

# NOA Conference Salt Lake City, Utah January 2-5, 2019

Wednesday, January 2, 2019

2:00 PM

Board of Directors Meeting

6:00-9:00 PM

Reunion Dinner

## Thursday, January 3, 2019

9:00-9:50 AM

Conductors and Pianists Collaborative Initiative Gathering

9:00-9:50 AM

Breakout Sessions

### Engaging Culture

#### Learning through Service: Opera Outreach and Education

(Joshua May)

*This session will focus on the creation, implementation, and progression of a collegiate opera workshop outreach program with a service learning model for music education and performance students to connect to our community. This session will provide the steps to build a successful opera outreach program for undergraduate singers, local opera companies and young artist programs. Attendees will learn the principles of best practice for service learning to provide the framework for their programs, which can provide unique partnerships and access to varied levels of grant funding, unique community relationships, service and deep experiential learning. Through the development of our program, the performers and teaching artists were able to share their passion for opera by performing three one-act operas of fables and fairy tales to over 10,000 students in our local community. These operas focused on the themes of literacy, problem solving and anti-bullying, while engaging the elementary students through the musical language of operatic composers. We presented interactive chorus, dance, and/or interactive experience of students/community members at each performance. The university students created unique cross-curricular lessons to bring to the classrooms/venues prior to our performance, which provided an outlet for service learning with our community partners. They focused on the connected elements of music in math, science, reading, story-telling, theatre arts, and foreign languages. Through the design of this project, we connect students and community members of all ages to the fine arts through multiple channels of learning and musical performance.*

### Educating for the Future

#### Pastiche Productions: Making Opera Personal for 21st Century Students

(David Ronis, Ann Baltz, Catherine Compton, Daniel Hunter-Holly)

*The future of opera depends on creating performance experiences that are personal to performers' and audiences' lives. Pastiche opera productions can bring contemporary issues to life by re-imagining and re-contextualizing familiar repertoire into a new storyline. The benefits*

of producing this type of performance project are varied and long-lasting, both for student-performers and directors, as well as for the audience.

This collaborative session will give examples from two recent pastiche productions. Find a description of each production below.

Production #1) Funded by an internal grant tied to the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley strategic plan, the “Transformations: Sing Your Story” project was a semester-long exploration of opera workshop students’ bi-lingual, bi-cultural lives on the US-Mexico border. The project culminated in performances of an opera pastiche based on stories from the students’ backgrounds, with oversight from UTRGV’s Counseling Center.

Production #2) A Kurt Weill Cabaret was assembled using a variant of the second method. However, a single framing narrative was not chosen to organize the material. Rather, the process involved juxtaposing the musical pieces so as to enable multiple mini-narrative threads to organically emerge, develop, and transform as the evening progressed. This method proved to be quite flexible and yielded compelling results. This presentation will outline the processes of creating and performing these projects.

**10:10-11:00 AM**

**Breakout Sessions**

### **Engaging Culture**

#### **Staging Intimacy in the #MeToo Movement**

(Lauren Carlton)

*With the recent media outpouring of stories surrounding sexual misconduct and harassment, theatrical creators are charged with more responsibility than ever with changing the narrative. As artists, we’re charged with bringing the human experience to the stage, but how do we take care of our own in the process? This session seeks to banish the awkward, empower the uncomfortable, and give both directors and singers tools to take with them into the rehearsal and performance space when staging sexual, violent, or emotional intimacy for production. We’ll discuss laying the groundwork in the rehearsal space, navigating personal and professional boundaries, choreography, and repeatability.*

### **Educating for the Future**

#### **The Art of an Assistant Director**

(Marc Callahan)

*Becoming an assistant director is an excellent way to learn the craft of directing and a solid path to a career in the profession. But how does one become an AD and exactly what are the duties, once you have landed the job? I propose to discuss these topics in a break-out session, beginning with the initial steps, working up the ladder through topics of self-promotion.*

*There are several ways to become an assistant director: through university and young artist programs or directly through opera companies and directors, themselves. I plan to discuss positive ways to prepare for these introductions and how to build a CV.*

*Once the job is attained, what are the expectations prior to rehearsals? Here, I plan to discuss topics such as: learning the score, reaching-out to the director, and memorizing the names of all company members.*

*What is the AD’s job on the first day of rehearsals? This varies from production to production. An AD must be one of the most nuanced members of the creative team in the*

*rehearsal room, supporting the organizational needs of the director and foreseeing logistical problems that might arise. I plan to discuss the ways an AD interacts with the director, liaises with members of the team, and their frequent staging duties. I also plan to discuss the most thrilling part of the job—walking a role—and the most mundane—scheduling.*

*Once the show running, it is generally the assistant who give notes and make sure that the production remains in good condition. Knowing how to effectively give notes is an extremely important skill. I plan to discuss tactics that I have used in past productions that might serve as useful tidbits for the aspiring assistant.*

*Finally, what does the job of an assistant director look like in the long run? Many of these questions will be discussed on a basis of personal experience and from colleagues that I have known in the career.*

### **Embracing the New**

#### **Thematic Transformations in Jake Heggie's *Three Decembers***

(Danielle Harrington)

*Though recognized as a significant opera produced in the last decade, no scholarly research exists regarding the music of Jake Heggie's chamber opera *Three Decembers* (2008). Famous for his larger works like *Dead Man Walking* (2000) and *Moby Dick* (2010), Jake Heggie shows his true mastery of musical motives in *Three Decembers* as well as his stylistic influences. What's brilliant about Heggie's writing is that it is impossible to examine the music without discussing the characters. So in this session, we will explore the many musical thematic transformations inspired by the opera's characters and their relevant, and often relatable, realities. By understanding the composer's intentions, the singing actor or director can make enhanced decisions. Heggie's musical choices are intrinsically tied to the emotional shifts experienced by each character, which creates pacing much like a movie with themes frequently changing in each scene. You will see how this compositional technique cultivates a connection with today's modern audience through the session's detailed breakdown of musical themes. Heggie's own story, though not directly autobiographical, greatly informs the drama and complex characters of *Three Decembers*, and therefore, I will demonstrate how this theoretical analysis will lead to stronger dramatic choices by singers, directors, and music directors alike.*

**11:20 AM -1:00 PM**

**Opening Ceremonies, Keynote Address and Luncheon**

**Keynote Speaker: Michael Ballam,**

**Founder and General Director, Utah Festival Opera and Musical Theatre**

*Michael Ballam has had an operatic and recital career spanning four decades and every continent. A native of Logan, Utah, Mr. Ballam has performed in the major concert halls of America, Europe, Asia, Russia and the Middle East, with command performances at the Vatican and the White House. His operatic repertoire includes more than 600 performances of over 100 major roles. He has shared the stage with the world's greatest singers, including Joan Sutherland, Beverly Sills, Kiri Te Kanawa, Birgit Nilsson, and Placido Domingo, performing regularly with such companies as the Chicago Lyric, San Francisco, Santa Fe, Dallas, Washington, Philadelphia, St. Louis and San Diego Operas. As a recitalist, Mr. Ballam has performed with critical acclaim in some of the most important concert halls in the country, including the Kennedy Center (Washington DC),*

*Orchestra Hall (Chicago), Jordan Hall (Boston), Jones Hall (Houston), and the Los Angeles Music Center. He has also performed with Broadway legends Karen Akers, Tammy Grimes, Douglas Fairbanks Jr., Jean Stapleton and Ethel Merman.*

*At the age of 24, Mr. Ballam became the youngest recipient of the degree of Doctor of Music with Distinction in the history of the prestigious Indiana University. An accomplished pianist and oboist, he is the Founder and General Director of the Utah Festival Opera and Musical Theatre, which is fast becoming one of the nation's major Opera Festivals. Professor of Music for the past 24 years at Utah University, he has also been a faculty member at Indiana University, The Music Academy of the West, University of Utah, Brigham Young University (where he was awarded the Teaching Award in Continuing Education in 1992) and guest lecturer at Stanford, Yale, BYU Idaho, Catholic University and Manhattan School of Music.*

*He is the author of over 40 publications and recordings in international distribution, has a weekly radio program on Utah Public Radio, starred in 3 major motion pictures and appears regularly on television. Dr. Ballam serves on the Board of Directors of twelve professional Arts organizations. In 1996 he was designated one of the 100 Top Achievers in the State of Utah by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of the U.K., appointed Artist Extraordinaire by the Governor of Utah in 2003, given Honorary Life Membership to the Utah Congress of Parents and Teachers, received the "Excellence in Community Teaching Award" from the Daughters of the American Revolution in 2007 and was awarded the Gardner Award by the Utah Academy of Science, Arts and Letters, for "Significant Contributions in the Humanities to the State of Utah" in 2010.*

**1:20-3:20 PM**

**Master Class**

**Stephen Lord**

*Stephen Lord has been chosen by Opera News as one of the "25 Most Powerful Names in U.S. Opera" (one of four conductors), and is continually praised for conducting both traditional and contemporary operatic works. For his debut with San Francisco Opera, conducting Rigoletto, one critic observed, "He partnered his singers perfectly and gave everything its proper weight – he was master of the score's details and the orchestra played superbly for him." He is currently principle conductor of the Michigan Opera Theater, music director for Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, and formerly was music director of Boston Lyric Opera. He now serves as artistic director of opera studies at the New England Conservatory, overseeing all aspects of the opera training program and conducting one main stage production a year.*

*Please Stephen Lord's full bio here: <http://www.barrettartists.com/artist.php?id=slord>*

**3:20-3:40 PM**

**Coffee Break**

**3:40-4:30 PM**

**Breakout Sessions**

**Engaging Culture**

**Utah Opera Education**

**(Paula Fowler, Carol Anderson, Utah Opera Resident Artists)**

*Professional opera companies and university opera programs share the opportunity of introducing young people to the art form of opera, as both audience members and possible pursuers of the arts involved. Utah Opera has a 40-year history of education outreach in its statewide community. Learn in this session how Utah Opera Education & Community Outreach has responded to the opportunities in this state for cultivating present success and future of opera in our corner of the world. Utah Opera's Education Director will share programming, highlighting current collaborations with university programs. The second half of the session will feature Utah Opera's quintet of Resident Artists in Freeze Frame: The Elixir of Love, our introduction to opera for junior high school audiences, as a sample of one of our four age-appropriate, in-school programs.*

### **Educating for the Future**

#### **Cliff Notes: A Guide to Abbreviating Opera for Small Departments**

(Richard Masters, Ariana Wyatt)

*In this session, Masters & Wyatt will describe their process in re-thinking Mozart's Marriage of Figaro in order to make it work within the strictures provided by a limited budget and a small pool of student singers. Collegiate instructors in smaller music departments who wish to give their students the experience of opera are often challenged by constraints placed upon them by the realities of their financial and personnel situations. The usual solution is to stick to the format of opera workshop, but what if you want to do more? Masters and Wyatt have new perspectives on this old problem, and will detail their solution to the full opera dilemma.*

### **Embracing the New**

#### **Models for New Work Development**

(Brian DeMaris, Kristin Kenning, Leigh Holman, Craig Kier)

*Engaging with new work and living composers and librettists develops and requires an extended set of skills for young performers, yet it remains a challenge for many university programs to incorporate exposure to and development of new works into their programming and curriculum. Inspired by a panel discussion at Opera America's New Works Forum in 2018, this session will feature a panel discussion with producers from multiple universities that have collaborated with nationally recognized composers, librettists and producers in the development of new work within the university setting, providing not only an opportunity for composers and librettists, but also a successful and essential pedagogical experience for student performers. These projects have proven to have a remarkable track record for community engagement, audience building and attracting outside funding.*

**4:30-7:00 PM**

**Dinner on Your Own**

**7:00-9:00 PM**

**College Opera Scenes Competition**

(Paul Houghtaling, Master of Ceremonies,  
and Dawn Neely, Chair, Collegiate Opera Scenes Competition Committee)

*This annual celebration of opera scenes is an entertaining energetic evening featuring young artists from all across the United States in undergraduate and graduate opera divisions and a musical theatre division. National finalists are selected from a competitive preliminary round and the NOA national conference offers a unique experience for the student performers.*

**9:00-10:00**

**Opening Reception**

## **Friday, January 4, 2019**

**9:00-11:00 AM**

**Poster Sessions**

**9:00-9:50 AM**

**Conversation with Harolyn Blackwell**

*One of the brightest stars on stages in the US and abroad, charismatic soprano Harolyn Blackwell has been hailed by audiences and critics alike as a “model of agility, spunk, charm and silvery tone.” Recognized for her expressive and exuberant performances, as well as for her radiant voice, she is making a wide and varied career on opera, concert and recital stages of the world.*

*Please find Ms. Blackwell’s full bio here: <https://www.harolynblackwell.com/about>*

**10:10-11:00 AM**

**Breakout Sessions**

### **Engaging Culture**

#### **Experiences of Faculty Members w/Disabilities**

(Tina Holmes Davis, Bonnie Von Hoff)

*Experiences of Faculty Members with Disabilities in Higher Education is a duo ethnographic study that showcases the challenges and triumphs that faculty members with disabilities are experiencing in Higher Education today. The goal of this study is to create a greater awareness of the issues by providing an open discussion of what faculty members with disabilities are facing when working with students with disabilities as well as in the academic community as a whole. Topics to be included in this discussion are:*

- *Challenges Disabled Faculty Members Face on a Day to Day Basis*
- *Suggestions for Working with Disabled Students when Staging Operas and Opera Scenes*
- *Suggestions for Working with Disabled Students in the Classroom*

*Key outcomes and implications are that there has been a rise in awareness of the needs of faculty members and students with disabilities in Higher Education, and there is more to accomplish. Discussing current issues openly is paramount to promoting greater understanding and insight to ensure continued progress in academia as we continue to learn about the practices of faculty members with disabilities in Higher Education.*

### **Educating for the Future**

#### **Winning the Mental Game**

(Nicholas Pallesen)

*Are nerves getting in the way of you performing and auditioning at the level you know*

*you're capable of? Imagine how it would feel to shine under the brightest lights, knowing that you're free to be your best! For over 15 years, Metropolitan Opera Baritone and Mental Performance Consultant Nicholas Pallesen has helped artists from high school to the top levels of the opera, musical theater, and orchestral worlds put performance anxiety behind them. Join him as he reveals the surprisingly simple cause AND solution to stage fright. You will also learn:*

- Why all the mental strategies and techniques you've been doing up until now often don't work*
- How your fear is actually on your side (Really!)*
- Why trying to get in "the zone" is not only unnecessary, but can actually make things worse*
- How you can perform at a high level whether you feel amazingly confident or wildly insecure*
- Why you are 100% okay no matter how a performance or audition goes*

*Learn to perform more consistently at your best with much less effort and enjoy doing what you love much more! NOTE: Some attendees may have the chance to receive personal coaching.*

### **Embracing the New**

#### **Beethoven's Slippers: A New Monodrama**

(Judith Cloud, Jennifer Trost, Rita Borden, Eric Gibson)

*Composer Judith Cloud and soprano Jennifer Trost will introduce "Beethoven's Slippers," a monodrama composed to a libretto by Douglas Atwill, noted Santa Fe artist and writer. Cloud and Trost will discuss the collaborative process involved with the commissioning and creation of this new work, a monodrama tailored to the strengths of a specific singer with an eye toward supplementing the standard operatic repertoire. Stage director Eric Gibson will join in the conversation sharing how his concept for the production was born out of the sketches provided by Atwill that outline and complement the libretto. The session will conclude with a staged performance of the 27' work, including projections of Atwill's artwork. Q&A will follow.*

*Synopsis: The setting is the living room of an adobe house in Santa Fe, NM on December 16<sup>th</sup>—Beethoven's birthday—in the mid 1980's. The Woman, a wealthy Southerner who lives alone, is entertaining some friends in the late afternoon with martinis. The Woman is reminiscing about Charles, the great love of her life, and their time together in Paris, then in Santa Fe. As she had given Charles their "two-seater" as a parting gift, the only memento she has are the slippers that once belonged to Beethoven. Librettist Douglas Atwill writes: "There is throughout the story a sense of sadness that she never let go of the memory of an unsatisfactory lover or went on to another. She holds on to a gentle rancor right to the end, deeper than her words would suggest."*

**11:10 AM-12:10 PM**

**NOA Annual Business Meeting**

**12:30-1:50 PM**

**Regional Lunch**

**Grand America Hotel**  
(Just across the street from the Little America)

**2:00-3:00 PM**

**Plenary Session**

***Educating for the Future***  
**Navigating the World of Young Artist Programs**

(Moderator: Mitra Sadeghpour (Chair, Student Involvement Initiative Committee),  
Panel: Michael Ballam (Utah Festival Opera and Musical Theatre) Laurie Rogers (Opera Saratoga), Darla Diltz (Red River Lyric Opera), and Paul Houghtaling (Druid City Opera Workshop)

*This session will cover several important topics and suggestions regarding young artist programs and allow ample time for students to ask questions of the panel. The discussion will include tips on how to find information on young artist programs (YAPTRacker, your network of mentors and teachers) and how to determine what programs are right for you (training or performance based or both? scenes or roles? domestic or international?) In addition, the panel will offer insight on the preparation and audition process, resources for funding, the transition from tuition-based programs to salaried opportunities, and demeanor and professional expectations in the young artist world.*

**3:00-3:20**

**Break**

**3:20-4:10**

**Breakout Sessions**

**Engaging Culture**  
**Scholarly Paper Presentation**

***Educating for the Future***

**Musical Give and Take: How to Sing with a Conductor**

(Kirk Severtson, Kristin Roach, Darryl Cooper)

*Singers who are most used to collaborating one-on-one with a pianist quickly discover that a successful collaboration with a conductor requires a different kind of working relationship. While the conductor is ultimately responsible for musically coordinating everything on stage and in the pit, the best conductors seek to cultivate a give-and-take musical relationship with singers to empower them to their most expressive artistry. How and when should singers feel empowered to take musical leadership, and how can they prepare themselves for this as they learn their roles? How can singers best prepare to adapt to a wide variety of conductors and styles? This session will explore the nature of musical leadership between singer and conductor, in its ideal form, as a shared, give-and-take relationship, and how voice teachers and coaches can best prepare singers for these collaborations.*

**Embracing the New**  
**Massage for Singers**  
(Christopher Meerdink)

*In a wellness model, the purpose of massage is to increase comfort, flexibility, and overall functioning, while decreasing stress, lowering blood pressure, and encouraging a sense of health and well-being. Massage for Singers, much like sport massage for athletes, is a series of massage and stretching techniques that addresses nodules (knots), adhesions, and taut bands in the torso, neck, and head, with the goal of increasing level of comfort and self-awareness of the singer in their instrument. Similarly, massage for musicians is a general descriptive phrase (including Massage for Singers) for massage techniques tailored for the unique areas of concern for musicians. In this session, I will demonstrate some of the techniques I have developed for use with a singer and with a pianist.*

**4:30-5:30 PM**

**Plenary Session**

***Engaging Culture***

**IDEA- Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, Access... The Start of a Discussion**

(Moderator: Justin John Moniz, Panel: Gayla Blaisdell, Minnita Daniel-Cox, Ryan Landis, Jess Muñoz and Kumiko Shimizu)

*The future of our art form and its relevance in our society is critically dependent upon our ability to recognize the challenges of Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA). Join NOA's newly formed IDEA Committee in an open dialogue surrounding some impactful issues which are included under the term "diversity" and which need to be addressed in an honest spirit of awareness. While this panel will not portend to be a finite presentation of all that needs to be shared, it is our hope that we might bring certain issues to the table for the start of conversation and comment. Topics such as authenticity and sensitivity in casting (from colorblind to color conscious), recognizing privilege (creating an equitable environment for all), fostering accessibility (engaging and serving underrepresented populations), and Diversity Officers as important members opera administration staffs will be discussed.*

**5:30-7:00 PM**

**Dinner on Your Own**

**7:00 PM**

**Shuttle Bus**

**7:30-9:30 PM**

**Sacred In Opera (SIO) Production**

(shuttles provided)

*THE SACRED IN OPERA INITIATIVE of NOA presents this staged dramatic oratorio by composer Marisa Michelson and Pulitzer Prize winning librettist Royce Vavrek. It tells the story of Noah's Ark from the perspective of Noah's wife, Naamah-- a strong woman who must guide all the diverse species of animals in coming together as the Ark reaches dry land. From the birds to the hippos, each group has its own concerns. Can they learn to live together after the crisis has passed? Presented in collaboration with Southern Utah University, a company of over 300 artists perform this inspirational work in Salt Lake City's **Gothic Romanesque Cathedral of the Madeleine**. (<https://utcotm.org>) Isai Jess Muñoz (SIO Chair), Carol Ann Modesitt (NOA Conference Host), and Krystal McCoy (Southern Utah University) coordinate the event. In line with the mission of the Sacred in Opera Initiative, this interfaith production is shared with a*

positive awareness of religious diversity and the intentional practice of engaging people of different faiths for the betterment of our organization and society as a whole.

## **Saturday, January 5, 2019**

9:30-10:20 AM

Breakout Sessions

### **Engaging Culture**

#### **Female Conductors and Directors and Their Paths to Careers in Opera**

(Beth Everett (Moderator), Laurie Rogers, Elizabeth Kirkland, Ariana Wyatt)

*While the gender gap in different areas of musical and stage directing leadership seems to be closing, the number of women on the opera conducting podium is still quite lacking. Women stage directors have arguably fared better, especially in academia, but there is still room for more. Questions to be addressed include: Is there a difference in rehearsal style based on gender? Have the challenges of balancing work/family life been more prevalent for women conductors and directors up to this point? What can be done in the future to encourage more women to pursue opera conducting and directing? Where can proper training and experience be found if you enter the field later? Each member of the panel will discuss her own journey in opera, either to the podium or to the director's chair, as well as unique challenges and obstacles.*

### **Educating for the Future**

#### **Musical Synthesis of Chekhov Technique: Integrated Training for the Singer—Actor**

(James Haffner, Amy Johnson)

*Training opera singers to be singer-actors requires an acting technique that addresses the needs unique to the demands placed on the performance of operatic theatre. Whereas psychological realism does not always effectively serve the genre, the Michael Chekhov technique unlocks a singer's acting potential, creating independent individual creative artists. The tenets of the Chekhov technique can be expressed fully in musical terms, which facilitate a more integrated and full-bodied performance approach. This presentation outlines the relationship between the Michael Chekhov technique and its application to operatic expression, specifically the 'aria'.*

*The technique frees the singer-actor: music has its own dimensions in space and can serve as a vehicle for character creation. For example, melody and harmony can be both expressed physically in the Chekhov principles of Sensations (Three Sisters), Expansion/Contraction, Qualities of Movement, the Four Brothers (feelings of ease, form, beauty and entirety) and Staccato/Legato. Staccato/Legato can be applied instantly by either mimicking the motion of the music or engaging in physical counterpoint (polarity). This session would apply the basic tenets of the technique to aria work, focusing on how the individual singer can begin character work—in the studio—before making the transition to the rehearsal hall.*

### **Embracing the New**

#### **Emerging from the Shadow of Puccini**

(Luvada Harrison with performances by Garrett Torbert)

*Franco Alfano, (1875-1954) was a pianist, composer and educator who today is mostly known for completing the ending of Puccini's last opera Turandot. How does a talented and admired composer in his own right, emerge from the shadow of one of the most prolific composers of Italian Verismo Opera? Puccini and Alfano were friends. They would consult with each other about their respective compositions. Alfano began his musical studies in Naples with Alessandro Longo. Leipzig was the next stop on his educational journey, where he studied composition and orchestration with Solomon Jadassohn. Miranda, his first opera had its debut in Berlin but was never published. Alfano would compose nine operas during his lifetime. The most successful being his third opera Risurrezione premiered in Turin (1904) nine months after the premiere of Puccini's Madame Butterfly in Milan. The opera enjoyed its 1000<sup>th</sup> performance in Italy in 1951. Risurrezione was championed by Mary Garden and had its US premiere with Garden performing the lead soprano role with the Chicago Opera in 1925 on New Year's Eve. The most recent performance was at the Wexford Festival in 2017. This lecture session will share additional information about Alfano that will hopefully convince the audience of his important contributions to opera.*

**10:40 AM-12:10 PM**

**Plenary Session**

***Embracing the New  
Breaking Boundaries in Opera:  
New Approaches to the Stage by Female Composers***

*(Jennifer Bellor, Cynthia Wong, Linda Lister)*

*This session will feature dramatic works by female composers Jennifer Bellor, Linda Lister, and Cynthia Wong. On the faculty at UNLV, each composer demonstrates various ways of contributing to the innovations of operatic and dramatic works for the concert hall and stage. Bellor blends classical, jazz and popular styles into her works, evident in her chamber opera Christabel (2013) that was premiered semi-staged at the Eastman School of Music, and her chamber opera Duffy's Cut (2013) that was premiered at the Kennedy Center as a part of Washington National Opera's American Opera Initiative. She will share excerpts from these works along with excerpts from her work-in-progress, a dramatic concept album that will also be a theatrical work for the stage.*

*Wong will present excerpts from No Guarantees (work-in-progress), an android comedy with librettist Richard Aellen), which received a 2017 Discovery Grant from Opera America. Set in a future America, No Guarantees explores a world in which human interaction is increasingly mediated by technology. No Guarantees will be presented by Linda Lister's Opera Workshop at UNLV on November 16 and 17, 2018. Musically, it mixes musical theatre, popular, and classical styles as well as electronics, projection screen, and video.*

*Lister brings yoga philosophy, Sanskrit chanting, and health awareness to State of Grace (2018), a one act opera meant to reach out to the yoga community as well as serve as tool of cancer survivorship and fundraising.*

**12:10 -1:30 PM**

**Lunch on Your Own**

**12:30-5:00 PM**

**Vocal Competition**

*The Carolyn Bailey and Dominick Argento Vocal Competition is conducted annually in two divisions: The Artist Division and the Scholarship Division. Preliminary screening and Semi-final rounds are heard by recording. Eight to ten finalists are selected in each division to compete in a live final audition.*

**1:00-3:00 PM**

**Tour of Utah Opera**

**1:30-2:20 PM**

**Breakout Sessions**

### **Engaging Culture**

#### **Trading Faces**

(Alexis Davis-Hazell)

*Cultural appropriation as referenced in popular music is today's euphemism for the culture of acceptable theft. Portrayal of non-eurocentric cultures in art music composition and on the singing stage is a common conceit for social commentary within Eurocentric culture. Nevertheless, debate on the validity of the cultural appropriation argument is largely done outside of historical context. Re-establishing an historical continuum as the overarching context for analysis facilitates the revelation of an impersonator vs interpreter dichotomy in performance practice. Impersonation and interpretation are often conflated in American culture, particularly regarding the intersection of African-American culture and the vocal arts. This conflation is made possible by cultural compartmentalization, invalidation and revisionist history. Erasure of iconographic and linguistic evidence is due in part to trauma and embarrassment. Blackface became the most popular and widespread practice of racial impersonation on the singing stage in America by the dominant Anglo-American culture, which has been pervasive into the present day.*

*Participants will learn the history of Blackface Minstrelsy and the structure and functions of the minstrel show. Participants will be provided examples of impersonation and authentic interpretation in performance practice.*

### **Educating for the Future**

#### **Inspiration and Expression: Using Breath as Primary Acting Tool for Connection to the Moment**

(Samuel Mungo)

*Opera as a genre is founded on the voice- beautiful, pear-shaped, it is the voice that carries the musical and textual ideal The pear shaped tone must at least be the predominant gesture. Today's opera world has changed this ratio. Opera today requires skills in performance in addition to the voice- for example acting. There is a fear as we delve into this, not altogether without merit. Opera deals with heightened emotion, dealing with the most pressing of ideals- not anger but hate, not love but true love, not sadness but abject sorrow. The fear is that by allowing too much emotion to reveal itself (I.E., crying) how can a singer keep the beauty of tone, and avoid swelling, that precludes vocal prowess. In this session, I will explore the breath as the transportation of the emotion. Specifically, my work has suggested that by focusing not*

*only on the exhalation, the expression, the manifestation of the thought, but on the inhale, the inspiration, the nascence of the feeling, it is possible to create real emotions based in breath- not coincidentally, one of the most important aspects of the singing gesture. Once properly inspired, the consequent realization that the expression- the singing- is the external, outward-going movement of the already inspired though, the actor is reminded they do not have to wallow in the emotion so much as send it out to the audience, for them to wallow. In this way, real emotions are fair game, and audiences get honest feeling sent by a beautiful voice.*

### **Embracing the New**

#### **Opera in the Gig Economy**

(Philip Seward, Tammie Huntington)

*In the era of early opera, the form and objective was musical story in an intimate setting. While opera houses today are large edifices able to launch productions on a grand scale, new possibilities in opera are unfolding which hearken more directly back to the roots of the form. When changing economic times impact the job possibilities in the current business model, composers and performers may find that a departure from the grand scale of opera opens up new possibilities in storytelling and employability. In keeping with the coming gig economy, operas written to take advantage of unique performance spaces and instrumentation point the way forward to a revitalization of the form. Beyond chamber opera, more intimacy in opera offers the opportunity to present interesting characters in a musical setting with little more than a piano, table and two chairs. This session will explore operas by Robert Denham, Philip Seward and others, from composition through performance, to examine how opera in a variety of spaces and contexts may become part of the instrumentalists and singers' repertoire and income portfolio.*

**2:40-4:40 PM**

**Chamber Opera Competition**

**6:00-7:00 PM**

**Pre-Banquet Gathering**

**7:00-9:00 PM**

**Awards Ceremony and Banquet**

**Sunday, January 6, 2019**

**Board Meeting**