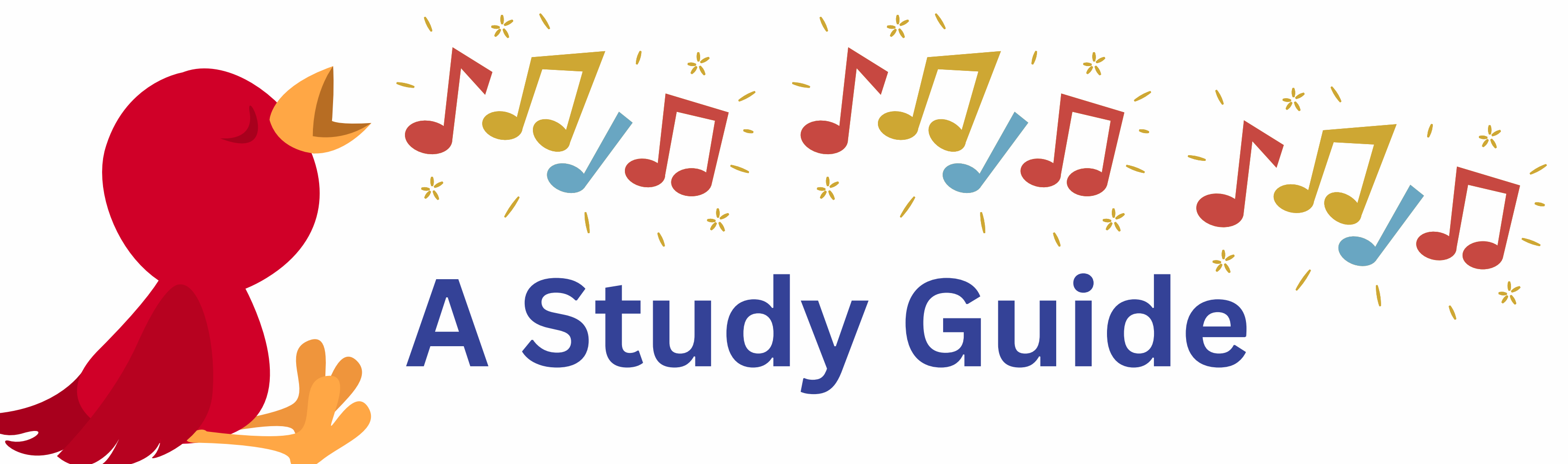




# THE RED SONGBIRD

Music by Zach Redler

Lyrics by Marquita Lister



A Study Guide

# GOING TO THE OPERA: WHAT TO EXPECT

An opera, like a play, is a dramatic form of theatre that includes scenery, props and costumes.



In opera, the actors are trained singers who sing their lines instead of speaking them.

Frequently an instrument or collection of instruments accompanies the singers.



Operas tell all sorts of stories - Some are tragedies, which are dramatic and sad, but many of them are comedies, which are funny!

The music in an opera always reflects the type of story that is being told.



Opera combines many things to make it a unique whole: the voice, instrumental music, the visual arts (costumes, scenery, lighting, and more) and DRAMA! This combination of elements transports you to a magical land!





# VOICE PARTS

**Soprano:** The highest singing voice, usually a female singer, but sometimes also a young boy. The soprano voice is often marked by her bright, sparkling sound. The soprano is often the heroine of the story. The soprano roles you will hear in these operas consist Francesca, Red Song Bird, and Despina the Fox.



**Mezzo-soprano** or **Mezzo:** Middle-range female voice. The sound is often warmer and richer than the soprano. Composers occasionally wrote male roles for mezzos. In these cases, the role is sung by a woman who is dressed in men's clothing. These roles are referred to as pants or "breeches" roles. The mezzo often portrays older female characters, such as mothers, villainesses, or servants. In this case, Mother and Rosina the Squirrel are mezzos.

**Contralto** or **Alto:** The lowest female singing voice. A true contralto is a very rare voice type, used for older female characters.

**Tenor:** The highest male singing voice in most operas. Like the soprano, the tenor is distinctive for their ability to deliver thrilling high notes. Tenors in opera frequently take the leading male role; they are said to always get the girl. A couple tenor roles you will hear in the opera are Bucky, Freddie the Frog, and Blue the Chipmunk.

**Baritone:** A middle-range male voice. The baritone is marked by the rich, warm, resonant quality of their voice. The baritone may portray a variety of characters spanning from the tenor's rival, husbands, fathers, villains, or even the hero himself. In *Red Song Bird*, Mr. Deer is a friendly baritone BUT in *3 Little Pigs*, the Big Bad Wolf is a villainous baritone. Chad the Turtle is also a baritone!

**Bass:** Pronounced "base," this is the lowest male singing voice. Bases do for low notes what sopranos do for high notes. Yet what makes basses so special isn't so much the depth of their notes, but the volume and strength with which they can sing them. The bass voice sometimes suggests wisdom in serious opera and older foolish characters in comic opera.

This List of Do's and Do Not's will help you, and those around you, enjoy this opera experience:

- **DO** get engaged with the story! Opera is a beautiful and entertaining art form.
- **DO** try to be on time. Latecomers disturb the rest of the audience and the performers on stage.
- **DO** turn off cell phones and all electronic devices. Devices going off during a performance can be distracting to performers and audience members alike.
- **DO NOT** take photos. Flash photography can be a distraction to the performers. That being said, performers are usually very friendly, and would be glad to take a picture with you after the performance if you ask nicely.
- **DO** Let the action on stage surround you. As an audience member, you are a very important part of the process taking place. Without you there is no show.
- **DO** applaud or shout Bravo (a fun, Italian word meaning 'well done') at the end of someone singing to show your enjoyment.
- **DO** laugh when something is funny!
- **Finally**, have fun and enjoy the show!!!!







# IMPORTANT TERMS

**Aria:** A solo piece written for one singer and focuses on the character's emotion

**Duet:** A longer musical passage performed by two singers. They may or may not sing together at the same time

**Chorus:** A group of singers, singing together, who can portray large groups such as townsfolk, servants, or even children

**Recitative:** A dialogue or narrative section where the music imitates the natural inflections of speech. In recitative, the sung text will imitate normal speech patterns

**Conductor:** The leader of the orchestra, sometimes called Maestro. This person leads all the musicians in the performance of an opera

**Orchestra:** The group of instrumentalists or musicians who, led by the conductor, accompany the singers

**Overture:** An orchestral introduction to an opera

**Director:** The individual in charge of creating an artistic vision, explaining their ideas to the singers, and making sure the story is being told

**Blocking:** The term used by performers and directors to describe where a performer should be on stage

**Composer:** A person who writes music

**Librettist:** A person who writes the text for an opera

**Falsetto:** A method of singing above the natural range of the male voice

**Coloratura:** Elaborate ornamentation of vocal music written using many fast notes and trills

**Vibrato:** A natural wavering of frequency (pitch) while singing a note. This is a trait of a trained singer's sound

**Opera:** A musical play in which all or most of the words are sung

**Synopsis:** A short summary of the opera's plot, or story

**Scenes:** Musical subdivisions of the opera which define the structure of the piece



# DYNAMICS

The range of sounds from soft to loud. All these terms come from Italian! The composer will use these words to describe how the music should be sung!

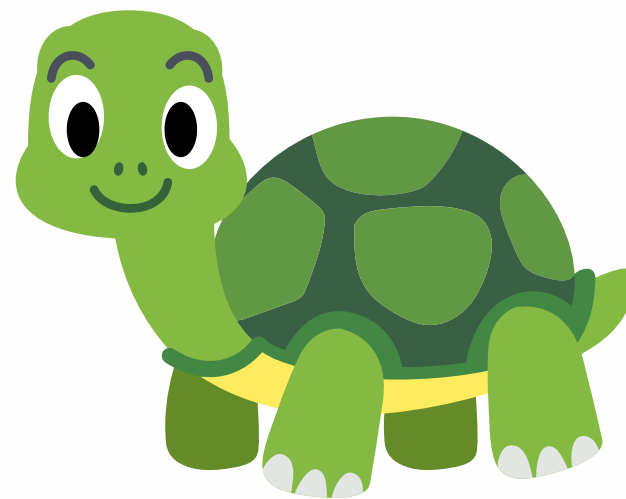
Pianississimo: very, very soft  
Pianissimo: very soft  
Piano: soft  
Mezzo piano: medium soft  
Mezzo forte: medium loud  
Forte: loud  
Fortissimo: very loud  
Fortississimo: very, very loud



# TEMPO

This means 'time' in Italian. The composer will use words to describe how fast or slow the music should be performed.

Presto: very fast  
Vivace: vivacious  
Allegro: joyful, quick, lively  
Moderato: not fast or slow  
Andante: rather slow, a "walking"  
Adagio: pace  
Lento: slow and expressive  
Largo: very slow  
Grave: very, very slow/dignified



# STAGE DIRECTIONS

Opera singers are required to sing AND act! In rehearsals, the director will tell the singers what they should be doing and where they should do it. To do this, they use special words. Long ago, many stages were slanted toward the audience or "raked." If you walked further away from the audience, or climbed the incline, you went "upstage." Moving down the incline towards the audience became "downstage." Even though stages are mostly flat today, directors and singers still use these same terms for moving away from or towards the audience. Similarly, the singer's left side is "stage left" and right side is "stage right." Take a look at the diagram in order to understand the different areas of the stage.

<b>Up Right</b>	<b>Upstage</b> The area of the stage farthest away from the audience.	<b>Up Left</b>
<b>Stage Right</b> The side of the stage to the Performers' right as they face the audience.	<b>Center Stage</b> The middle of the stage where much of the action takes place.	<b>Stage Left</b> The side of the stage to the Performers' left as they face the audience.
<b>Down Right</b>	<b>Downstage</b> The area of the stage closest to the audience.	<b>Down Left</b>





# THE STORY



Siblings Bucky and Francesca, with the help of their Mother, go on an outdoor adventure to find the Red Song Bird after hearing its beautiful singing. Once they reach the forest, the graceful Mr. Deer welcomes the family. Then, they meet Freddie the Frog, who has a dance party with all the animals and humans in the forest!

Next, they're introduced to Despina the Fox, Rosina the Squirrel, Blue the Chipmunk, and Chad the Turtle. The family has still not found the Red Song Bird and decide to go home since nighttime is coming. As they're leaving, Francesca hears the Red Song Bird singing and stops her family. They run back into the forest and finally meet the Red Song Bird, who sings a special song just for them! Afterwards, Red Song Bird says goodbye and flies away.

After having the most magical, musical day they ever could have imagined, Francesca, Bucky, and Mother walk home in the moonlight as the animals sing for them to "Come back soon!"







# ZACH REDLER COMPOSER



is a music theater composer whose work has been performed in concert halls, opera houses and theaters around the world. In 2014, the American Theatre Wing awarded Zach and Sara Cooper the Jonathan Larson Grant for their work together (*The Memory Show*, *Loving Leo*, *Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner*, and *WINDOWS*).

Other favorite theater compositions include: *Movin' Up In The World* (Jerre Dye), *A Song for Susan Smith* (Mark Campbell), *Emily Sutton* (Jerre Dye), and, their American Prize award winning piece, *The Falling and The Rising* (libretto by Jerre Dye).

Currently, Zach is working on a number of projects across various genres from children's music and jazz to opera and musical theater. Zach also works as a music copyist, music director, pianist, and musicologist working with orchestras and Broadway shows around the world. Additionally, Zach has served on the faculties of New York University, Manhattan School of Music, and Molloy College; mentors young opera writers for Seattle Opera's creation lab; teaches music, yoga, and meditation; loves cooking plant based meals for their family; and runs ultramarathons when time allows. Love to their wife Brittney and two children, Skylar and Ellis.



# MARQUITA LISTER LIBRETTIST



Has earned worldwide critical praise for over two decades for an impressive repertoire that includes the masterworks of Verdi, Strauss, Puccini and Gershwin. Ms. Lister has sung with major opera companies such as the San Francisco Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Montreal Opera, Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, Grosses Festspielhaus in Salzburg, La Scala, Semperoper Dresden, Staatstheater Stuttgart, Arena di Verona, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Opera Bastille Paris, Michigan Opera Theater, to name a few. Her convincing performance as Bess in New York City Opera's Emmy nominated production of *Porgy and Bess* earned her the "NYCO Diva Award." Ms. Lister also received the "Artist of the Year Award," from the Pittsburgh Opera, and has appeared in television broadcast productions of "An Evening with the Pops;" Keith Lockhart and the Boston Pops (PBS), A Christmas Celebration: Dallas Symphony Orchestra (KXAS- TV), and Live from Lincoln Center (PBS). In studio, Ms. Lister recorded George Gershwin's Blue Monday and Excerpts from *Porgy and Bess* for Telarc Records with Erich Kunzel and the Cincinnati Pops (Grammy nominated), Where the Sunsets Bleed: The Chamber Music of Edward Knight on Albany Records, and the critically acclaimed *Porgy and Bess* recording on the Decca label hailed by Opera News as one of the best recordings of 2006. In 2012, Ms. Lister recorded composer Michael Ching's contribution to the Opera America Songbook commissioned for opening celebrations of the National Opera Center in New York. Ms. Lister is presently collaborating with soprano Louise Toppin to pioneer The African American Art Song and Arranged Negro Spirituals for a New Generation Project. She is the Coordinator of Vocal Studies and Director of Opera at Morgan State University, Vice President and Auditions Chair for the MD/MD Chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing, Inc., as well as a Board member. She is the newly appointed Artistic Director of Opera Ebony, the longest surviving African-American opera company in American history and a faculty member of the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program at the Metropolitan Opera.



# THE CAST



**Julia Fertel** is a mezzo-soprano based in Columbia, South Carolina. An expressive and versatile artist, she is passionate exploring the intersections between Opera and Social Justice, examining how storytelling can inspire empathy in an audience. Equally at home in Operatic canon and art song, Ms. Fertel is devoted to performing works by female composers and repertoire in Hebrew and Yiddish. As a performer, she feels it is crucial that all voices are heard, especially those that are consistently overlooked throughout history. Ms. Fertel is passionate about exposing Opera to the next generation; although this is her first engagement with FBN, she toured productions of *The Three Bears* and *The Ugly Duckling* to schools throughout the North Country while performing with The Seagle Festival in upstate New York. Recent engagements include her chorus debut with Opera Carolina in *Turandot*, Maria Luisa in *With Blood, With Ink*, and Suor Zelatrice in *Suor Angelica* at the Seagle Festival, Der Trommler in *Der Kaiser von Atlantis*, Rebecca Nurse in *The Crucible*, and Mrs. Grose in *The Turn of the Screw* with Opera at USC. In addition to opera, Fertel has significant musical theatre experience. Among her roles are Golde in *Fiddler on the Roof* with Seagle Festival and Aunt March in *Little Women* with One Off Productions.

**Katie Gatch**, from Lexington, SC, is the director of Music Education and Director of Choirs at Cardinal Newman School and is a singer and voice teacher in Columbia. She holds a bachelor's degree in Music, emphasis in Choral Music Education, a performance certificate in Voice, and a master's degree in Opera Theatre from the University of South Carolina. Katie's opera and musical theater roles include the Queen of the Night, *Die Zauberflöte*; Governess, *Turn of the Screw*; Despina, *Così fan tutte*; Belle, *Beauty and the Beast*; Marian, *The Music Man*; and Brenda, *Catch Me if You Can*. Katie teaches private voice lessons at Cardinal Newman and Town Theatre where she is also one of the music directors for the Youth Theater program. She was a member of the Cathedral Singers at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral from 2017 to 2024, and has also been working with children's choirs since 2011, including the Capella Pueri at St. Peter's Catholic Church and the Cathedral Choristers at Trinity Episcopal. She has also enjoyed music directing for musical theatre productions in Columbia including *The Wizard of Oz*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, and *Beauty and the Beast*.





# THE CAST



**Andrew Hebert** is a Vocal Performance Major at the University of South Carolina, studying with Dominic Armstrong. He can frequently be seen in Opera at USC Productions, most recently Ladislav Sipos in *She Loves Me* last February and Antonio in *Le nozze di Figaro* last fall. Andrew is also a member of Concert Choir at UofSC and holds a Choral Scholar position at Shandon Presbyterian Church. After finishing with FBN Productions this summer, Andrew will be heading up to Brevard, North Carolina where he will be singing Mr. Peachum in *The Threepenny Opera* and covering the role of Colline in *La bohème*. Special thanks to our director Ellen Schlaefer for this wonderful opportunity, as well as Professor Armstrong and all of my other mentors who provide so much guidance and support.

Soprano, **Lillie Judge**, is a native of Charlotte, NC and has just completed her Master of Music degree at the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University under the tutelage of Dr. Brian Gill. In the Fall, she will begin working on a Doctorate of Music in Voice Performance and Literature with a full tuition Performance Award and Voice Graduate Assistantship. Judge also holds a Certificate in Vocology from IU and a Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance and Sacred Music from Westminster Choir College. During her time at Westminster, Judge sang in Westminster Choir under Joe Miller and performed Bach's B minor Mass under the baton of Yannick Nézet-Séguin with Westminster Symphonic Choir and the Philadelphia Orchestra. In Indiana, Lillie has a flourishing private voice studio and has worked as church choir director at First Christian Church in Bedford, IN. Notable roles include Mrs. Edith Frank in the world premiere of Shulamit Ran's *Anne Frank* (IU Opera Theater), Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* (LASHOW), Gretel in *Hänsel und Gretel* (WCC Opera), and Laetitia in *The Old Maid and The Thief* (WCC Lyric Theater).



Performer, educator, and lover of all things music, **Jason Pandelidis** is a lyric tenor. This year, Jason performed in Opera Omaha's first opera in Spanish, *El último sueño de Frida y Diego* and was a Young Artist with Cedar Rapids Opera in their production of *Tosca*. Last year, Jason played The Ghost of Christmas Present in Omaha Community Playhouse's *A Christmas Carol* and was a Teaching Artist for OPERA San Antonio's Classical Music Institute. In the spring of 2023, Jason received a Master of Music in Vocal Performance and Literature from The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, under the tutelage of Jerold Siena. His performance credits at UIUC include Basilio in *Le nozze di Figaro* under the direction of Nathan Gunn, Normanno in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, the Angel City Tenor in *City of Angels*, and Palhaço Beringela in the partial premier of João Guilherme Ripper's opera in Portuguese, *Candinho*. In the summer of 2022, Jason had the opportunity to sing Rolf in *Sound of Music* and Parpignol in *La bohème* at the Bay View Music Festival. When he is not singing, he enjoys reading, playing board and video games, and engaging in other classical nerdy endeavors.



# THE CAST



**Jacob Parker** is a native of Charlotte, NC. He just graduated from the University of South Carolina with his Bachelor's in Vocal Performance, where he did five productions with Opera at USC. During his time there he studied with Professor Jacob Will. In the fall he will be heading to Tallahassee to pursue his Master's in Vocal Performance at Florida State University.

Venezuelan bass-baritone **Miguel Pedroza** loves bringing stories to life through opera. Having been a resident artist at Opera Columbus, Opera Maine, Opera Southwest, Opera on the James, among others; he's had the chance to explore a variety of roles, each with its own unique story to tell. Some of his recent roles include Masetto in *Don Giovanni*, Colline in *La bohème*, and Sciarrone in *Tosca*. Whether it's the playful Marchese d'Obigny in *La Traviata* or the brave Raimbaud in *Le loup garou*, Miguel enjoys diving into the emotions of his characters and sharing them with the audience. Miguel is proud of his educational journey, which took him to the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music and the University of Houston. Over the years, he's had the chance to perform as Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Rabbi in Lori Laitman's newest work *Uncovered*, Randy Curtis in *Lady in the Dark*, and Zuniga in *Carmen*, among many others.



**Briona Robinson** is a mezzo-soprano and native of North Charleston, South Carolina. She recently got her Bachelor's of Music with an emphasis in Vocal Performance from the University of South Carolina and is a current student of Rachel Calloway. Briona's previous roles include Tituba in Robert Ward's *The Crucible* with Opera at USC, Rona Lisa Peretti in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* with University of South Carolina Musical Theatre, Missus Herring in *Albert Herring* with Harrower Summer Opera Program, Kate in *Pirates of Penzance* with Columbia Operatic Laboratory, and Ilona Ritter in *She Loves Me* with Opera at USC. Briona will next be seen in Chicago Summer Opera's production as Cornelia in *Giulio Cesare*.



# THE CAST



**DESPINA THE FOX**

Soprano **Julie Welch** has performed at the regional level with the Lyric Theatre of Oklahoma where she performed the role of Mulan in the brand-new stage production of Disney's *When You Wish: A Celebration of The Disney Song Book*. She also originated and premiered the role of Julia Howe in the new opera *A Porcelain Doll* by James Vernon. She has sung the role of Belinda from Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* and recently performed the role of Pamina in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*. She has been a Concerto Aria Competition winner at Oklahoma Baptist University and was a featured performer at the Wooloroc Outdoor Concert hosted by the OK Mozart Music Festival. With several years of dance training, she has been a featured dancer in *Hello, Dolly!* (Lyric Theatre of Oklahoma), *The Addams Family* (OBU Theater), and *The Music Man* (OBU Theater). Welch holds a Bachelor of Music in voice performance from Oklahoma Baptist University and a Master of Music in Performance and Pedagogy from Nazareth University. She has just finished all her coursework for a doctoral degree in voice performance at the University of South Carolina and is currently researching the impact of ballet on training singers.

**Khary Wilson**, tenor, is delighted to return to FBN Productions. He recently performed the roles of George Stinney Sr. in *George Stinney Jr: An American Execution*; Frederick Douglass in *Seneca Falls*; and the Tenor Soloist in Schubert's *Stabat Mater*. Mr. Wilson recently completed his DMA in Vocal Performance/Pedagogy from Louisiana State University in '21 and is currently on the voice faculty at Southern University in Baton Rouge. He looks forward to an amazing inaugural festival!



**FREDDIE THE FROG**



# PRODUCTION STAFF



**Ellis Carroll** is originally from Crofton, Maryland. She received her Master of Music in Voice Performance at The University of South Carolina. She holds a Bachelor of Music and Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Voice from Towson University.

Ms. Carroll has appeared as Hippolyta in the regional premiere of Michael Ching's a capella opera, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, at Towson University (2022) and Barbarina in Opera at USC's production of *Le Nozze di Figaro* (2023). She has served as prop master and Assistant Stage Manager for Opera at USC productions, and assistant director with Music For the Stage at Towson University. In addition to her work with FBN Productions and Opera at USC, Ms. Carroll is a choral scholar at Eastminster Presbyterian Church (Columbia, SC).

Her love for children's opera began at Towson University, with roles in Hilliard and Boresi's *The Harmony Jar*, and continues through her work with FBN Productions. She believes that opera is for everyone and enjoys sharing opera with young audiences. Ms. Carroll is thrilled to be part of the team bringing the Children's Opera Festival to the Midlands.

**Heather Gonzales** is delighted to work with FBN Productions! She is a freelance costume designer and draper. Her passion for storytelling and building community led her to working in costuming. Her design credits include: *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Twelfth Night* (South Carolina Shakespeare Company), *She Loves Me*, *Le Nozze Di Figaro*, *La Belle Hélène*, *The Crucible*, (Opera at USC), *Vanya*, *Sonia*, *Masha and Spike* (NC Stage Company), *Native Gardens* (Warehouse Theatre) *Something Rotten*, *Sound of Music*, *Desperate Measures* (Post Playhouse), *Native Gardens* (Warehouse Theater), *Metamorphoses*, *She Kills Monsters*, *Season of Echoes* dance piece, (University of South Carolina), *Newsies*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (Utah Shakespeare Festival), *Julius Caesar* (Women of Will), *Laughter on the 23rd Floor*, *Greater Tuna* (Neil Simon Festival), and *Little Women* (Southern Utah University). She received her MFA in Costume Design and Technology from the University of South Carolina. For her work view [www.heathergonzalez.wixsite.com/costumes](http://www.heathergonzalez.wixsite.com/costumes)





# PRODUCTION STAFF



A Wilmington, Delaware native, baritone **Michael LaRoche** has sung in many locales along the east coast as well as internationally. He currently serves as the technical director for Opera at USC and FBN Productions. Dr. LaRoche is a graduate of the University of Delaware (BM voice performance), East Carolina University (MM in Vocal Performance and Pedagogy), and the University of South Carolina (DMA in Voice Performance). At home in both the front and back of the opera stage, Dr. LaRoche has sung in or helped produce operas for 25 years with many regional companies including Long Leaf Opera, Opera Company of North Carolina, OperaDelaware, Opera at USC, and ECU Opera Theatre. His recital and oratorio credits are numerous, with major performances in North and South Carolina, Georgia, Virginia, Delaware, and Guadeloupe.

Danny Harrington's scholarship at Methodist University required him to work on all shows, and he experienced a hectic senior year as tech director for one class, while stage managing the same show for another. Additionally, he has designed sets for Trustus, Columbia Children's Theatre, and the Chapin Theatre Company.



Corey Langley defines his painting style through color, energy, and texture, and he enjoys experimenting with new techniques. "You never know when something unexpected could become something incredible."

By trade, Langley is a scenic artist for theater and creates immersive sets to bring stories to life. His experience in theater, both on and off stage, greatly influence his art, "which is about creating a moment of drama and emotion."

<https://coreylangley.art>



# PRODUCTION STAFF



**Dr. Rebecca Loar** received a Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance from Samford University in Birmingham, AL, a Master of Music degree in Opera Performance from Manhattan School of Music, and Doctorate of Musical Arts in Voice Performance with a cognate in Choral Conducting from the University of South Carolina in Columbia. Rebecca has performed various opera roles and concert works across the Southeast. While in New York, Rebecca worked as a member of the New York Choral Artists, singing with the New York Philharmonic, the American Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Society of St. Luke's, and the Little Orchestra Society of New York. A teacher for thirty years, Rebecca's students perform on Broadway, national Broadway tours, summer opera programs and major cruise lines and have secured places in advanced conservatory graduate programs such as Manhattan School of Music, Oberlin Conservatory, and Boston University. In addition to her teaching schedule, Rebecca has been the vocal/music director for several musical productions such as *Grease*, *Guys and Dolls*, and *Sunday in the Park with George*. She currently serves as co-conductor for the women's community choir "She Sings" based in Columbia, SC where she resides with her husband and two children.

Brenda Lord-McGrew has been a hair stylist for 44 years. Her hair designs have been published in national and international magazines. She also has been an educator for Redken, a hair cosmetic company, for 14 years and works as a stylist in a downtown salon. Brenda has been associated with Opera at USC for 14 years.





# PRODUCTION STAFF



**Veronica Page**, from Charlotte, NC, will be a fourth-year DMA candidate in Vocal Performance with a minor in Opera Direction, as well as an Opera Graduate Assistant at The University of South Carolina. Previous roles include Countess Almaviva in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Ann Putnam in *The Crucible*, and Ajax 1 in *La belle Hélène* with Opera at USC; Lady Billows in *Albert Herring* with Harrower Summer Opera; Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi* with VIMA; and Mother in *Hansel and Gretel* with East Carolina University. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Music with an emphasis in Voice Performance from Wingate University (2019) and Master of Music with a double concentration in Vocal Performance and Vocal Pedagogy from East Carolina University (2021). Mrs. Page has had the opportunity to work in a variety of roles with Opera at USC, including the Camera Operator and Assistant House Manager for *The Turn of the Screw* (2021), Assistant Stage Manager and Supertitles Coordinator for *The Diary of One Who Disappeared* (2022), Stage Manager for *Die Zauberflöte* (2023), House Manager for *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* (2023), and Stage Manager for *She Loves Me* (2024). She had her directorial debut with Missy Mazzoli's *Proving Up* in April, 2024 with Opera at USC

**Dr. Megan Rich** is a pianist and pedagogue in Aiken and Columbia, South Carolina. She is the Coordinator of Piano Studies at USC Aiken and the Manager of Communications for the Frances Clark Center for Keyboard Pedagogy. Megan is an experienced collaborative pianist, who formerly assisted with the Opera Workshop classes and voice studios at the University of South Carolina as a Graduate Assistant, where she completed her DMA in Piano Pedagogy. An Idaho native, Megan completed her Master's degree in Piano Performance and Pedagogy at the University of Idaho, where she served as pianist and musical director for various classes and shows in the Musical Theater Department and accompanied voice and trumpet studios. Megan currently accompanies voice, instrumental, and theater students at the University of South Carolina Aiken, and will be a featured artist of the 2024-25 Carolina Series at the Etheredge Center in Aiken.





# PRODUCTION STAFF



**Cosetta Righi** is a native of Ivrea, Italy and Lawrenceville, GA. She recently graduated from the University of South Carolina with her MM in Opera Theatre Performance where she studied under Rachel Calloway. During her time at USC, she served as a Graduate Assistant for Opera at USC. Previous engagements include USC Summer Immersion Project with the Castleton Festival; Amalia Balash in *She Loves Me*, Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and Papagena in *Die Zauberflöte* with Opera at USC; La Fée (cover) in *Cendrillon* with DePauw University, and Barbarina in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Prague Summer Nights. Off-stage she has served as Stage Manager for *Proving Up*, Assistant Stage Manager for *The Crucible* and *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* with Opera at USC, and Assistant Director for *Cendrillon* with DePauw University.

**Dr. Alan Rudell** holds a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Piano Performance from the University of South Carolina, where his primary teacher was Joseph Rackers, with additional studies under Marina Lomazov, and with Mayron Tsong at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. Prior to his appointment at Allen University, Dr. Rudell served on the faculties of Presbyterian College and South Carolina State University. In addition to an active performing career, he is currently engaged in research projects centering on the music of twentieth-century American composers, particularly the works of Elliott Carter and Frederic Rzewski.





# ELLEN DOUGLAS SCHLAEFER

FOUNDER, GENERAL MANGER, & STAGE DIRECTOR



Schlaefer is the Founder and General Director of FBN Productions, Inc., Opera for Kids, a professional touring company established in 1994 performing operas in schools, libraries, and other venues throughout the Southeast. Since 2004, Ellen Douglas Schlaefer has been the Director of Opera Studies at The University of South Carolina. She has staged over 50 productions for Opera at USC and established the Carolina Opera Experience, a summer day camp for children. She received her BA from Davidson College and MFA (stage directing) from The Catholic University of America.

Professional directing credits include Tosca for The Dallas Opera, The Little Prince for Houston Grand Opera, Dead Man Walking for Kentucky Opera, Il Barbiere di Siviglia for Brott Opera, Hamilton, Ontario, CA, Faust for The Washington Opera (Washington National Opera); La Bohème and Don Giovanni (Lyric Opera of Kansas City); Scott Joplin and Treemonisha, The Magic Flute, Don Pasquale, and La Traviata (Opera Memphis); Le Nozze di Figaro, Carmen, La Bohème (Green Mountain Opera Festival, Vt.); Le Nozze di Figaro (Opera on the James) La Bohème and Romeo et Juliette (the National Symphony Orchestra/Wolf Trap Opera); The Little Prince (Houston Grand Opera, Tulsa Opera- Zambello production); Die Entführung aus dem Serail, Aida, Salome, Norma, Il Tabarro, Romeo et Juliette, The Ballad of Baby Doe, Die Fledermaus, Tosca (The Connecticut Opera); The Magic Flute (Houston Ebony Opera); La Bohème (Michigan Opera Theatre, Opera Carolina, Connecticut Opera, Augusta Opera, Quisisana Productions); Porgy & Bess (Opera Illinois, Connecticut Opera); La Traviata (Cleveland Opera, Connecticut Opera); Rigoletto (Opera Carolina, Piedmont Opera); Madama Butterfly (Artpark & Co., Connecticut Opera, Houston Ebony Opera Guild); Lucia di Lammermoor (Orlando Opera); Fidelio (Cleveland Opera); I Pagliacci (Eugene Opera, Connecticut Opera). Other operas staged include La Dolorosa, The Face on the Barroom Floor, Luisa Fernanda, and Bastien & Bastienne (Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Tour); Amahl & the Night Visitors, Gianni Schicchi (Dayton Opera); Brundibar (Tulsa Opera); The Medium (Augusta Opera); The Telephone (Augusta Opera, Dayton Opera); Le Ville, Edgar, Martha, Linda di Chamounix, La Pietra del Paragon, and The Toy Shop (Opera Theatre of Northern Virginia), L'Elisir d'amore (Shenandoah University) and Love makes the World Go Round (Opera on the James).

Additional directing projects include the dramas I Am My Own Wife, In The Next Room or the vibrator play, Doubt-a parable, The Goat or Who is Sylvia (Trustus Theatre) Master Class, Grace & Glorie, You Can't Take it With You, and The Sister Rosensweig (Workshop Theatre of SC) Comedy of Errors (University of Dallas); musicals She Loves Me (Coastal Carolina University); A Chorus Line, South Pacific, Oklahoma, The Merry Widow, and The King & I (Artpark, Lewiston, N.Y.) and Sweeney Todd for The Princeton Festival (Princeton, N.J.) and Workshop Theatre of SC, Most Happy Fella (Quisisana Productions, ME).



FBN

# PRODUCTIONS

## OPERA FOR KIDS



### Children's Opera Festival

May 30	@ 10 a.m.	Icehouse Amphitheater
May 31	@ 10 a.m.	Columbia Music Festival Assoc.
June 1	@ 11 a.m.	Robert Mills House Grounds
June 2	@ 2:30 p.m.	Earlewood Park



[OperaForKids.org](http://OperaForKids.org)



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