

SMU Meadows School of the Arts

MUSIC BY GIACOMO PUCCINI

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FEBRUARY 15-18, 2024
BOB HOPE THEATRE

Cover Art By Chris Rynne and Will Emmert

The illustration features a woman in a white veil and a man in a suit, set against a black background with decorative elements. The woman is positioned in the upper half, and the man is in the lower half, both looking forward. The background is filled with intricate patterns, including floral motifs, geometric shapes, and a crescent moon. The overall style is reminiscent of Art Deco or mid-century modern graphic design.

**SMU Meadows School of the Arts
Division of Music**

**MEADOWS LYRIC THEATRE
Michael Scarola, Interim Director**

GIACOMO PUCCINI

SUOR ANGELICA



GIANNI SCHICCHI

**Bob Hope Theatre
February 15 - 18, 2024**

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MEADOWS LYRIC THEATRE

Bob Hope Theatre
Meadows School of the Arts

Thursday, February 15, 2024 at 7:30 p.m.

Friday, February 16, 2024 at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, February 17, 2024 at 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, February 18, 2024 at 2:30 p.m.

In commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the death of Giacomo Puccini

Giacomo Puccini

SUOR ANGELICA & GIANNI SCHICCHI

Conductors: William Lumpkin (February 15-17),

Christopher Widomski (February 18)

Stage Director: Michael Scarola

Set and Lighting Designer: Chris Rynne

Costume Designer: April Hahn

Hair, Wig and Makeup Designer: Nicole Alvarez

SUOR ANGELICA

Opera in one act

Music by Giacomo Puccini

Libretto by Giovacchino Forzano

Characters in order of vocal appearance

Suor Angelica: Sarah E. Navy* / Avuya Ngcaweni+

The Monitor: Evrithiki Bailey

A Lay-Sister: Stephanie Lopez* / Ella Dabney+

The Mistress of the Novices: Holli Selmon

Suor Chiara: Kailyn Welch

Suor Osmina: Sara Barkouras

Suor Genovieffa: Jungmin Lee* / Lindsey Austin+

A Novice: Elise Ramirez* / Andie Earl+

Suor Dolcina: Eliza Schumacher* / Yina Qiao+

Nursing Sister: Andie Earl* / Elise Ramirez+

First Tourière: Hannah Howard

Second Tourière: Sharon-Sue Trujillo

The Abbess: Taryn Beard* / Cydney Leach+

The Princess, Angelica's Aunt: Akosua Adwini-Poku* / Leela Bharath+

*Thursday, February 15, 2024 & Saturday, February 17, 2024

+Friday, February 16, 2024 & Sunday, February 18, 2024

GIANNI SCHICCHI

Opera in one act

Music by Giacomo Puccini

Libretto by Giovacchino Forzano

Based on an incident from Dante's *Divine Comedy*

Characters in order of vocal appearance

Zita, Buoso's cousin: Karina Buruca-Kunda

La Ciesca, Marco's wife: Jasmine Williams* / Lexi Cook+

Marco, Simone's son: Will Emmert* / Nathan Hasbrook+

Simone, Buoso's cousin: Bob Rowe* / Seth-Emmanuel Clarke+

Rinuccio, Zita's nephew: Wayne Gasheum Mkhize* / Cole McIlquham+

Gherardo, Buoso's nephew: Nicholas Patys* / Diego Roberts Buceta+

Nella, his wife: Sophie Young* / Jordan Lage+

Betto di Signa, Buoso's brother-in-law: Jacob Mayo

Gherardino, Nella and Gherardo's son: Beckett Potter

Gianni Schicchi: J'Von Brown* / Christopher Curcuruto (Guest Artist)+

Lauretta, his daughter: Robin Flatt* / Adriana Palomo+

Maestro Spinelloccio, a physician: Adam Walker* / Nicholas Hausman+

Ser Amantio di Nicolao, a notary: Rey Winn

Pinellino, a shoemaker: Noah Ochieng* / River Engel+

Guccio, a dyer: River Engel* / Kyle Dacon+

Buoso Donati: Nathan Hasbrook* / Will Emmert+

*Thursday, February 15, 2024 & Saturday, February 17, 2024

+Friday, February 16, 2024 & Sunday, February 18, 2024

Synopsis of Scenes

Suor Angelica

A convent in Italy

The latter part of the 17th century

INTERMISSION

Gianni Schicchi

The bedchamber of Buoso Donati

Florence, the 1950s

Musical Director/Conductor: William Lumpkin
Associate Conductor: Christopher Widomski
Chorus Masters: Jason Smith, Christopher Widomski
Musical Preparation: Jason Smith, Christopher Widomski
Rehearsal Pianists: Katia Dinas, Kara Solis, Jason Smith
Italian Diction Coaches: Camille King, Brian Bentley, Jason Smith
Movement Director: Sara Romersberger
Fight Captain: Will Emmert
Assistant to the Director: David Womack
Stage Manager: Brad Cassil
Assistant Stage Managers: Liv Robertson, Andrés Carbonell, Timothy Wright
Poster and Program Cover Design: Chris Rynne, Will Emmert
Supertitles prepared and operated by Jason Smith

Production Staff

Production Manager: Dawn Askew
Technical Director: Justin Mosher
Costume Studio Supervisor: Melissa Panzarello
Stage Lighting Supervisor: Steven Piechocki
Sound Designer/Engineer: Jason Biggs
Prop Supervisor: Teila Vochatzer
Assistant Technical Director: Brandon Smith
Stage Lighting Technician: Cooper Simon
Costume Studio Cutter/Draper: Amanda Hendrickson
Assistant Costume Designer: Anna Zaunbrecher
Assistant Scenic Designer: Joey Barnett
Assistant Lighting Designer: Ilia Kemble
Scene Shop Foreman: Steve Leary
Inter-disciplinary Technician: Max Morgan
Scenic Artesian: Jacquelyn Reis
Costume Studio Assistants: Nicole Alvarez, Michele Nordahl, Chris Spencer

Student Staff

Kendall Barnes, Jameson Black, Andrés Carbonell, Dylan Cassady-Horton,
Emmet Overcarsh, Matt Reno, Lauren Secrest

Show Crew

Costuming

Lexi Cook, Jordan Lage, Sophie Young, Jasmine Williams

Electrics

Lindsay Austin, Ella Dabney, River Engel, Nicholas Hausman,
Hannah Howard, Jungmin Lee, Nicholas Patys, Holli Selmon,
Eliza Schumacher, Rey Winn

Props

Andie Earl, Cydney Leach, Stephanie Lopez, Elise Ramirez, Yina Qiao

Scenery

Evrithiki Bailey, Taryn Beard, Seth-Emmanuel Clarke, Will Emmert,
Nathan Hasbrook, Jacob Mayo, Noah Ochieng, Diego Roberts Buceta,
Bob Rowe, Sharon-Sue Trujillo, Adam Walker

Suor Angelica Nun Habits designed by Melanie Taylor Burgess,
provided by Seattle Opera

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Access is available for the physically disabled.

OPERA ORCHESTRA

*Members of the Meadows Symphony Orchestra
Nathan Howard, Interim Adjunct Conductor*

Violin 1

Dmitrii Tabala, *Concertmaster*
Mark Sanchez
Isabella Cowart
Luis Canosa
Duncan McVety

Violin 2

Maren Flechsig, *Principal*
Monica Limberg
Amelia Brencick
Morgan Kiser

Viola

Catherine Beck, *Principal*
Brandon Morrison
Simone LeFavour
Donovan De Jesus

Cello

Clare Choi, *Principal*
Rachel Ellis
Hua Huang
Yibo Guan

Bass

Israel MacDonald, *Principal*
Jake Dixon
Robert Kohler

Flute

Kendra Hamblin
Hannah Peterson

Oboe

Maggie Ng

Clarinet

Sam Fredrick
Brennan Coffey

Bassoon

Andy Brooks

Horn

Jose Diaz
Jackson Ward

Trumpet

Guillermo Villa
Caden Stehlik

Trombone

Vincent Tapia

Percussion

Torrance Buntyn
Patrick Griffin
Melody Tang

Harp

Catherine Ramsey

Banda for *Suor Angelica*

Organ

Yumi Hastings
Christopher Widomski

Piano

Kyle Dacon

Percussion

Max Whittaker

Southern Methodist University

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Laura Hearn - Assistant Director, Division of Music
David Brown - Assistant Director for Music Operations
Christopher Widomski - Coordinator of Graduate Assistants and
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Virginia Dupuy - Voice
Clifton Forbis - Chair of Voice
Christopher Mason - Interim Director of Choral Activities
Barbara Hill Moore - Voice
Camille King - Voice
Michael Scarola - Interim Director of Lyric Theatre
Jason Smith - Vocal Coach, Lyric Theatre
Leon Turner - Voice
Christopher Widomski - Conductor, Lyric Theatre

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Christopher Adkins – cello

Stephen Ahearn – clarinet

Sergei Babayan – piano

George Baker – organ

Aaron Boyd – violin

John Bryant – percussion

Scott Dettra – organ

Andrés Díaz – cello

Stefan Engels – organ

Donald Fabian – saxophone

Kevin Finamore – trumpet

Erin Hannigan – oboe

Barry Hearn – trombone

Willa Henigman – oboe

David Heyde – horn

Haley Hoops – horn

Chad Hoopes – violin

Ronald Houston – viola

Brian Jones – timpani

David Karp – piano

Alexander Kienle – horn

Diane Kitzman – violin

Drew Lang – percussion

Pierre Lapointe – viola

Jon Lee – percussion

Carol Leone – piano

Emily Levin – harp

Catharine Lysinger – piano

Darren McHenry – bass trombone

Jamal Mohamed – percussion

Naoko Nakamura – harp

George Nickson – percussion

Chris Oliver – trombone

Brian Perry – double bass

Andrey Ponochevny – piano

Gregory Raden – clarinet

James Richman – harpsichord

Jarrod Robertson – euphonium & tuba

James Romeo – piccolo

Ellen Rose – viola

Alexander Sitkovetsky – violin

Ed Smith – percussion

Ted Soluri – bassoon

Stuart Stephenson – trumpet

Barbara Sudweeks – viola

Kara Kirkendoll Welch – flute

SYNOPSIS

Suor Angelica

Banished to live in a convent after having an illegitimate child, Sister Angelica has not heard from her family in seven years. Finally a visitor is announced: it is Angelica's aunt, the Princess. She explains that when Angelica's parents died, she was made guardian of both her and her younger sister. The sister is to be married, and the Princess demands Angelica sign her share of the inheritance over to her. Crushed by her aunt's cruelty, Angelica asks about her little son. The Princess coldly tells her that he died two years earlier. The devastated Angelica signs the document, and the Princess leaves. Angelica grieves that her child died without her mother by her side ("Senza mamma"). Using her extensive knowledge of herbs and plants, Angelica mixes them into a potion, which she drinks. As the poison starts to take effect, Angelica realizes that she has committed a mortal sin. Praying for forgiveness, she dies with a vision of her son returning to her.

Gianni Schicchi

The greedy relatives of the wealthy Buoso Donati sit around his bedchamber waiting for him to die. When he finally does, they go on a mad rampage to find his will to see what they have inherited. When they finally find the will, they discover that Buoso has left his fortune to the church. Rinuccio suggests that Gianni Schicchi, a shrewd, self-made man and the father of his girlfriend, Lauretta, can help them. They reject his idea, but Rinuccio secretly gets word to Schicchi that he needs his help. Schicchi arrives with Lauretta. He quickly discovers that they have all been disinherited but, disgusted by the hypocrisy of the aristocratic family, he refuses to help them. He is ultimately persuaded by Lauretta to help, making it clear that she intends to marry Rinuccio ("O mio babbino caro"). Giving in, Schicchi reads the will and devises a plan to impersonate the dead man, dissolve the old will and write a new one. The relatives send for the lawyer and Schicchi, wearing Buoso's pajamas and night cap, dictates a new will, in which he leaves the greater part of the estate to his "dear friend Gianni Schicchi." The relatives are beside themselves and once the lawyer has left, go after Schicchi and steal what they can from the house. Schicchi turns to the audience and asks that if they have enjoyed the evening, they might forgive him for the prank he has played.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The operas of Giacomo Puccini have been an integral part of my life since I was young. Some quick background: my mother was a wonderful lyric soprano who had just been accepted into the Metropolitan Opera National Company when she found out she was pregnant, with me. This was the late 1950s (not coincidentally where I decided to place the action of our production of *Gianni Schicchi*), a time when you either had a family or a career. It's also no coincidence that since Puccini was my mom's favorite composer, I grew up hearing his music around the house all the time.

Fast forward some seventeen years. Somehow or another I convinced my dad, who owned an Italian restaurant in Brooklyn, NY (part of the family business started by my paternal grandparents) to let me start my own opera company in the restaurant. Yes, you read that right! An opera company in an Italian restaurant. But not just a few arias or duets. We put on fully staged operas. As you might imagine, Puccini's operas played a large part of the repertory we presented. *La Bohème*, *Madama Butterfly*, and *Tosca* were particular favorites that we presented during the ten years that we performed in the restaurant. But it was always my mom's dream to perform all three heroines in Puccini's *Il trittico*: Giorgetta in *Il tabarro*, the title role of *Suor Angelica* and Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi*.

To fully understand the complexity of not only singing all three roles in one night but also contend with the technical demands of each of the operas, you should know that more often than not only major opera companies perform all three operas in one evening. It is why you more frequently see only one or two of them on double bills with each other or other one-act operas (*Il tabarro* is frequently paired with Leoncavallo's *Pagliacci*, for instance). As a matter of fact, the Metropolitan Opera frequently used *Gianni Schicchi* as a curtain raiser to *Pagliacci*, *Hansel and Gretel*, and of all things, Richard Strauss' *Salome* and *Elektra*! It's only in recent years that the three operas have started to come back together as Puccini originally intended. It should also be noted that very few sopranos have taken on the challenge of singing these three very different roles in one night. Renata Scotto, Teresa Stratas, Beverly Sills (for one performance only), and more recently, Catherine Malfitano, Patricia Racette, Amarilli Nizza, and Asmik Grigorian, are a few of the singers who have done so onstage. Italian sopranos Renata Tebaldi and Mirella Freni also sang all three roles but only in the recording studio. But, back to Brooklyn.

It was very special creating a production of all three operas for my mom and it was the first time that this 20-something-year-old kid had the opportunity to direct these pieces. This will be my fifth production of *Gianni*

Schicchi but only my second time directing *Suor Angelica*. I have yet to return to *Il tabarro*. Hopefully that will happen one day soon.

Fast forward again, this time to 2023. When I was asked to be the Interim Director of the Meadows Lyric Theatre this past May, one of my first tasks was to decide on which opera we should do this semester. As I began the process, I set a few guidelines for myself. First, and perhaps most importantly, I wanted to make sure that the production would include every student in the MLT program. Next, I wanted to find a piece that would challenge them both as singers and as actors. Lastly, I wanted to do an opera in a foreign language, as it is such an important part of a young singers' training. When I realized that it was the 100th Anniversary of the death of Giacomo Puccini, things quickly fell into place. *Suor Angelica & Gianni Schicchi* would not only allow every student in the program to be in the opera this year (there are some 30 named characters between the two pieces and most of the roles are double cast), but they would all have their moments to shine onstage. I feel privileged to have been able to create these two wonderful operas with all of them.

To be honest, this was all a little overwhelming for my first full show here at SMU. But I have been incredibly fortunate to be surrounded by a team of people who know this school and theatre intimately, making my job that much easier. Dawn, Melissa, Teila, Justin, Pie, Brandon and the rest of the production staff, thank you all for your tireless hours of work behind-the-scenes. And then there is the stage management team led by SMU Head of Stage Management, Brad Cassil and his 30-plus years of experience. I am also extremely grateful to have had my dear friend and colleague Chris Rynne by my side to create the sets and lighting for this production. And last, but not least, April Hahn for her fantastic costume designs and Nicole Alvarez for her expertise in designing the wonderful hair, wigs and makeup for this production.

On the musical side of things, what a joy it has been to reconnect with Maestro William Lumpkin again after twenty years. We are so fortunate to have his vast operatic knowledge and expertise in guiding the students and our incredible orchestra through these challenging scores. Endless thanks to Chris Widsomski, whose institutional knowledge of this program has guided me through the creation of this production, as well as Jason Smith who, along with Chris, spent hours teaching the students their music months before we ever stepped into a rehearsal room.

A special thank you to Dr. Thomas Keck for his sage advice and endless support throughout the process. To the esteemed voice faculty here at SMU, thank you for the dedication you have shown in helping prepare the students for the rigors of a professional career. Not only have you become trusted colleagues and mentors, but also wonderful new friends. Lastly, to

all the talented and hardworking young artists in our shows, I wish you great success tonight and in all your future endeavors. I can't wait to see where your journeys take you.

I hope that you will enjoy these works as much as we have had in creating them for you. With that, as our school slogan says, Pony Up!

Michael Scarola
Interim Director of Meadows Lyric Theatre, Visiting Professor of Practice

BACKGROUND NOTE

Originally premiered by the Metropolitan Opera in 1918 as two-thirds of *Il trittico* (*The Triptych*), *Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi* represent some of Giacomo Puccini's most emblematic and moving writing. Puccini initially conceived of the idea of a trio of one-act operas sometime around 1904, but between the lack of attractive subjects and resistance from his publisher, Casa Ricordi, it was not until 1916 that he completed the first of the three that would become *Il trittico*, *Il tabarro* (*The Cloak*). In the next two years he completed *Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi*. After originally planning to reference each of the three parts of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Puccini only drew from *Inferno* for *Gianni Schicchi*. Despite the explicit connection between only one of the operas and Dante's epic poem, there is a parallel in the affective arc from darkness to light in both the *Divine Comedy* and *Il trittico*.

Since the double bill performance lacks the brutal verismo of *Il tabarro*, we get more of a contrast than a true arc. *Suor Angelica* is replete with sentimentality. It begins almost idyllic and pastoral, depicting a tranquil scene from a convent that very well may have been based on a scene Puccini witnessed when visiting his sister, then Mother Superior of a cloistered order at the Convent of Vicopelago. Throughout the first part of the opera, there are frequent musical representations of nature such as a piccolo bird call or the high winds alternating with harp and triangle in eighth-note chords to suggest the flow of water in a fountain. The serenity is wholly disrupted by the arrival of the Princess, Angelica's aunt, who is introduced by a jagged, tonally ambiguous passage. After seven years of silence, Angelica has finally had contact from her family, and what she learns compels her to sing one of Puccini's most beloved arias, "Senza mamma." This climax of the opera is defined by desperation and anguish.

Gianni Schicchi on the other hand is a comic opera through and through. With its roots in the Italian tradition of *commedia dell'arte*, the one-act opera is truly an ensemble drama. With the exception of the eminently popular "O mio babbino caro" at the midpoint of the opera, *Gianni Schicchi* is almost non-stop action. From one humorous beat to the next, it is like the final presto of a three-movement symphony. It takes hold of you and doesn't let go until the very end, by which point you are out of breath from laughing. While the opera is through-composed, aiding the sense of constant motion, it is held together by several motifs that Puccini threads throughout the opera. From the very beginning, Puccini uses a sighing theme to expose the hypocrisy of the relatives. The theme starts out perky and rhythmic and quickly becomes dirge-like as the relatives shed their crocodile tears, but it just as easily returns to its original form as the relatives frantically search for Buoso's will. Another motif to spot is the four-note theme first introduced by Rinuccio, when he sings Gianni Schicchi's name. It can be heard again in the bassoon right before Schicchi's entrance. Rinuccio also is the first to give us the most iconic melody of the opera in the second part of his solo extolling the virtues of Florence. Puccini later fleshes it out in "O mio babbino caro," which remains one of his most well-known and most excerpted arias, made even more famous when it was featured prominently in the 1985 Merchant/Ivory film "A Room with a View".

Throughout the performance, you will find yourselves immersed in a profound musical and emotional tapestry woven by Giacomo Puccini. *Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi* are exquisite examples of Puccini's ability to capture the essence of human experience through contrasting lenses of tragedy and comedy.

Despite being conceived as part of a larger masterpiece, *Il trittico*, these two operas stand as individual gems, each revealing a distinct facet of Puccini's genius. In experiencing their performance, we reflect on the depth of Puccini's artistry, spanning the spectrum from the depths of despair to the heights of laughter. This year being the centennial of Puccini's death showcases how well these two operas serve as a testament to the enduring power of opera to illuminate the human experience with all its complexities and contradictions.

David Womack

BIOGRAPHIES

MICHAEL SCAROLA

Stage Director

A native of New York City, Michael Scarola joins SMU this year as Visiting Professor of Practice and Interim Director of Meadows Lyric Theatre. He recently returned to Cincinnati Opera to assist on *The Pirates of Penzance* and joined the directing staff of Seattle Opera to work on their new production of *Tristan und Isolde*. He has also been a member of directing staff of The Metropolitan Opera during which time he worked on such varied operas as *The Ghosts of Versailles*, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Andrea Chénier* (PBS Telecast with Luciano Pavarotti, conducted by James Levine and released on DVD by Decca) and the Met Premieres of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *La Cenerentola* (PBS Telecast with Cecilia Bartoli). He has also been on the directing staffs of Lyric Opera of Chicago, Los Angeles Opera and New York City Opera.

Mr. Scarola has been privileged to collaborate with such artists as Renée Fleming, Sondra Radvanovsky, Karita Mattila, Christine Goerke, Angela Meade, Nadine Sierra, Pretty Yende, Marilyn Horne, Stephanie Blythe, Jaime Barton, Carlo Bergonzi, Plácido Domingo, Lawrence Brownlee, Stephen Costello, Leo Nucci, Sherrill Milnes, Hermann Prey, Bryn Terfel, Thomas Hampson, Quinn Kelsey, Nathan Gunn, Will Liverman, Nicolai Ghiaurov, James Morris, René Pape, Paul Plishka, Ryan Speedo Green, and many others.

He has worked with such prestigious opera companies as The Dallas Opera, Opera Company of Philadelphia, Santa Fe Opera, Sarasota Opera, Cabrillo Music Festival with Marin Alsop conducting, Florida Grand Opera, Opera Pacific, Hollywood Bowl, Michigan Opera Theatre, Arizona Opera, Madison Opera, Utah Opera, Boston Pops, Indianapolis Opera, Virginia Opera, New Orleans Opera, Palm Beach Opera, Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, L'Opéra Français de New York, and Opera Orchestra of New York at Carnegie Hall.

Mr. Scarola directed Bernstein's *Mass* for the Dallas Symphony Orchestra in commemoration of the 40th Anniversary of the John F. Kennedy assassination, as well as for the final performances of Keith Lockhart's tenure as Music Director of the Utah Symphony.

In May of 2006 Mr. Scarola had the honor of working with Emmy Award-winning Partisan Pictures in its filming of a feature documentary on the story of Raphael Schächter and his performances of Verdi's *Messa da Requiem* in the concentration camp of Terezín, near Prague in the Czech

Republic. As well as his role as Music Consultant to the project, he was instrumental in the success of capturing this tribute performance of author and conductor Murry Sidlin's *Defiant Requiem* - a feature of the 2006 Prague Spring International Music Festival - as the on-set camera director overseeing the movements of five cameras. The Emmy-Nominated film was shown as part of the prestigious DocuWeeks Film Festival in New York City and Los Angeles. It has aired on PBS and was released on DVD.

In addition to his opera work, he has had the privilege of working with some of the top Broadway stars of our time, including Kelli O'Hara, Lisa Vroman, Victoria Clark, Norm Lewis, and Jason Danieley.

As an advocate for working with young professionals, Mr. Scarola has turned his attention to working with students from all over the world. He recently directed productions for the Academy of Vocal Arts and DePauw University Opera. In the past few years, he has developed a close relationship with New York University and the Steinhardt School of Music Program in Vocal Performance where he is Adjunct Faculty. Other young artists and university programs that he has worked with include the Tanglewood Festival Fellows, Opera Institute of Boston University, Florida Grand Opera Young Artists Program, Cincinnati Opera Young Artists Program, Israel Vocal Arts Institute in Tel Aviv, La Musica Lirica, and was Visiting Guest Director of Opera at the University of Utah and Catholic University in Washington, DC. His production of Jonathan Dove's *The Enchanted Pig* for the Crane School of Music, SUNY Potsdam, recently tied for first place in the Division I category in the National Opera Association's 2022-23 Opera Production Competition.

This past summer, Mr. Scarola joined the faculty of Opera Lucca in Italy to direct a new production of *Gianni Schicchi* as well as giving master classes and directing their scenes programs. He then returned for his fifth summer to lecture and teach with the prestigious Summer Intensive Program at NYU. Future engagements include returning to Opera Lucca and La Musica Lirica in Novafeltria, Italy, this summer.

WILLIAM LUMPKIN

Music Director/Conductor

Maestro William Lumpkin's extensive repertoire and career have led to engagements with Opera Theatre of St. Louis and Boston Lyric Opera, having previously served on the music staff for Los Angeles Opera, Aspen Opera Theatre, and Wolf Trap Opera. Additionally, Maestro Lumpkin led performances of the Mary Zimmerman production of Philip Glass's *Galileo Galilei* as part of the Brooklyn Academy of Music's New Wave Festival, having previously conducted world premiere performances at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago.

Most recently, Mr. Lumpkin conducted performances of *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at Opera Grand Rapids with members of the Grand Rapids Symphony in a production directed by Eve Summer. Mr. Lumpkin conducted the American premiere of Jonathan Dove's *Flight* with Opera Theatre of St. Louis and again for Boston Lyric Opera, which Opera News praised, stating "Dove's impressive score was conducted wonderfully by another veteran of the Saint Louis production, William Lumpkin." Additional credits at St. Louis include *La Bohème*, *The Magic Flute*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and *Hansel and Gretel*. He also joined Boston Lyric Opera to conduct *Così fan tutte*. Of this production, Opera News stated "Lumpkin kept his players and singers under firm control, at the same time allowing them sufficient liberty to bring out nuances in their performances," and the Boston Globe noted "His work had brio, style, and heart, and the orchestra played beautifully for him."

Maestro Lumpkin is an Associate Professor of Music and the Artistic Director and Conductor for the Opera Institute at Boston University, where he has conducted over 40 opera productions at the Huntington Theatre, the Emerson Cutler Majestic, the Paramount Theatre, and at the newly constructed Booth Theatre at Boston University. Highlights include a co-production with Glimmerglass Opera of E. Loren Meeker's production of Janacek's *The Cunning Little Vixen*, a co-commission with New York City Opera of Tobias Picker's chamber version of his opera *Dolores Claiborne*, and a concert version of *Vanessa* with Boston University alum Lauren Flanigan. Most recently, he conducted productions of *Alcina* and *Little Women*, which he will lead again at the Harrower Summer Opera Workshop in 2024. He has also appeared as guest conductor at the Jacob School of Music at Indiana University and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

As a pianist, Mr. Lumpkin collaborated with Juliana Gondek recording Roger Bourland's *Four Quartets of Songs and Arias* for Navona Records.

A native of Lewisburg, PA, Mr. Lumpkin holds a BM from the Eastman School of Music, an MM in Conducting from UCSB, and a D.M.A. from the University of Southern California.

CHRISTOPHER WIDOMSKI

Associate Conductor

Christopher Widomski has been a conductor of musical theatre, operetta and opera for the past 20 years in New York and Texas. He has been a musician in pit orchestras for over 100 productions including the NETWORKS Presentations National Tour of *Shrek, The Musical*. He has been a conductor for the Meadows Lyric Theatre program since 2017, working closely with Hank Hammett and Jason Smith on Opera-Free-For-All and other performances. He specializes in performance practices of American musical theatre and operetta both on the stage and in the pit orchestra, conducting techniques for the theatre, “Pops” conducting, and the symphonic music of Joseph Jongen.

A native of the Utica, NY area, he holds master’s degrees from SMU in Organ Performance and Instrumental Conducting, a student of Larry Palmer and Jack Delaney. He has also worked with Paul Phillips and Pamela Elrod-Huffman. He earned a Bachelor of Music Education degree from The Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam in Potsdam, NY. In addition to his duties with the Division of Music at Meadows, he is the Director of Music and Liturgy at Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church in Rockwall, TX.

CHRIS RYNNE

Set and Lighting Designer

Chris Rynne is a lighting and scenery designer of theatre, opera, museum exhibitions, and architectural features. He has collaborated with Stage Director Michael Scarola on several production in Wisconsin, Michigan, and Indiana. His theatrical design work has been seen in productions around the country including The Old Globe, San Diego Rep, San Diego Opera, Cygnet Theatre, Pasadena Playhouse, Madison Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Michigan Opera Theatre, Hartford Stage, Geffen Playhouse, Laguna Playhouse, Berkeley Rep and Off- Broadway. He has been responsible for lighting numerous independent touring theatrical productions that have played around the United States as well as in London, Paris, and Tel Aviv. In the realm of education, Mr. Rynne has served as professor of lighting design for University of California, San Diego Department of Theatre as well as conducted special lighting design lectures and workshops with primary, secondary, and collegiate organizations. Beyond his lighting and scenic design work in the performing arts realms, Chris also specifies theatrical, entertainment, and architectural lighting control systems for theatres, houses of worship, hospitality, theme parks, schools, museums, and archtainment features. He is a member of USA829. For more information, go to csrdesign.net.

APRIL HAHN

Costume Designer

April is currently a 2nd year graduate student earning her Master of Fine Art in Entertainment and Stage Design at Southern Methodist University. She holds a BA in Technical Theatre with an emphasis in Costume Design from Rider University. She is a freelance costume designer currently based in Dallas, TX. Selected costume design credits include “The French Play” (SMU), Amor Fati (Pegasus Contemporary Ballet), “Utility” (SMU), and “The Monstersongs” (Rider University). For more information, go to aprilhahn.com.

NICOLE ALVAREZ

Hair, Wig and Makeup Designer

Nicole Alvarez is a Dallas-based designer whose hair/wig/makeup and costume designs have been seen across the country on stage, in magazines, and in design campaigns. Selected design credits include: Broadway: *Fat Ham* (Assistant Hair/Wig/Makeup Design). Off-Broadway: *Fat Ham* (Assistant Hair/Wig/Makeup Design, The Public). Regional: *Lucha Teotl* (Costume Design, The Goodman), *Idomeneo* and *Bel Canto* (Hair/Wig/Makeup Design, Aspen Music Festival), *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Costume Design, Theatre Three), *Real Women Have Curves* and *The Wolves* (Hair/Wig/Makeup Design, Dallas Theater Center), *Electra* and *Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure* (Associate Hair/Wig/Makeup Design, Dallas Theater Center), and *Lobster Alice* (Costume Design, Second Thought Theatre).

Akosua Adwini-Poku (The Princess in *Suor Angelica*), mezzo-soprano, is a first-year graduate student of Barbara Hill Moore. A proud Detroit native with Ghanaian heritage, Akosua has previously appeared as the Third Wood Nymph in SMU's 2023 scene presentation of *Rusalka*, Maddalena in Capitol City Opera's 2023 presentation of *Rigoletto*, Ernesto in Clayton State University's 2022 production of *Il mondo della luna*, and Soprano II soloist in the Cobb Summer Singers performance of Mozart's *Great Mass in C Minor*. In 2021, Akosua was inducted into the Delta Psi chapter of Mu Phi Epsilon, an international professional music fraternity, and received the Foundation's 2022 Sara Eikenberry Voice Undergraduate Scholarship for mezzo-sopranos.

Lindsey Austin (Suor Genovieffa in *Suor Angelica*), soprano, is a sophomore from Houston. She is studying with Virginia Dupuy and pursuing a degree in Music. Lindsey has previously performed the roles of Susanna in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* and Clorinda in Rossini's *La Cenerentola* for SMU's Opera Scenes Programs. She also performed at SMU's Toas campus this past summer with *Broadway Anthems*. Lindsey is excited to be making her SMU opera debut and would like to thank her family, friends, and teachers for all of the love and support that helped her get to where she is today.

Evritiki Bailey (The Monitor in *Suor Angelica*) is a soprano pursuing her bachelors in Vocal Performance at SMU, under the instruction of Clifton Forbis. She is a Dallas native, and graduated from Interlochen Arts Academy where she continued her collegiate studies at Indiana Universities Jacob's School of Music before transferring to the Meadows School of the Arts. Her performance background includes her opera debut at Indiana University in *Die Zauberflöte*, as well several opera scenes in the Opera Lucca Young Artist Program. She would like to thank her friends and family for all of their support, as well as the incredible faculty and production team for all of their hard work and dedication towards this double-bill.

Sara Barkouras (Suor Osmina in *Suor Angelica*), lyric soprano, is a junior double-major graduating early in December. She studies voice and corporate communication and public affairs with a nonprofit and arts leadership specialization. Hailing from Newport Beach, CA, she is a student of Professor Camille King. Sara recently attended the Brancaleoni International Music Festival where she performed in the chorus of *Le nozze di Figaro* and as Maria from *West Side Story*. Other notable roles include First Spirit (*Die Zauberflöte*) and chorus in Lyric Opera of Orange County's *The Fairy Queen*. She would like to thank her friends, family, and professors for their steadfast support.

Taryn Beard (The Abbess in *Suor Angelica*) is a senior Music Education major from Houston, TX. She is currently studying voice with Barbara Hill Moore. This is her second time performing with Meadows Lyric Theatre at SMU, having sung the role of Bianca in last year's production of Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*.

Leela Bharath (The Princess in *Suor Angelica*) is a sophomore, double majoring in Music and Business from Plano, TX. She is currently studying voice under the tutelage of Professor Camille King and is excited to be making her SMU opera debut in Puccini's *Suor Angelica* as La Zia Principessa. Leela previously appeared in scenes programs at SMU as Fiordiligi in Mozart's *Così fan tutte* and Ma Moss in Copland's *The Tender Land*. Leela would like to thank her family, friends, colleagues, professors, and others who have supported her through her journey as a vocalist, and she looks forward to performing again in the future.

J'von Brown (title role in *Gianni Schicchi*), baritone, is a Florida native who began his studies as a vocalist in 2016, finding a passion for music during his freshman year of college after a football injury. J'Von graduated from New World School of the Arts where he was the winner of the 2020 Grady-Rayam Negro Spiritual Competition. As an alum, J'Von was the winner and recipient of the 2021 "Turn Up the Volume" Grant competition. J'Von is now a first-year graduate student at SMU where he studies with Professor Barbara Hill Moore. Both on and off the stage, he seeks to encourage young artists to dream and live through their God-given gifts.

Karina Buruca-Kunda (Zita in *Gianni Schicchi*) - Salvadoran-American mezzo-soprano Karina Buruca-Kunda is a visiting student from Dallas, TX in the studio of Virginia Dupuy. She earned her bachelor's degree in music education from Dallas Baptist University and both a master's degree and performer's diploma in voice performance from SMU. She has previously appeared in SMU's *The Crucible*, the Stepmother in *The True Story of Cinderella*, and the title role in *The Rape of Lucretia*. She is currently a singer with The Dallas Opera Chorus as well as The Dallas Opera Education Outreach. She would like to thank her family, friends, and teachers for their support.

Andrés Carbonell (Assistant Stage Manager) is a B.F.A. Theatre Major (Acting Concentration) at SMU. He was born in Maracay, Venezuela and has worked in Miami, Houston, and now Dallas. Most currently, Andrés has worked in Kitchen Dog's production of *Safe at Home* and is currently working on SMU's production of *References to Salvador Dalí Make Me Hot*. He describes assistant stage-managing SMU's 2024 double bill as a pleasure with an incredible cast and crew.

Brad Cassil (Production Stage Manager) comes to SMU with over 30 years of experience as a professional stage manager. He has stage managed productions all over the world. He has also worked as a producer, production coordinator and company manager in theatre, television, dance, business theatre, corporate and special events. His resume includes such events as the Olympics, Super Bowl, Screen Actors Guild Awards, Academy Awards and Grammy Awards. He has worked with such artists as N'Sync, Celine Dion, Ben Vereen, Michael Peters, Angela Lansbury and Debbie Reynolds. Regionally, he has worked at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the Orlando International Fringe Festival, Dallas Theater Center, Shakespeare Festival of Dallas, ACT, SRT and Sacramento City Actor's Theatre. In addition, he owns a production staffing company in Dallas and often uses current and former students as production assistants for large corporate events. Over the years, he has taken several upper-class stage management students to assist him on professional shows all around the country. Brad holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts with honors from California Institute of the Arts. He is a member of Actor's Equity Association (AEA), the professional union for actors and stage managers. Brad teaches undergraduate courses in stage management as well as supervising-coordinating stage management for the Division of Theatre.

Seth-Emmanuel Clarke (Simone in *Gianni Schicchi*), bass-baritone, is a local resident of Dallas, TX, and is pursuing a Performance Diploma in Voice Performance at SMU with Professor Barbara Hill Moore. He is in his third season as an Education Artist at The Dallas Opera where he is currently performing the role of Vertigo in Offenbach's *Pépito*. Most recently, Seth was a vocalist for the 2024 Hart Institute for Women Conductors Showcase Concert in which he sang the role of Figaro in excerpts from Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*.

Lexi Cook (La Ciesca in *Gianni Schicchi*), a soprano in her junior year in the Vocal Performance major at SMU, is thrilled to be making her opera debut! She has previously performed in SMU opera scenes programs and musical theater shows, performing in roles from Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro* to Hunyak in *Chicago*. A California native, Lexi sincerely thanks her family for their unending support and her friends and loved ones who have welcomed her to Texas with open arms.

Christopher Curcuruto (Guest Artist, title role in *Gianni Schicchi*) - Praised for his "satisfyingly rich" and "resonant" tone, professional Italian-Australian bass-baritone Christopher Curcuruto "simply owns the stage whenever he is on it." Christopher continues to enjoy an extensive performance career across the United States and internationally and is excited to be able to assist the talented voice students of SMU to bring this clever 1950's re-imagining of *Gianni Schicchi* to life. In addition to his professional career as a singer, Christopher currently serves as Director of

Opera, Instructor of Vocal Pedagogy, and Applied Lesson Teacher at the University of Texas at Arlington and is a Doctoral Candidate at the University of North Texas.

Ella Dabney (Lay-Sister in *Suor Angelica*) - Originally from Manhattan Beach, CA, Ella is a soprano studying in the studio of Barbara Hill Moore. She is double majoring in Vocal Performance and Health and Society on the Pre-Health track with plans to pursue otolaryngology. Ella is thrilled to perform in this Puccini classic. She thanks her professors, family, and friends for their support.

Kyle Dacon (Guccio in *Gianni Schicchi*) is a grad student in his final year at SMU getting a master's degree in piano performance in the studio of Cathy Lysinger. He enjoys singing in his free time and is excited to be part of an opera production for the first time.

Andie Earl (A Novice/Nursing Sister in *Suor Angelica*) is a sophomore Voice Performance major from Montclair, NJ. She is currently studying with Barbara Hill Moore at SMU. Andie is thrilled to be performing in *Suor Angelica*. Some of Andie's recent operatic roles in SMU's Opera Free for All's include Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel*, Barbarina in *Le nozze di Figaro*, and Papagena in *The Magic Flute*. She recently played Ado Annie in *Oklahoma!* for SMU, Rosie in *Sweet Charity* and the Old Sheep in *Charlotte's Web* at The Woodstock Playhouse. Andie would like to thank her family, professors, and colleagues who are her greatest supporters.

Will Emmert (Marco in *Gianni Schicchi*) is a junior from Arlington, TX, majoring in Vocal Performance with a minor in Arts and Nonprofit Leadership. Will is a student of Clifton Forbis and is excited to make his opera debut! SMU credits include Amos Hart in *Chicago*, and Will Parker in *Oklahoma!*, performed abroad as a part of the SMU-in-South Africa program. Many thanks to Prof. Mike and the entire voice faculty for challenging and inspiring me every day, and to my family and friends for never letting me take anything too seriously.

River Engel (Pinellino/Guccio in *Gianni Schicchi*) is a transfer student from Houston, TX in his first year at SMU. He is a student of Clifton Forbis. River has performed the roles of Mercury in *Orpheus in the Underworld* as well as First Sailor in *Dido and Aeneas* during the Lonestar College Kingwood summer opera in 2022. River thanks all of his former and current teachers for helping him develop into the musician and person he is today.

Robin Flatt (Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi*), soprano, hails from Talty, TX. A proud graduate of Richland College and Tarleton State University, he is a first-year graduate student at SMU studying with Professor Camille King. Performing highlights include Lucy in Menotti's *The Telephone*, soloing with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, and winning TSU's Concerto

Competition. He has been featured on jazz, Latin, and percussion concerts. He is thrilled to sing Laretta in *Gianni Schicchi* amongst such good company. On his days off, Robin enjoys taking long drives and studying arias his teacher has said “not yet” to.

Nathan Hasbrook (Marco in *Gianni Schicchi*) is a junior from Portland, OR, studying voice under Dr. Leon Turner as well as pursuing majors in mathematics and data science. Nathan is beyond excited to be making his SMU opera debut! He would like to extend a huge thank you to Prof. Mike, who has believed in us and pushed our performances beyond what we thought we were capable of, Chris and Jason, whose musical expertise made the show possible, as well as his family and friends whose support lets him give it his all on stage!

Nicholas Hausman (Maestro Spinelloccio in *Gianni Schicchi*) is a first-year graduate voice performance major from Orefield, PA in the studio of Clifton Forbis. Nick is excited to be a part of his first opera at SMU. Nick previously appeared with the Crane Opera Ensemble in an award-winning production of Jonathan Dove's *The Enchanted Pig* as well as roles in *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Dido and Aeneas*, and *Zazá*. He also sang in the Domenic J. Pellicciotti Opera Competition Prize workshops premiering the role of Billy O'Connor in *The Strangers* and Ensemble in *Computing Venus*. Nick would like to thank all his teachers who have helped him through his journey and looks forward to performing.

Hannah Howard (First Tourière in *Suor Angelica*) is a sophomore Vocal Performance and German major from Dallas, TX. They study voice under Professor Camille King and are so excited to be making their opera debut in *Suor Angelica*! Hannah has been in several Meadows Opera Scenes Programs and last appeared as The Sandman in Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*. They are also the current President of SMU's Mixed Acapella Choir, Hilltop Singers. Hannah would like to thank Professor King and Professor Mike for everything as well as their incredible family and friends, without whom this would not be possible.

Jordan Lage (Nella in *Gianni Schicchi*), soprano, is a freshman from Dallas, TX, pursuing degrees in Voice Performance and Music Education studying under Virginia Dupuy. She is super excited to be performing in her first SMU opera! She has previously performed in Meadows Lyric Theatre opera scenes programs this fall as Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel*. She has also competed in both NATS and the Schmidt Vocal Institute Competition. She is currently a chorister at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Dallas. She would like to thank her family and professors their endless support! Pony up!

Cydney Leach (The Abbess in *Suor Angelica*) is a freshman from Frisco, TX, pursuing a degree in Music Education. Previously, she has led the Griffin Middle School Treble Choir through a UNT Opera concert of *Otello*, and has performed with various other students across the Dallas Metroplex in collaboration with the Jason Max Ferdinand Singers. She is thrilled to be performing in her first opera! She is a student of Clifton Forbis and would like to thank her teachers, family, and friends for their support!

Jungmin Lee (Sour Genovieffa in *Suor Angelica*) is a soprano who graduated with honors from Sookmyung Women's University in Seoul, South Korea, where she won awards for achieving academic excellence. Currently, she is pursuing further studies at SMU in the studio of Professor Barbara Hill Moore.

Stephanie Lopez (Lay-Sister in *Suor Angelica*) is a first-year undergraduate student pursuing a degree in business and Vocal Performance studying with Barbara Hill Moore. Born and raised in New York, Stephanie studied at The Manhattan School of Music since age 11. In 2023, she won First Place New York State NATS Classical Voice Competition. Here at SMU, Stephanie is involved in SMU's Female Acapella group The Belletones, Earth First, and has recently been invited by the American Heart Association to take part in the Women of Impact Team. Stephanie wishes to thank her parents who always believed in her and pushed her to be the best she can possibly be!

Jacob Mayo (Betto di Signa in *Gianni Schicchi*) is a freshman studying for a vocal performance degree hails from Fargo, North Dakota. In high school, he was a part of many theater productions, but perhaps none as professional as this. His opera debut is a great excitement to the young man, as he's been working to get to this moment ever since he set foot in SMU.

Cole McIlquham (Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi*) is currently pursuing a Performer's Diploma at SMU where he studies with Clifton Forbis. Recently, he was named a winner of the Meadows Concerto Competition and a finalist in the Orpheus Vocal Competition. Last summer, Cole was a Lehrer Voice Fellow at Music Academy of the West where he sang Parpignol in Puccini's *La Bohème*. This summer, he will return to Music Academy to sing Le Remendado in Bizet's *Carmen*. Cole is a recent graduate of Wichita State University where he won the vocal division of the Naftzger Concerto Competition and received outstanding recognition in the Shirley Rabb Winston Classical Voice Competition. While in Wichita, Cole made his professional debut with Wichita Grand Opera as Sam Polk in Carlisle Floyd's *Susannah* alongside mentors Alan Held and Samuel Ramey.

Wayne Gasheum Mkhize (Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi*), a distinguished South African tenor, excels in opera and vocal performance. A Foote Scholar, he is pursuing the PD Program at SMU. Wayne is a part-time Voice Lecturer at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. With The Dallas Opera Outreach Ensemble, he has performed the role of Nemorino in Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore* and has had the privilege of collaborating in concert with such luminaries as baritone Thomas Hampson. As a versatile guest soloist, Wayne's performances with the Soweto Choral Festival highlight his musical diversity. His oratorio repertoire includes performances in Haydn's *The Creation* at Durban Playhouse Opera Theatre.

Sarah E. Navy (title role in *Suor Angelica*), soprano, is a native of Houston, TX. Sarah is pursuing a Master of Music for Voice Performance and is studying with Professor Barbara Hill Moore. Sarah has recently performed the role of Bianca in Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* and is reprising the title role of *Suor Angelica* by Puccini. She is now in her second season as an Education Outreach Artist with The Dallas Opera. When Sarah is not singing opera, she enjoys teaching and leading worship opportunities in her church. The support from her family, professors, friends, and mentors is insurmountable and she is more than appreciative.

Avuya Ngcaweni (title role in *Suor Angelica*) is a soprano from Durban, South Africa. She started singing Opera/Choral Music in High School. She is in the studio of Barbara Hill Moore, and has finished her Master's Degree and Performance Diploma at SMU. While Avuya was part of the Dallas Opera Education Program, she won the audience prize at MIO opera Competition. In the future, she is looking forward to more opportunities to be on stage and entering more vocal competitions.

Noah Ocheing (Pinellino in *Gianni Schicchi*), baritone, is a first-year vocal music education student from Arlington, TX. He currently studies with Clifton Forbis, and is excited to debut in the Meadows production of *Gianni Schicchi*. Noah has previously performed in several ensembles, from musical theater productions like *SpongeBob*, *The Musical*, and conducting choirs at several of his high school's concerts. Noah extends his gratitude and thanks to Professor Mike Scarola, Chris Widomski, Jason Smith, Clifton Forbis, and all the amazing musicians he works with in the Meadows music program!

Adriana Palomo (Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi*) is a Dallas native and is working towards her Master of Music in Voice Performance at SMU, in the studio of Professor Barbara Hill Moore. Adriana received her Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance from SMU in May 2022. During her undergraduate career, she performed the role of Cinderella in *The True Story of Cinderella* by Warren Martin and the role of Sara in Adam Gorb's *The Path to Heaven*. Adriana is currently teaching Voice at SMU and is a

choral scholar at Preston Hollow Church. She would like to thank everyone who has helped her through her journey.

Nicholas Patys (Gherardo in *Gianni Schicchi*) is a first year Master's student from Plano, TX. Currently studying with Clifton Forbis at SMU, Nicholas received his BA in Vocal Performance from Oklahoma City University in 2022 and taught voice privately in the DFW public schools during his gap year. Previous credits include Prunier in *La Rondine* at Opera in the Ozarks, Gastone and Giuseppe in *La Traviata* at Bayview Music Festival, and Adam in *Children of Eden* at Oklahoma City University. He would like to thank his family and friends for all the support along the way, and the SMU faculty for giving him this opportunity!

Beckett Potter (Gheradino in *Gianni Schicchi*) is a young and passionate student whose talents are reflected in his love for the performing arts. Beckett is in his seventh year at SMU's Piano Preparatory Department under Kevin Gunter. Through the Greater Dallas Choral Society and Greater Dallas Children's Chorus, he performed at the world-class Morton Meyerson Symphony Center. Beckett also performed at the Winspear Opera House in The Dallas Opera productions of *Hansel and Gretel* and *Tosca* as well as a supernumerary in *Das Rheingold*. Beckett is interested in the creative process and expanding his fluency in the performing arts with exposure to new and exciting roles and opportunities.

Yina Qiao (Suor Dolcina in *Suor Angelica*) is a junior spring transfer student from Manhattan School of Music originally from China. In 2023, she made her debut at the Mediterranean Opera Studio and Festival in Italy, portraying the title role in *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Her choral experience includes participation in the Aspen Music Festival and Seraphic Fire Choral Institute. She expresses deep gratitude to the opera director Michael Scarola for the precious opportunity to perform in *Suor Angelica*. She also appreciates the strong support and assistance received from her voice professor, Camille King. She is also very thankful for the dedication of all the other members in the program.

Elise Ramirez (A Novice/Nursing Sister in *Suor Angelica*), soprano, is a junior from Richardson, TX. She is double majoring in Music Education and Vocal Performance and is in the studio of Virginia Dupuy. Elise is excited to make her SMU Meadows Lyric Theatre opera stage production debut! She has been in the Meadows Lyric Theatre ensemble since her freshman year, and has performed scenes from *The Magic Flute*, *La Cenerentola*, and *Fiddler on the Roof*. Elise is a part-time voice teacher. Her biggest passions are teaching music and singing. She wants to thank her family, friends, and teachers for their love and guidance through her musical journey!

Diego Roberts Buceta (Gherardo in *Gianni Schicchi*) is a first-year master's student from Seattle, WA. He is currently studying with Virginia Dupuy at SMU. In previous years, he has performed as Miles Zegner (*Proving Up*), Parpignol (*La Bohème*), and in the chorus of Detroit Opera's concert version of *Cavalleria Rusticana*. He would like to thank his family, friends, and teachers for supporting him on his journey through music!

Liv Robertson (Assistant Stage Manager) is a B.F.A. Theatre Major (Acting Concentration) at SMU. She was born in Connecticut and has studied acting in NYC and now Dallas. Liv has worked in the Regional Center for The Arts production of *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *The Learned Ladies*. She is thrilled to have the opportunity to work on this show as it has been such an amazing experience because of the plethora of knowledge it has opened up to her by working with such a wonderful cast and crew.

Bob Rowe (Simone in *Gianni Schicchi*), baritone, is a first-year graduate student who is studying vocal performance. He is from Garland, TX and is in the studio of Clifton Forbis. Bob is ecstatic to be cast in his first opera as Simone in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*. Last semester, he played Count Almaviva in *Le nozze di Figaro* and Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* in SMU's Mozart scenes performance. He would like to thank Maestro Lumpkin, Chris, Jason, Brian, Clifton, Camille, and Mike for helping him prepare for the role. He would also like to thank the stage and costume crew for all their hard work.

Eliza Schumacher (Suor Dolcina in *Suor Angelica*) is a sophomore vocal performance major from Houston, TX, in the studio of Virginia Dupuy. Eliza previously appeared in multiple performances of *Broadway Anthems* in SMU-in-Taos, and venues throughout the Dallas area. She also performed "Silver Bells" as a solo in SMU's annual celebration of lights. She would like to thank her mother and father for their consistent love and support, and her close friends for uplifting and encouraging her throughout the long rehearsals leading up to the show.

Holli Selmon (Mistress of the Novices in *Suor Angelica*) is a junior Voice Performance and Music Education major from Dallas, TX, in the studio of Virginia Dupuy. Previously, Holli appeared in *The True Story of Cinderella* as the Wicked Stepmother and *Chicago* as Matron "Mama" Morton. She is also the group manager for Hilltop Singers, SMU's premier acapella ensemble. Holli would like to thank her mother, family, and friends for their love and support and is excited for future performance opportunities!

Sharon-Sue Trujillo (Second Tourière in *Suor Angelica*) is a freshman pursuing a degree in Music Education, studying voice under Dr. Leon Turner. She was involved in Meadows Lyric Theatre's opera scene performances and participated in NATS in the fall of 2023. She would like

to thank the Lord Jesus, her family, friends, and Dr. Turner for all of their support.

Adam Walker (Maestro Spinelloccio in *Gianni Schicchi*) is a voice major at SMU in his second semester as a junior. Adam is from Plano, TX and is currently studying under Dr. Leon Turner. He has previously performed the roles of Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* and The Baker in *Into the Woods* in this year's SMU Scenes Programs.

Kailyn Welch (Suor Chiara in *Suor Angelica*) is an undergraduate freshman majoring in vocal performance from Forney, TX. Kailyn is in the voice studio of Virginia Dupuy. This is Kailyn's first opera. She was Cinderella's Mother in *Into the Woods* in her sophomore year of high school and in *Shrek the Musical* as the Elf her junior year. Kailyn is very excited for this opportunity to show off the hard work of Meadows Lyric Theatre!

Jasmine Williams (La Ciesca in *Gianni Schicchi*), soprano, is a first-year graduate student studying vocal performance at SMU in the studio of Professor Barbara Hill Moore. Jasmine, is a Florida native who received her B.A in Music at Palm Beach Atlantic University and is committed to fostering an environment for other artists to find their sound. In the Fall of 2023, Jasmine won First Place in her division and won the Grady Harlan award for first place overall in the TEXOMA NATS Competition. In every performance Jasmine aspires to provide each individual with an experience of a lifetime while sharing her unique sound.

Rey Winn (Ser Amantio di Nicolao in *Gianni Schicchi*) is a bass-baritone undergrad from Garland, TX studying in their 3rd year in the studio of Clifton Forbis. They have previously performed the role of Collatinus in Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* with MLT. Other notable performances include Billy Flynn in *Chicago*, Jud Fry in *Oklahoma!* and as a soloist around the city of Dallas. They would like to thank every teacher and peer that has helped them along this journey and wishes for a bright performance future ahead.

Timothy Wright (Assistant Stage Manager) is currently a Sophomore at SMU, pursuing a BFA in Theatre (Acting track) with a Minor in Music. He's from Tyler, TX, where he graduated from TJC with an AA in Musical Theatre. Timothy loves Music & Acting simultaneously, studying both in hopes of a career in the Performing Arts. Timothy has portrayed characters from Opera, Musical Theatre, & straight plays so far in his training: Brother Jeremiah in *Something Rotten*, El Gallo in *The Fantasticks!*, & Bert in *Mary Poppins* to name a few. Timmy has loved Assistant Stage Managing *Suor Angelica* & *Gianni Schicchi*, as it combines all his loves for Music, Theatre, & Opera into a learning experience he won't soon forget!

Sophie Young (Nella in *Gianni Schicchi*), soprano, is a sophomore vocal performance major from Charlotte, North Carolina. She is currently studying voice with Professor Camille King at SMU and is excited to make her opera debut with this production. She would like to thank her teachers, Professor Mike, and Professor King, for constantly pushing her to be a better performer, for her family, who has supported her throughout her entire journey, and for her friends, who have always believed in her even when she didn't believe in herself. She could not have done this without them!

SPECIAL THANKS

Will Emmert, Assistant Social Media Manager, Division of Music

Liudmila Georgievskaya, Adjunct Lecturer in Piano,
Chamber Music Coach and Coordinator of Accompanying

Lee Gleiser, Director of Audience Development

Nicholas Hausman, Teaching Assistant to Prof. Scarola

Nathan Howard, Adjunct Resident Conductor, Meadow Symphony Orchestra

Sara Romersberger, Associate Professor

Tyson V. Seale, Academic Technology Service Director

The Meadows Organ Studio for the Allen Organ

Michael McNicholas, DFW Percussion Rentals, LLC. for the Celeste

Meadows Ticket Office

Director of Audience Development, Lee Gleiser,
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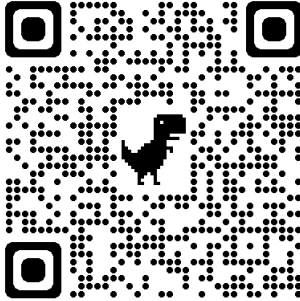
Makayla Alston, Elaine Aredo, Evangeline Bulick,
Arwen Caballero, Chyler Caldwell, Briana Camillus,
Matthew Garcia, Zachary Gould, Sophia Harris,
Rosemary (Rose) Hill, Haley Lopez, Shreenaya Prabu,
Denise Rivera, Karina Rodgerson, Caleb Rosse,
Isabella Salazar, Hannah Trahan, Aislyn Tully,
Melanie Verdi, Daunte Ware

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Upcoming Events at Meadows

Follow the QR link for the Calendar of Events



Meadows School of the Arts at Southern Methodist University
6101 Bishop Boulevard, Dallas, TX 75205