impossible. Over the ensuing months, negotiations between the Viennese directors and Puccini's now-publisher Renzo Sonzogno (Puccini had not found his usual publisher Ricordi's proposals to his liking) to salvage the ill-fated *rondine* proceeded. Meanwhile, Puccini completed the score and also began substantial work on *Il Tabarro*, the first opera of his subsequent *Il Tritico* triptych. By December 1916, matters were at long last settled: *La rondine* would have its premiere not on enemy territory in Vienna but in neutral Monte Carlo on March 27, 1917. The story of *La rondine* did not end there, however; up until 1921 Puccini continued to revise the opera, creating a second and third version, each with alternate endings.

The present production is of the 1917 version (ultimately Puccini's favorite). The story centers on the bittersweet love of Magda (a Parisian courtesan) and Ruggero (a young man from a modest background). Magda is the opera's restless *rondine* (or "swallow"), who flies in pursuit of a dream; ultimately, Magda sacrifices her wistful romance with Ruggero to return to the glittering trappings of her former life. As Puccini heroines go, Magda has more of what contemporary audiences would regard as a sort of feminism. This is true at least of the 1917 version of the opera, in which Magda has agency to choose which doorways she will step through. (Subsequent revisions submit Magda more to the whims and power of the male characters.) Magda retains the nostalgic and melancholic

yearning of her forebears, Mimì or Manon; yet while Puccini's earlier heroines are portrayed as victims (they die in the end), Magda is conspicuously anything but. In the present production, this idea of choice is reflected in the very *mise-en-scène*: when we meet Magda in Paris in Act I, we are situated in a comfortable terrace apartment; in Act II, as Magda chases after the memory of a youthful love affair, we are vaulted into the expansive, exhilarating cacophony of Bullier's; by Act III, the action is compressed downstage as Magda becomes aware of the consequences of her decision closing in on her.

It is hard to imagine that Puccini once vehemently expressed distaste (even boredom!) for dramatic subjects. Yet student notebooks from his "Poetic and Dramatic Literature" class are filled with his scribbled, desperate pleas: "Alas!!!! Oh! Oh God!!! Help for Goodness' sake!!! Enough!!! It's too much; Bye, Professor ... I'm going to sleep; I'm dying!!!" Puccini was not yet the exacting dramatist he was to become; yet it was this very "symphonic element" of rich orchestral colors that distinguished his earliest operas *Le Villi* and *Edgar* and set him on a path to gift posterity such masterworks as *Manon Lescaut*, *La Bobème*, *Tosca*, and, ultimately, *Turandot*. In *La rondine*, vibrant orchestration indeed abounds, along with melodic richness and rhythmic vitality. Few are the dramatic outbursts characteristic of some later Puccini heroines, and yet there are moments, as in Magda's impassioned "Che più dirgli?" (What more can I say to him?) of Act III. Myriad are the emotive melodies and memorable motifs on which Puccini's fame was made. While *La rondine* remains somewhat obscure within Puccini's larger oeuvre, the irresistible Act I melody "Chi il bel sogno di Doretta" continues to appear in movies (and audition packages) to great effect. And those lucky enough to experience this belle époque gem undoubtedly feel the timeless allure of its recurring "love theme," which winds its way between the orchestra and singers, continuing to captivate audiences and resonate across generations.

—Program note and synopsis ©Heather O'Donovan (MM '20),
beatherodonovan.com

CAST

Annelise Burghardt

Magda (Role Study)
MM '23, PS antic. '24
Syracuse, New York
Student of Ruth Golden

Bai Chen

Ensemble, Périchaud (Cover),
Crébillon (Cover)
MM antic. '25
Zhanjiang, China
Student of Mark Schnaible

Yixin Chen

Ensemble, Georgette (Cover)
MM antic. '24
Shenzhen, China
Student of Ruth Golden

SeongBeom Choi

Prunier
MM antic. '24
Seoul, South Korea
Student of Shirley Close

Wei Ding

Adolfo, Ensemble
MM antic. '25
Shanxi, China
Student of Cynthia Hoffmann

Raine Filbert

Ensemble, Suzy (Cover)
MM antic. '25
Bellevue, Idaho
Student of Shirley Close

Graham Rui Guan

Rabonnier/Maggiordomo, Ensemble
MM antic. '25
GinqDao, China
Student of Mark Schnaible

Jennifer Kayner Honan

Ensemble, Yvette (Role Study)
MM antic. '24
New York, New York
Student of Joan Patenaude-Yarnell

Hailey Hye-In Ji

Bianca, Ensemble, Lisette (Role Study)
MM antic. '24
Seoul, South Korea
Student of Shirley Close

Anya Kosachevich

Yvette (Cover)
MM antic. '25
Parsippany, New Jersey
Student of Shirley Close

Seul Lee

Madga de Civry
MM antic. '24
Seoul, South Korea
Student of Shirley Close

Yisheng Lin

Ensemble, Adolfo (Cover)
MM antic. '25
Xiamen, Fujian
Student of Christòpheren Nomura

Xiangxiang Liu

Ensemble
MM '23, PS antic. '24
Shanghai, China
Student of Dimitri Pittas

Katherine Malone

Lisette
MM '23, PS antic. '24
Greenville, South Carolina
Student of Mary Dunleavy

Kevin Mann

Crébillon, Ensemble
PS antic. '24
Alexandria, Virginia
Student of Christòpheren Nomura

Seolbin Oh

Magda
BM '22, MM antic. '24
Seoul, South Korea
Student of Edith Bers

Moses Sunghyun Park

Prunier

MM antic. '24

Seoul, South Korea

Student of Mark Schnaible

Upcoming: *Le nozze di Figaro* (Don Curzio), Aspen Music Festival, Summer 2024

Yuhan Qin

Ensemble, Lolette (Cover)

MM antic. '24

Suizhou, China

Student of Christòpheren Nomura

Edvard Sandbakken

Ensemble, Rabonnier/

Maggiordomo (Cover)

MM antic. '25

Oslo, Norway

Student of Mark Schnaible

Fernando Silva-Gorbea

Ruggero

MM antic. '24

San Juan, Puerto Rico

Student of James Morris

Bibi Simons

Ensemble, Gabriella (Cover)

MM antic. '24

New York, New York

Student of Joan Patenaude-Yarnell

Blake Stevenson

Rambaldo

MM antic. '25

Orange County, California

Student of Mark Schnaible

Isaiah Traylor

Ruggero

MM antic. '24

Tupelo, Mississippi

Student of Shirley Close

Upcoming: *American Apollo* (George), Des Moines Metro Opera, Summer 2024

Grace Verbic

Suzy, Ensemble

MM antic. '24

DeKalb, Illinois

Student of Sidney Outlaw

Sanne Vleugels

Lisette

MM antic. '24

Tilburg, The Netherlands

Student of Sidney Outlaw

Tom Yulin Wang

Gobin, Ensemble,

Ruggero (Cover)

MM antic. '25

Dezhou City, China

Student of Cynthia Hoffmann

Weiyu Wang

Ensemble

MM antic. '24

Beijing, China

Student of Mary Dunleavy

Abigail Williams

Gabriella, Yvette, Ensemble

MM antic. '24

Tulsa, Oklahoma

Student of Joan Patenaude-Yarnell

Laura Woody

Magda (Role Study)

MM antic. '25

Greeneville, Tennessee

Student of Shirley Close

Upcoming: Spoleto Festival USA Chorus

KwanSoon Yim

Périchaud, Ensemble

MM antic. '24

Daejeon, South Korea

Student of James Morris

Alexander Gustav Young

Ensemble, Gobin (Cover)

MM antic. '25

Sydney, Australia

Student of Dimitri Pittas

Kemeng Zhang

Ensemble, Bianca (Cover)

MM antic. '25

Tongren, China

Student of Cynthia Hoffmann

Yitian Zhang

Georgette, Ensemble

MM antic. '24

Henan, China

Student of Christòpheren Nomura

Yuhao Zhang

Lolette, Ensemble

MM antic. '24

Zhengzhou, China

Student of Mark Schnaible

Zhenpeng Zhang

Rambaldo (Cover)

MM '23, PS antic. '24

Tianjin, China

Student of Cynthia Hoffmann

ORCHESTRA

Marcello Cormio, Conductor

VIOLIN 1

Amelia Bailey,
concertmaster
Round Hill, Virginia

Jimi Kim
Daegu, South Korea

Cheng-Cian Li
Hsinchu City, Taiwan

Licheng Chen
Bondi Junction, Australia

Naru Watanabe
Ube, Japan

Jasmine Lin
Etobicoke, Canada

VIOLIN 2

Skyler Blair, principal
Shaker Heights, Ohio

Mengzhe Zhao
Lanzhou, China

Christophe Koenig
East Aurora, New York

Jiachen Xu
Ningbo, China

Oliver Costello
Denver, Colorado

VIOLA

Linnea Marchie,
principal
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Melis Turker
Istanbul, Turkey

Hannah Thill
Geneva, Illinois

CELLO

Haeun Chung,
principal
Jinju, South Korea

Rahel Lulseged
Richardson, Texas

Aidan Pan
Ithaca, New York

DOUBLE BASS
Sienna George,
principal
New York, New York

Tong Wu
Nanjing, China

FLUTE

Kyrese Washington
Raleigh, North Carolina

Megan McCafferty
McKinney, Texas

OBOE

Melody Shaffer
Virginia Beach, Virginia

Zihao Zhang
Beijing, China

CLARINET

Mateo Balboa Doldan
Ponferrada, Spain

Emily Geoffroy
Portland, Oregon

BASSOON

Peter Ecklund
East Lansing, Michigan

Nicholas Fitch
New York, New York

HORN

Vera Romero
Austin, Texas

Hui-An Wen
Taoyuan City, Taiwan

TRUMPET

David Peebles
*Weaverville, North
Carolina*

Alexander Keiser
Orlando, Florida

TROMBONE

Sarah Rathbun
Wellington, New Zealand

TIMPANI

Kah Yiong Cheong
Singapore, Singapore

PERCUSSION

Zoe Beyler
Portland, Oregon

HARP

Isabel Cardenes
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

KEYBOARD

Se Won Lim, celeste
Seoul, South Korea

Travis Bloom, piano
New York, New York

CREATIVE TEAM

Marcello Cormio, Conductor

Marcello Cormio is an Italian born conductor who has distinguished himself with his energetic style and engaging persona on the podium. His work ranges from operatic and symphonic conducting to coaching singers to education at all levels. He has been a frequent guest conductor at the Sarasota Opera, leading productions of *Don Giovanni*, *Les pêcheurs de perles*, *La serva padrona*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Così fan tutte*, *Rita*, and *Il segreto di Susanna*. Other titles in his repertoire include *I am a dreamer who no longer dreams* (Syracuse Opera); *L'elisir d'amore*, *Così fan tutte*, *A Room with a View* (Michigan State University); *Street Scene*, *Hansel and Gretel* (West Virginia University); and *La Traviata* (La Musica Lirica), among others.

Marcello Cormio has been praised as “an assured hand in the pit”: “the young Italian drew vital and spirited playing, with the fizzing ensemble exciting yet with a fine balancing of solo voices, chorus and orchestra.” As a symphonic conductor, he was recently appointed Music Director of the Lexington Chamber Orchestra and has appeared with orchestras around the U.S. and Europe, including Santa Fe Pro Musica, the San Antonio Symphony, the Orchestra Sinfonica della Città Metropolitana di Bari, and the Bacau Symphony. marcellocormio.com

Katherine M. Carter, Director

Katherine M. Carter is a stage director of theatre and opera based in New York City. Her work has been seen at Houston Grand Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Santa Fe Opera, Sarasota Opera, the Alley Theatre, Westport Country Playhouse, Boston Lyric Opera, Playwrights Horizons, 54 Below, and the New York Musical Theatre Festival.

She is a frequent guest at some of opera's leading training programs, including the Ryan Opera Center at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Santa Fe Opera, and Wolf Trap Opera. Katherine has also led productions and workshops at the Juilliard School, Manhattan School of Music, Mannes Opera, New York University, Carnegie Mellon University, and Rice University. This season, Katherine directed new productions for Intermountain Opera Bozeman, Indiana University School of Music, On Site Opera, and the Bard College Conservatory of Music. In the 2024–25 season, she returns to the Canadian Opera Company, Houston Grand Opera, and Wolf Trap Opera, as well as makes her San Francisco Opera debut.

Katherine is a certified Intimacy Director through IDC Professionals. She has served on the creative team for several Metropolitan Opera productions, most recently the new productions of *Champion* and *Carmen*. katherinemcarter.com.

Brendan Gonzales Boston, Scenic Designer

Brendan Gonzales Boston is a New York City based scenic designer from Chicago. Design credits include *Orphée aux enfers* (Fisher Center at Bard), *No Good Things Dwell in the Flesh* (A.R.T./New York Theatres), *Alice Tierney* (Opera Theater Rutgers), *Crumbs from the Table of Joy* (Keen Company), *Buggy Baby* (Astoria Performing Arts Center), *Hippolytos* (Fisher Center at Bard), *A Number* (Abrons Arts Center), *Blanket of Dust* (The Flea), *Chris Gethard: Career Suicide* (Lynn Redgrave Theater). Associate design credits include *Der Rosenkavalier* (Metropolitan Opera), *Lohengrin* (Royal Opera House), *Semiramide* (Royal Opera House), *L'Italiana in Londra* (Oper Frankfurt), *Tamerlano* (Oper Frankfurt), *The Flying Dutchman* (Santa Fe Opera). He received his MFA from New York University Tisch School of the Arts. brendangonzalesboston.com

Rodrigo Muñoz, Costume Designer

Rodrigo Muñoz is a New York based costume designer, originally from Mexico City. Off-Broadway: *Sally & Tom*, *Plays for the Plague Year* (The Public Theater), *Bernarda's Daughters* (The New Group), *Sorry for Your Loss* (Minetta Lane Theatre), *Rent* (Paper Mill Playhouse), *Notes from Now* (Prospect Theater Company), *This Space Between Us* (Theatre Row), *Preparedness* (The Bushwick Starr), *Volpone*, *The Revenger's Tragedy* (Red Bull Theater). Regional: *The Bluest Eye* (Huntington Theatre Company), *Red Velvet* (Shakespeare Theatre Company), *Palacios Sisters* (GALA Hispanic Theatre), *Torera* (Alley Theatre), *Cabaret* (Barrington Stage Company), *Somewhere* (Geva Theatre), *How To Make an American Son* (Arizona Theatre Company), *Mushroom* (People's Light Theatre Company), *Fall of the House of Usher* (Boston Lyric Opera), *Bad Dates* (Portland Stage), *Jazz Singer* (Abrons Arts Center). Upcoming: *What Became of Us* (Atlantic Theater Company), *Dial M for Murder* (Alley Theatre), *Mother Road* (Berkeley Rep). rodrigomunozdesign.com

Marika Kent, Lighting Designer

Marika Kent is a Brooklyn based lighting designer of plays, opera, and dance. Previously at MSM she was the lighting designer for *Albert Herring* and *The Snow Maiden*. Recent/upcoming: *Orphée aux Enfers* (Fisher Center at Bard), *Fences* (Trinity Rep), *POTUS* (Arena Stage), *Clyde's*, *Choir Boy*, *Gem of the Ocean*, *School Girls; Or The African Mean Girls Play* (Portland Center Stage), *Ulysses*, *Seagull* (Elevator Repair

Service), *Amani*, *Bernarda's Daughters* (National Black Theater), *Catch as Catch Can* (Playwrights Horizons). Marika teaches at Playwrights Horizons Theater School and is a proud member of USA Local 829. marikakent.com

Loryn Pretorius, Wig, Hair, and Makeup Designer

Loryn Pretorius's wig and makeup work has been seen on Broadway, at the Metropolitan Opera, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and in theatres all over the world. She holds an MFA in wig and makeup design from UNC School of the Arts and was professionally mentored by Paul Huntley. Her most recent design credits include *A Christmas Carol* read by Neil Gaiman as Charles Dickens at Town Hall. Off-Broadway: *Nine*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *Paperboy*, *She Loves Me*, *Sunday in the Park with George*, and *Sweeney Todd* (Manhattan School of Music); *La traviata*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, and *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis* (NYC Opera); *Tootsie* (1st National Tour); *Cullud Wattab* (The Public Theater); and *Gilbert vs. Sullivan* (Opera Tampa). You can currently catch her wig work on Madonna and Bob the Drag Queen on the Madonna 40th Anniversary Celebration Tour. She thanks her incredible build and run crew for making her wig and makeup dreams a reality—this show would be impossible without them. IG: @loryn_pretorius

Joshua Larrinaga-Yocom, Props Supervisor

Joshua Larrinaga-Yocom is excited to be working at Manhattan School of Music. Some of his memorable New York premieres include *The Humans* (Roundabout and Broadway), *The Sound Inside* (Studio 54), *Hangmen* (Atlantic Theater Co. and the Golden), *The Bedwetter*, *Days of Wine and Roses*, *Halfway Bitches Go Straight to Heaven*, *Secret Life of Bees*, *Between Riverside and Crazy*, *Guards at the Taj*, *Marie and Rosetta* (Atlantic Theater Co.), *Letters for Max* (Signature Theatre), *Heroes of the Fourth Turning*, *Corsicana*, *Tambo and Bones* (Playwrights Horizons), *Evanston* (The New Group), *Collective Rage* (MCC), *Do You Feel Anger?* (Vineyard Theatre), *Lazarus* (New York Theatre Workshop), *Mary Paige Marlow* (Second Stage), *For All the Women Who Thought They Were Mad* (SoHo Rep), *Epiphany* (Lincoln Center Theater), and Sarah Ruhl's *Passion Play* (Epic). He is eternally grateful for the continued love and support of his husband Roberto.

Catheryn Hooper, Production Stage Manager

Stage Manager of both land and sea, Catheryn is delighted to be working again with Manhattan School of Music. Off-Broadway: *Perfect Crime* (The Theater Center), *All the Devils Are Here* (DR2), *Stranger Things! The Parody Musical*

(The Players Theatre), *Bonkers in the Boroughs* (MMAC), *Adoration* (Sheen Center). Cruise Lines: *The Effectors*, *Grease* (Royal Caribbean), *Rock You Tonight* (Norwegian). Touring: *Fancy Nancy Splendiferous Christmas* (Vital Theater Co.), *The Little Mermaid* (Missoula Children's Theatre). Regional: *Addams Family*, *Shakespeare in Love* (Pacific Conservatory Theatre), *It's a Wonderful Life* (Great Plains Theatre), *Newsies*, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* (Rocky Mountain Repertory).

Jackson McKinnon, Chorus Master and Assistant Conductor

Jackson McKinnon serves as Music Director for Manhattan School of Music's Undergraduate Opera Theatre's Riverside productions and is a member of the Graduate Opera Theatre's music staff as Chorus Master and Assistant Conductor. Mr. McKinnon has worked with ensembles all over the world, including the International Contemporary Ensemble, Grafenegg Academy Orchestra in Austria, the Orchestra Now (TÖN), Palaver Strings, Vienna State Opera Chorus, Linz Landestheater Opera Choruses, Bard Festival Chorale, American Symphony Orchestra, and Face the Music. Mr. McKinnon has served as Music Director for City Lyric Opera and Opera Maine's Studio Artists for multiple seasons. He has spent four seasons as a part of the creative team for the Bard Summerscape and Music Festival as cover conductor, assistant chorus master, and musicological consultant. Other projects include Ana Sokolović's *Svadba* at the request of Dawn Upshaw and the New York premiere of Lori Laitman's new opera, *Uncovered*.

Kristen Kemp, Head of Music in Opera for Vocal Arts and Vocal Coach/Pianist

Vocal coach and pianist Kristen Kemp, a Florida native, has worked with numerous opera companies throughout the United States, including Cincinnati Opera, Michigan Opera Theater, Sarasota Opera, Indianapolis Opera, Utah Festival Opera, Martina Arroyo's Prelude to Performance Program, and Opera North, as well as the Opera Theatre of Lucca, Italy, in association with the University of Cincinnati Conservatory. Kristen served on the music staff of Sarasota Opera from 2003 to 2015, where she was also the Studio Artist Director for five seasons. As a member of the coaching staff for Sherrill Milnes's VOICE Experience, Kristen has worked with the programs in New York, Florida, and Savannah since 2010. Since moving to New York City in 2013, she has been a frequent performer and collaborator in numerous concerts of choral works with piano and orchestra at Carnegie Hall and David Geffen Hall. Kristen Kemp

joined Manhattan School of Music as an Opera Theatre coach in 2018 and was named Head of Music in Opera for Vocal Arts in 2021. She received her Master of Music degree in collaborative piano and her Artist Diploma in opera coaching from the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music, where she studied with Kenneth Griffiths and Donna Loewy.

Travis Bloom, Vocal Coach/Pianist

Travis Bloom is a sought-after vocal coach and collaborative pianist. He has served as a member of Manhattan School of Music's artistic staff since 2017 and most recently joined the NYU Steinhardt School's artistic staff as a vocal coach/collaborative pianist. Travis served as the principal coach/pianist for the 2023 Berkshire Opera Festival's production of *La Bohème* and was featured in their summer concert series. In the summer of 2022 Travis joined the music staff of Opera Saratoga, serving as the principal coach/pianist for their production of *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. From 2020 to 2022 he served on the music staff for Ricky Ian Gordon and Lynn Nottage's *Intimate Apparel* at Lincoln Center. From 2019 to 2021 he worked as a faculty coach with the Chautauqua Institute Voice Program under the direction of Marlena Malas. Since 2018, he has worked with the Metropolitan Opera Guild as a pianist for their master class series. He has accompanied master classes with Renée Fleming, Susan Graham, Craig Rutenberg, Thomas Hampson, Isabel Leonard, Anthony Roth Costanzo, Harolyn Blackwell, and Piotr Beczała. Since moving to NYC in 2016, Mr. Bloom has been a staff pianist for the Bronx Opera Company and the International Vocal Arts Institute under the direction of Joan Dornemann and Paul Nadler. Upcoming engagements include pianist/coach in residence for JAM on the Marsh Festival in the U.K. and returning to the Berkshires for Gounod's *Faust*.

Jeanne-Minette Cilliers, Vocal Coach/Pianist

Hailed as a "pianistic poet," South African-born artist Jeanne-Minette Cilliers maintains an international performing career in both recital and opera.

In high demand as a collaborator, Ms. Cilliers has performed in Austria, Belgium, Croatia, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Israel, Japan, Russia, Sweden, South Africa, Barbados, and North America, including festivals and venues such as the Irving S. Gilmore Keyboard Festival, the Ravinia Festival, the Guggenheim Museum, Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, the Cuvillies Theatre in Munich, and the Yusupov Palace in St. Petersburg.

Ms. Cilliers has served on the music staff of the Glimmerglass Opera Festival, Santa Fe Opera, Opera Ballet Vlaanderen, and the Bayerische Staatsoper

(BSTO). From 2019–2022, Ms. Cilliers spearheaded the new Collaborative Piano program at the Royal Conservatoire Antwerp, simultaneously functioning as Studienleiter for the voice department.

Her 2023–24 season includes a recital tour with mezzo-soprano Raehann Bryce-Davis, performances with countertenor John Holiday, as well as opera productions at the Gran Teatre del Liceu (Barcelona), and the Festival d’Aix-en-Provence in France.

Stephanie Sutherland, Choreographer and Intimacy Director

A certified Intimacy Director through IDC Professionals, Stephanie Sutherland works in theater, opera, film, dance, and the music video world. In addition to her work as an ID, Stephanie has worked nationally and internationally as a dancer, actress, movement director, and choreographer in dance, theater, film, commercials, and music. A graduate of Fordham University’s BFA program with the Alvin Ailey School, she continues to work with their theater department as guest lecturer. She is currently Assistant Director to YSDT’s upcoming premiere at the Shed in June 2024, and has collaborations debuting at Bard and Fordham University this spring. stephaniesutherland.com @stephaniesland

Stefano de Peppo, Italian Diction Coach

Born in Italy, Stefano de Peppo decided he wanted to become an opera singer when he was part of the Children’s Chorus at La Scala in Milan. Known for his voice, crisp diction, and acting skills, he has enjoyed a very successful career as a bass-baritone for more than 30 years, primarily in Italian opera’s comedic roles, performing in theatres all over the U.S., Europe, Mexico, and South America. Parallel to his singing career he enjoys imparting his expertise to younger singers as an Italian diction and repertory coach and is often invited to give master classes in conservatories, music schools, and Young Artist programs. He currently holds the position of Italian coach at the Lamont School of Music at the University of Denver. He also teaches an “Italian Recits” Class at Manhattan School of Music.

Ellis Durand, Assistant Director

Ellis Durand is an NYC-based theater artist and stand-up comic. They’re thrilled to be working at Manhattan School of Music. Previous Assistant Director credits include *Psychic Self Defense* and *The Story Box* (HERE Arts Center), *Lorca in a Green Dress* (California State University, Northridge), *Thoughts of a Dying*

Absurdist (Zanni Theatrics). They've produced and performed comedy shows in NYC and LA and recently premiered a comedic two-hander, *Gay and Afraid*, at The Tank. As a stage manager, they've worked with Manhattan School of Music, Saint Michael's Playhouse, Mannes School of Music, Playwrights Horizons, Abrons Arts Center, The Flea, HERE Arts Center, Theater Row, and more.

Laura Valenti, Assistant Scenic Designer

Laura Valenti is thrilled to make her opera debut at Manhattan School of Music. She is a NYC-based set designer, model maker, and scenic artist. Recent design credits include *Spring Awakening* (Monumental Theatre Co.), *Hedda Gabler* and *The Violet Hour* (Stella Adler Studio of Acting), *Later Life*, *Betrayal*, *The Dumb Waiter* (Katonah Classic Stage), and Lynn Nottage's *Fabulation* (Columbia University). She is an associate and model maker to several other set designers, including Emmy Award-winning set designer Jason Ardizzone-West, Tony Award-winning set designer Alexander Dodge, and award-winning international designer Paul Tate DePoo III. Laura's passion is working in educational theatre. She was an adjunct teaching instructor at Point Park University in 2020–21 as the stagecraft instructor and interim Scenic Charge. She also works annually with her high school alma mater in Pittsburgh (*Frozen*, *Addams Family*, *Legally Blonde*).
lauravalentidesigns.com

Melissa Gargiulo, Assistant Costume Designer

Melissa Gargiulo is a New York-based assistant costume designer, working most recently on Broadway's *Enemy of the People* and *Sweeney Todd*. Off-Broadway credits include Stephen Sondheim's final musical, *Here We Are* (The Shed) and the world premiere of *Bernarda's Daughters* (The New Group). Other notable credits include: Coachella, Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, and Disney Cruise Line. She'd like to thank Rodrigo for another beautiful adventure on this show.

Matt Lazarus, Assistant Lighting Designer

Matt Lazarus is a lighting designer based in New York City. Off-Broadway: *Scouts: A New Musical* (The Players Theatre), *I'm Gonna Marry You Tobey Maguire*, *Nightclub Cantata* (the cell), *Solo: A Story About Friendship* (Soho Playhouse, The Connelly Upstairs). Off-Off-Broadway: too many to list. He holds a BFA from the University of Connecticut. MattLazarusDesign.com, @LazMattarus

Joya Giambrone, Associate Wig, Hair, and Makeup Designer

Broadway: *Into the Woods* (Associate Makeup Designer), *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow Is Enuf* (Associate Hair Designer), *A Strange Loop* (Associate Hair Designer), *POTUS* (Associate Hair Designer), *Clyde's* (Associate Hair Designer), *Grand Horizons* (Makeup Designer), *Slave Play* (Associate Hair and Makeup Designer), *The Cher Show* (Associate Makeup Designer). Off-Broadway: *White Girl in Danger* (Makeup Designer), *Hercules* (Associate Hair and Makeup Designer), *A Strange Loop* (Associate Hair Designer), *Ain't No Mo'* (Associate Hair and Makeup Designer). National Tours: *Once On This Island* (Associate Hair and Makeup Designer), *Love Never Dies* (Associate Makeup Designer). Manhattan School of Music: *Bye Bye Birdie* (Associate Hair and Makeup Designer), *Nine* (Associate Hair and Makeup Designer). Education: BFA, Theater Arts, Nazareth College. Makeup Certification: Makeup Forever Academy NYC. joyagiambrone.com

Lauren Linsey, Assistant Stage Manager

Lauren Linsey is a director, dramaturg, and stage manager based in New York City with roots in Houston, Texas and Norman, Oklahoma. She is a co-producer with Collective Arts Productions, an Oklahoma-based theatre company creating work for and by young artists. She's just happy to be here! Stage management credits include *Nine* (Manhattan School of Music), *Icing on the Cake* (La Senta Opera), *Forget Me Not* (Manhattan School of Music), *The Joe Hill Revival* (Brooklyn Tavern Theatre), *The Secret Life of the American Musical* (Manhattan School of Music), *Lincoronazione di Poppea* (Assistant, Manhattan School of Music), *An Autopsy of a Night at a Bar* (The Tank), Graduate Opera Theatre Scenes (Assistant, Manhattan School of Music), and *A New Brain* (University of Oklahoma).

Carleen Graham, Dean of Vocal Arts

Carleen Graham is the inaugural Dean of Vocal Arts at Manhattan School of Music. A native of Ohio's Hocking Hills region, her career has encompassed academic, artistic, and community-building work in music and opera for over 40 years.

Prior to MSM, she was Director of HGOCO, Houston Grand Opera's celebrated community and learning initiative. Dr. Graham is a State University of New York Distinguished Teaching Professor *Emerita* and was Director of the award-winning Crane Opera Ensemble at SUNY Potsdam for 25 years, earning numerous awards for teaching and opera direction. She was instrumental in the

development of the Domenic J. Pellicciotti Opera Composition Prize and was a co-founder, along with Stephanie Blythe, of the Fall Island Vocal Arts Seminar. Stage directing credits include productions of traditional and new works for Houston Grand Opera, Hawai'i Performing Arts Festival, Tri-Cities Opera, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Central City Opera, Tanglewood Music Center, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

She is a member of the National Opera Association, Co-Chair of OPERA America's Women in Opera Network, and a member of OA's Learning and Leadership Council.

Dr. Graham holds degrees from Teachers College–Columbia University, New England Conservatory of Music, and Ohio University.

LA RONDINE PRODUCTION STAFF

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Max Breslow, Technical Director

Junior Diaz, Production Supervisor

Patrick St. John, Production Coordinator

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Manhattan School of Music opera productions have been praised as a significant contribution to operatic life in New York City, and numerous performances have been released as commercial recordings. Opera is a significant feature of the vocal performance experience at MSM. All voice students participate in ensembles, and opera experience is available through a rich variety of opera related programs and courses.

Graduate students develop their artistry under the guidance of eminent artist teachers, while gaining exposure before New York City audiences through the many performance opportunities MSM offers. Productions each year include two full operas with orchestra on the Neidorff-Karpati stage; a new fall opera scenes series; a new fall chamber opera-level production; a fall Opera Workshop to hone audition and professional skills; a new spring Opera in Concert collaboration with the MSM Symphony Orchestra; a workshop of a new work or a workshop performance of a one-act opera; and a Musical Theatre Lab.

Juniors and seniors participate in a fall opera scenes program that explores a wide variety of styles and languages while developing important artistic and collaborative skills. In the spring, they audition to appear in a fully staged production with chamber orchestra, or in a one-act opera or cabaret-style performance with piano.

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Founded as a community music school by Janet Daniels Schenck in 1918, today MSM is recognized for its more than 1,000 superbly talented undergraduate and graduate students who come from more than 50 countries and nearly all 50 states; its innovative curricula and world-renowned artist-teacher faculty that includes musicians from the New York Philharmonic, the Met Orchestra, and the top ranks of the jazz and Broadway communities; and a distinguished community of accomplished, award-winning alumni working at the highest levels of the musical, educational, cultural, and professional worlds.

The School is dedicated to the personal, artistic, and intellectual development of aspiring musicians, from its Precollege students through those pursuing doctoral studies. Offering classical, jazz, and musical theatre training, MSM grants a range of undergraduate and graduate degrees. True to MSM's origins as a music school for children, the Precollege Division is a professionally oriented Saturday music program dedicated to the musical and personal growth of talented young musicians ages 5 to 18. The School also serves some 2,000 New York City schoolchildren through its Arts-in-Education Program, and another 2,000 students through its critically acclaimed Distance Learning Program.

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