



WEITZENHOFFER FAMILY COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS
UNIVERSITY THEATRE
The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA

2023-2024 UNIVERSITY THEATRE SEASON



THE MERRY WIDOW

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WEITZENHOFFER FAMILY COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS
UNIVERSITY THEATRE
The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA

and
SCHOOL OF MUSIC
present

THE MERRY WIDOW

Composed by
FRANZ LEHAR

Libretto by
VICTOR LÉON and LEO STEIN

Artistic Director and Conductor
JONATHAN SHAMES

Stage Director
NICOLE KENLEY-MILLER

Choreographer
REBECCA HERRIN

Chorus Master
GIOVANNI CORRODUS

Assistant Conductor
KATIE NOELKER
Conducting Feb. 18 performance

Scenic Designer
ABIGAIL PIRTLE

Costume Designer
LLOYD CRACKNELL

Lighting Designer
KAIT STAPP

Vocal Coaches
TAYLOR HUTCHINSON
LORNE RICHSTONE

Associate Lighting Designer
EMILY MORRIS

Stage Manager
JENNA NORTON

Associate Stage Managers
MCKENNA BOWMAN
EMILY MATTHEWS

This production is suitable for all audiences.

8 P.M. FEBRUARY 15, 16, 17, 2024
3 P.M. FEBRUARY 18, 2024

REYNOLDS PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
560 PARRINGTON OVAL, NORMAN, OK 73019

OU FINE ARTS BOX OFFICE • (405) 325-4101
THEATRE.OU.EDU

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the University Theatre production of Franz Lehár's uplifting, lively, and witty opera, *The Merry Widow*, presented by the Weitzenhoffer Family College of Fine Arts. The opera features upbeat music, including the famous "Merry Widow Waltz," spirited dancing, and a delightful love story, making the opera an audience favorite.

The School of Music is fortunate to collaborate with world-class faculty and staff in the Weitzenhoffer Family College of Fine Arts, as well as brilliant student designers, artists, soloists, and musicians whose tireless efforts bring *The Merry Widow* to life. I'd like to express gratitude to the entire University Theatre team, including Dr. Jonathan Shames, Artistic Director and Director of the OU Symphony Orchestra, Dr. Nicole Kenley Miller, Opera Stage Director, and Rebecca Herrin, Choreographer. The Weitzenhoffer Family College of Fine Arts faculty, staff, and students have cultivated a tremendous collaborative spirit in producing this charming opera.

We are immensely grateful to all our patrons who support the Weitzenhoffer Family College of Fine Arts, University Theatre, and the University of Oklahoma School of Music. We hope you enjoy the show as *The Merry Widow* transports you to 1920's Paris through an enchanting story and memorable score.



Jonathan Nichol
Director, School of Music
University of Oklahoma

Dear Friends and Patrons,

Thank you for your support of University Theatre and commitment to the arts on our campus and beyond! Performances at the University of Oklahoma have been presented for all of the 100-year history of the College of Fine Arts and in Holmberg Hall of the Reynolds Performing Arts Center since the hall first opened its doors in 1918.

The Merry Widow is an ideal contribution to our centennial celebration in this beautiful hall as it bubbles with all of the charm and joy of 1920's Paris. From sparkling costumes and evocative scenery to Lehar's sweeping melodies and a cast of beguiling characters, *The Merry Widow* provides a slice-of-life of Parisian society with its foibles, humor, humanity, and endless searches for love. This society is brought to delightful life by the faculty, staff, and students of the School of Music and Helmerich School of Drama, collaborating creatively in ways that entrance, entertain, and enhance our lives.

Undergraduates and graduate students polish their craft alongside faculty and professional staff, meeting challenges unseen by those in the audience who in turn make each production possible with their collaborative attendance and support. University Theatre is a wonderful place to be and, as the lights dim and the curtain rises on *The Merry Widow* we welcome you once again and invite you to celebrate the wonders of live theatre and the centennial of the College of Fine Arts with us!



Professor Mary Margaret Holt
Dean, Weitzenhoffer Family College of Fine Arts
Nichols' Chair, Regents' Professor, and
Presidential Professor
University of Oklahoma

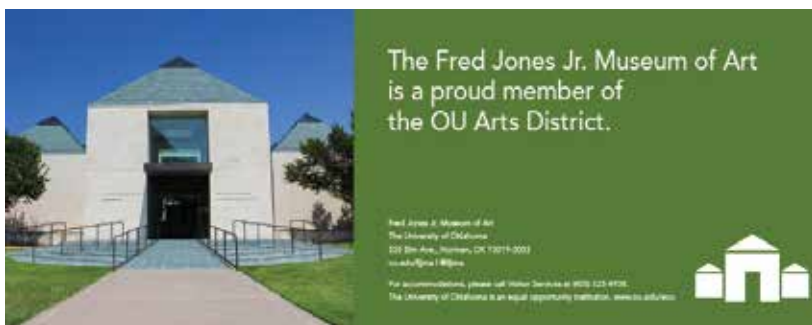
University of Oklahoma Land Acknowledgement

Long before the University of Oklahoma was established, the land on which the University now resides was the traditional home of the “Hasinai” Caddo Nation and “Kirikiri” Wichita & Affiliated Tribes.

We acknowledge this territory once also served as a hunting ground, trade exchange point, and migration route for the Apache, Comanche, Kiowa, and Osage nations.

Today, 39 tribal nations dwell in the state of Oklahoma as a result of settler and colonial policies that were designed to assimilate Native people.

The University of Oklahoma recognizes the historical connection our university has with its indigenous community. We acknowledge, honor, and respect the diverse Indigenous peoples connected to this land. We fully recognize, support, and advocate for the sovereign rights of all of Oklahoma’s 39 tribal nations. This acknowledgement is aligned with our university’s core value of creating a diverse and inclusive community. It is an institutional responsibility to recognize and acknowledge the people, culture, and history that make up our entire OU Community.



Masks are encouraged for all audience members.

**Please turn off all cell phones and electronic devices.
The use of cameras or any recording devices is prohibited by law.**

There is no tobacco use on The University of Oklahoma campus.

THE MERRY WIDOW

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Nicole Kenley-Miller

When "The Merry Widow" premiered in Vienna on December 30, 1905, it was an immediate hit, and that popularity has followed the piece through its performance history. Very few operas or operettas have garnered the commercial success of The Merry Widow. At the peak of its fame, sheet music and recordings of its most popular songs were widely purchased for in-home enjoyment; Merry Widow-themed products were on offer in stores; and five film adaptations were made, the most famous one by Ernst Lubitsch in 1934 starring Jeanette McDonald and Maurice Chevalier. All of this was on top of wide-spread performances across the globe. The Metropolitan Opera has programmed the opera more than twenty times in the last 100 years.

The libretto is based on a play by Henri Meilhac, who was himself a librettist for some of the most famous operas still performed today – Carmen, Manon, and several of Offenbach's operettas. It surrounds the affairs of a small fictional country, Pontevedro, whose leaders are trying to protect the country's financial solvency by making sure that the assets of the wealthy widow Hanna Glavari stay in the country.

The Merry Widow's history has been one of endless adaptation. In addition to the five film versions, which offer a wide range of interpretations, there have been many English translations written that change the character's names, the setting, the order of the musical numbers, etc. Our production combines the original German text of Viktor Léon and Leo Stein for all the musical numbers with spoken dialogue in English written by Donald Pippin, an American Broadway conductor and founder of Pocket Opera. The major change we have made is in the setting. The opera is most commonly set around the year it was premiered in 1905. We have chosen to move it to the late 1920s, so that we can take advantage of the glamorous society and nightlife that Paris had to offer at that time. Taking a nod from many productions that have moved the action of the third act to the famous nightclub Maxim's (an actual restaurant and club that is still open in the 8th arrondissement in Paris), we have showcased the glitz and glamour of 1920s Paris nightlife, complete with a dance number by seven showgirls!

Without great music, costumes, scenery, and dance, this show cannot shine, so I am indebted to our artistic team who have collaborated to make this production so spectacular. Our music team have brought this beloved score to life. And our design team of Lloyd Cracknell, Abigail Pirtle, Kaitlyn Staff, and Goldie Snow, have captured the glamour and whimsy in the libretto so beautifully that it will be a feast for the eyes. I am also so grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with our choreographer Rebecca Herrin. As a director and teacher of young singer actors, I am passionate about them being able to move on stage. Professor Herrin shares this commitment to making dance accessible to performers who have not traditionally been called upon to dance. Her choreography has infused this performance with life and movement that will make it seem more akin to a Broadway musical than high opera.

And finally, I thank the students. Your commitment to this show and to learning so much choreography – something that I know you were not expecting when you were cast – has been an inspiration. In the face of many hours of cancelled rehearsal because of weather and illness, your investment and dedication has kept me going.

Not all theatre is meant to ask hard questions and challenge the audience's thinking. Sometimes we need to just go to the opera and laugh and enjoy something beautiful in the company of other people to remind of us our collective humanity. We hope that happens for you and the person sitting next to you tonight. Sit back, unwind, and let yourself have a good time. We will be doing the same on the stage!

SYNOPSIS

Act 1: The Pontevedran Embassy in Paris is hosting a party at which the millionairess Madame Hanna Glavari is expected. The host Baron Zeta, married to a young French wife Valencienne, is oblivious to the fact that his wife is having an affair with Count Camille Rosillon. As they shamelessly flirt, Camille writes a message on Valencienne's fan – "I am in love with you," but Valencienne insists that she wants to marry him off to someone else so that she can remain a respectable wife.

Zeta explains to the diplomats that Madame Glavari inherited millions when her husband died, all of which are held in the Pontevedran National Bank, and therefore the future of Pontevedro relies on whomever Madame Glavari marries. If she marries a non-Pontevedran and withdraws the funds, it could wipe out the economy of their entire country! Zeta proposes that they prevent her from marrying a foreigner by finding an attractive man from Pontevedro to set her up with, and he has one in mind - Count Danilo Danilovitch.

Madame Glavari arrives at the embassy and invites them all to a Pontevedran-themed party she is hosting the next evening at her home. Zeta apologizes that Danilo is not yet there to meet her. Hanna is surprised to hear his name, and Zeta is surprised that they already know each other. Valencienne explains to Camille that Hanna is the woman she plans for Camille to marry. He agrees reluctantly. Count Danilovitch finally arrives and is surprised to find Hanna there. They reminisce about their tangled past when they were in love and Danilo's family didn't approve of a marriage. Danilo declares that it is all in the past and he could never love Hanna again.

Kromov has found Valencienne's fan, and thinking it is his wife Olga's, is certain that she is cheating on him. Zeta assures Kromov that the fan belongs to his wife, Valencienne, getting her to play along. She claims that Zeta wrote on the fan, and Kromov goes to find Olga to apologize. Zeta explains the mission to Danilo – that he must marry Hanna Glavari. Danilo refuses to marry Hanna himself, but promises to find another Pontevedran for her to marry. Valencienne tries to pawn Camille off on Hanna, but Hanna chooses Danilo. Danilo tries to auction off his dance with Hanna to the other men. When no one buys the dance, Danilo decides he will take it after all, and they dance off together.

Act 2: Hanna begins her Pontevedran folk party by telling the tale of the magical wood fairy known as Vilja who bewitched a hunter. Zeta instructs Danilo that he needs to try to keep Hanna away from Camille and suggests that they find a secret in his past to bring to light...perhaps an affair. He proposes that his wife Valencienne would be a good candidate for getting the secret out of Camille.

Hanna finds Danilo alone and confronts him about why he has come to her party. Danilo won't admit that he is jealous for her. Hanna reminisces about how much nicer things were back in the old days in Pontevedro.

Camille agrees to marry Hanna, but asks Valencienne for a souvenir of their relationship. She gives him her fan, on which she writes "I am a proud, impeccable wife." Camille convinces her to have one last tryst in the pavilion. Njegus sees them sneaking into the pavilion together and attempts to keep Zeta from finding out, but is unsuccessful. As Zeta demands the door be opened, Njegus sneaks Hanna in the back of the pavilion to switch places with Valencienne. When the door is opened, Hanna and Camille emerge and announce that they are engaged. Danilo makes a scene and says that he is going back to his old life at Maxim's. Hanna realizes that he really does love her.

Act 3: Zeta blames Danilo for the impending bankruptcy of Pontevedro. Danilo claims that a sense of duty to his country will not let him give up on Hanna. Left alone with Hanna, Danilo tells her that she should not marry Camille. Hanna explains that the pavilion incident was all a setup to protect Valencienne's reputation. Danilo is overjoyed to find out that Hanna is not in love with Camille. As they dance, he finally opens up and they confess their love for each other.

Danilo reveals to Zeta that Hanna will not be marrying Camille, that her role in the pavilion was to help out a married woman whose reputation was on the line. A drunk Njegus enters with Valencienne's fan. Valencienne claims the fan as hers. Zeta finally thinks that his wife has betrayed him until he reads the message on the fan, and they reconcile. Hanna reveals that her late husband's will specifies that all her money will be passed to whomever she marries. Danilo confirms his love for her even with millions.

THE MERRY WIDOW

by Franz Lehár
Libretto by Victor Léon & Leo Stein

TIME Set in the 1920's

HANNA GLAWARI	Julia Pace (Nov. 15 & 17) Amanda Koi (Nov. 16 & 18)
COUNT DANILO DANILOVITSCH	Matt Corcoran (Nov. 15 & 17) Matt McKinnon (Nov. 16 & 18)
BARON MIRKO ZETA	Lane Elliott
VALENCIENNE	Elena McKenna (Nov. 15 & 17) Rachel Gilliam (Nov. 16 & 18)
CAMILLE, COUNT DE ROSILLON	Marcos Ochoa (Nov. 15 & 17) Lorenzo Butler (Nov. 16 & 18)
NJEGUS	Thomas Chavira
DROMOW	Ryan Smith
BOGDANOVITCH	Joseph Matthew
Sylviane	Emma Hatfield
ST. BRIOCHE	Corbin Hall
CASCADA	Xander McRae
OLGA	Kate Snowden
PRITSCHITSCH	Mitch Waggoner
PRASKOWIA	Lily Campbell
GRISSETTES:	
Do-Do	Megan Austin
Frou-Frou	Lily Gnam
Clo-Clo	Kaitlyn Johnson
Margot	Aubrey McNeil
Jou-Jou	Rebekeh Peters
Lo-Lo	Carlie Pool

THE MERRY WIDOW CHORUS / DANCERS

Giovanni Corrodus, chorus master
Rebecca Herrin, choreographer
Shara Sun and Zhengying Zhong, rehearsal pianists

SOPRANOS

Megan Austin
Katelyn Cruse
Emma Hatfield
Carlie Pool
Kaitlyn Johnson
Aubrey McNeil
Rebekah Peters

TENORS

Samuel Cashdollar
Corbin Hall
Ryan Smith
Mitch Waggoner

ALTOS

Lily Campbell
Erica Carranza
Allison Donnellon
Addison Gaillardet
Lilly Gnam
Laila Menden
Kate Snowden

BASSES

Lane Elliott
Joseph Matthew
Xander McRae
Nathaniel Stambaugh

This performance will have two 15-minute intermissions.

THE MERRY WIDOW ORCHESTRA

Jonathan Shames, conductor
Katie Noelker, assistant conductor
Shara Sun and Zhengying Zhong, rehearsal pianists

VIOLIN I

Juan Moreno Suarez,
concertmaster
Leonard Chow
Paloma Torres
Amy Chang
Devin Sunday
Henry Ingels

VIOLIN II

Evalynn Reynolds, *principal*
Sage Gibson
Charis Steward

VIOLA

Jianghai Hu, *principal*
Vidal Verástegui
Zhe Cao
Evelyn Combs
Christian Whitfield
Anysa Hardin
Jacob Symalla
Hans Edlund

CELLO

Nicholas Bedway, *principal*
Karla Romani
Rece Nottingham
Erica Jernigan
Mason Leidner

BASS

Katie Fairbanks, *principal*
Gesiyé Okoya

HARP

Caroline Robinson
Ciara Mariano

FLUTE

Adri Manzano, *principal*
Jackson Gordon

OBOE

Adelin Yoon, *principal*
Kinsten Rought

CLARINET

Emma Green, *principal*
Matt Tyler

BASSOON

Jake Jauregui Garcia, *principal*
Caleb Brogren

HORN

Skye Curtis, *principal*
Garrett Humann
Lauryn Marshall
Zoe McDowell

TRUMPET

Ben Eagan, *principal*
Gavin Palmer Ruiz

TROMBONE

Hope Bellows, *principal*
Isaac Haas
Alec Lawson, bass

TIMPANI/PERCUSSION

Ian Heatherington, *principal*
Dillon Carpenter
Caleb Roybal

ORCHESTRA STAFF

Lily Blanchard, graduate assistant
Amy Chang, graduate assistant
Katie Noelker, graduate assistant
Adelin Yoon, undergraduate assistant



A special thank you to our current Dean's Circle members!

- Membership as of Jan. 3, 2024 -

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Questions? Contact David Barocio, Executive Director of Development,
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THE MERRY WIDOW

PRODUCTION STAFF

Producer	Mary Margaret Holt
Associate Producer	Kasey Allee-Foreman
Assistant Costume Designer	Emily Heskett
Faculty Advisor to the Scenic Designer	Jon Young
Faculty Advisor to the Lighting Designer	Renee Brode
Faculty Advisor to Stage Management	Christopher Sadler
Design and Production Area Coordinator	Renée Brode
Production Carpenter	E. Pope
Scenic Charge Artist	Sophie Block
Scenic Undergraduate Assistants	Elizabeth Elliott, Cadence Gates, Diego Gonzales Kay Bailey Hall, Gillian Kelley, Abby Knauber Gage Martinez, Hollis Narkiewicz Jenna Norton, Cara Oates, Abigail Pirtle, Erasmus Salinas, Goldie Snow, Ethan Walker
Properties Director	Margot Glaser
Properties Lead	Goldie Snow
Run Crew Head	Ryan Wallace-Woods
Run Crew	Buck Blume, Lauren Foster Iker Garcia, Conner Lin
Fly Rail Operator	Hunter Sheehan
Electrics Supervisor	Eric Stehl
Lighting Undergraduate Assistants	Micah Dooley, Lauren Foster, Madison Heckelsberg Noah Jittawait , Madeline Lewis, Connor Lin Lucas Knapp, Emily Morris, Ruby Ravsten Kellen Sapp, Sophia Smith, Kait Stapp, Trey Wilson
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Light Board Programmer	Lucas Knapp
Light Board Operator	Samantha Verbsky
Follow Spot Operators	Carson Burton, Caylor Peterson
Audio Supervisor	Alan Hiserodt
Audio Undergraduate Assistant	Kait Stapp
Costume Studio Supervisor	Christina Draper
Lead Stitcher	Amy Kercher
Stitcher	Stephanie Cirar
Costume Undergraduate Assistants	Jodi Cone, Emily Heskett, Jylian Humber, Paige Kasulis, Natalie Lane, Joy Omeish Emily Post, Landre Sanders, Hunter Sheehan, Brooke Strachan, Samantha Verbsky
Fight & Intimacy Captain	E. Farney
Wardrobe Supervisor	Stephanie Cirar
Wardrobe Crew Head	Cheyenne Lok Suet Yeng
Wardrobe Crew	Anthony Glosson, Luke Hartman Melanie Jacobs, Katy Kendall, Blake Vest
Supertitle Operator	Lily Blanchard
Box Office	Terrye Hudson, Sherri Morgan
House Manager	Donna Huston
Assistant House Managers	Ellie Bush, Kristen Dickey, Kerynn Eckenrode Madsy Hanks, Ella Partanen, Ella Platt
Production Undergraduate Assistant	McKenna Bowman

MEET THE CAST OF THE MERRY WIDOW



LORENZO BUTLER



LILY CAMPBELL



THOMAS CHAVIRA



MATT CORCORAN



LANE ELLIOTT



RACHEL GILLIAM



CORBIN HALL



EMMA HATFIELD



AMANDA KOSI

MEET THE CAST OF THE MERRY WIDOW



ELENA McKENNA



MATTHEW McKINNON



XANDER McRAE



JOSEPH MATTHEW



JULIA PACE



RYAN SMITH



KATE SNOWEN



MITCH WAGGONER

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

LORENZO BUTLER (Camille, Count De Rosillon) is a third-year DMA in Voice candidate from Lawton, OK. Credits: University Theatre: Sam Polk, *Susannah*; Arthur Dimmesdale, *The Scarlet Letter*; William Center for the Performing Arts: Piquillo, *LaPerichole*; Opera on Tap OKC: Anthony Benson, *No Justice, No Peace*; Lawton Philharmonic Orchestra: Curly, *Oklahoma!*; Ozzie, *On the Town*; Mark A. Chapman Theatre: Elder Hayes, *Susannah*.

LILY CAMPBELL (Praskowia) is a vocal music education and performance junior from Norman, OK. Credits: OU University Theatre: Chorus, *Orfeo ed Euridice*; Chorus, *Susannah*. Sooner Theatre: Ensemble, *Mamma Mia!*

THOMAS CHAVIRA (Njegus) is an actor/educator/producer from Ft. Worth, TX. He holds a BFA from Abilene Christian University, and MFA in acting from the University of Southern California, and an MFA in Performance Pedagogy from Loyola Marymount University. He has performed in theatres across Southern California and his film/tv credits include SHAMELESS and the feature film BENEATH US. As a producer he has nominations and awards from the LA Stage Alliance with Ovation awards for best production of an intimate theatre. Other credits include Dancing at Lughnasa and The Man Who Came to Dinner among others, As an educator, Chavira is interested in the expanding work of French Theatre practitioner Jacques Lacoq and highlighting the work of Hispanic and Latino authors. He is a member of SAG-AFTRA, Actors Equity, and the National Alliance of Acting Teachers.

MATTHEW CORCORAN (Danilo) is a DMA in Voice candidate from Ipswich, MA. Credits: University Theatre: Sam, *Susannah*; Santa Fe Opera: Cavaradossi(c), *Tosca*; UNT Opera: The Male Chorus, *The Rape of Lucretia*; Dallas Symphony Orchestra: Jew #3, *Salome*; SMU Opera: The Stage Manager, *Our Town*; NEMPAC: Don Ottavio, *Don Giovanni*; Opera 51: Eisenstein, *Die Fledermaus*; Soloist, *Beethoven 9*, *Verdi Requiem*, *Mozart Requiem*, *Handel's Messiah*; *Mozart Grand Mass in C Minor*, Various Back Cantatas.

LANE ELLIOTT (Baron Zeta) is a vocal performance senior from Moore, OK. Credits: OU University Theatre: First Man/Chorus, *Susannah*; Chorus, *Orfeo ed Euridice*; Saratro, *The Magic Flute* (abridged). Painted Sky Opera: Chorus, *La Bohème*; Chorus, *Don Giovanni*; Chorus, *Carmen*; Chorus, *Pagliacci*. Norman Philharmonic: Pontius Pilate, *St. John's Passion*. Cimarron Opera: Bunthorne, *An Exciting Trip to the Museum!*

RACHEL GILLIAM (Valencienne) is a vocal performance senior from Broken Arrow, OK. Credits: OU University Theatre: Queen of the Night, *The Magic Flute* (abridged); Pamina, *The Magic Flute* (abridged); Chorus, *Susannah*; Euridice, *Orfeo ed Euridice*.

CORBIN HALL (St. Brïoché) is a vocal performance senior from Norman, OK. Credits: OU University Theatre: Chorus, *Orfeo ed Euridice*; Chorus, *Susannah*. Oklahoma Parks and Recreation: All Good Gifts, *Godspell*.

EMMA HATFIELD (Chorus) is a vocal education sophomore from Bartlesville, OK. Credits: University Theatre: Chorus, *Orfeo ed Euridice*.

AMANDA KOSI (Hanna) is a MFA in Voice Performance student from Qonce, Eastern Cape, South Africa. Credits: OU University Theatre: Susannah, *Susannah*; Hester Prynne, *The Scarlet Letter*; Winsepar Opera House: Laurette, *Doctor Miracle*; Southern Methodist University: Fiordiligi, *Così fan Tutte*; Nelson Mandela University: Nellie Forbush, *South Pacific*.

ELENA McKENNA (Valencienne) is a vocal performance senior from Arlington, TX. Credits: OU University Theatre: Euridice, *Orfeo ed Euridice*; Mrs. Hayes, *Susannah*. Mediterranean Opera Studio and Festival: Lucia, *Lucia di Lammermoor*; First & Second Lady, *The Little Flute* (*Die Zauberflöte* abridged).

MATTHEW McKINNON (Count Danilo Danilovitch) is a second-year DMA vocal performance candidate, with an opera concentration, from Belton, TX. Credits: OU University Theatre: Orfeo, *Orfeo ed Euridice*; Elder McLean, *Susannah*; Roger Chillingworth, *The Scarlet Letter*; Schlendrian, *Coffee Cantata*; Zurga, *The Pearl Fishers* (Reimagined). Opera in the Ozarks: Top, *The Tender Land*; Belcore, *L'elisir d'amore*. Red River Lyric Opera: Argante, *Rinaldo*.

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

XANDER McRAE (Cascada) is a Vocal Performance and Music Education senior from McKinney, OK. Credits: OU University Theatre: Elder Ott, Susannah; Sailor, The Scarlet Letter; Seagle Music Festival: Count Capulet, Romeo et Juliette.

JOSEPH MATTHEW (Bogdanovitch) is a Vocal Performance and Pre-Med sophomore from Coppell, TX. This is his University Theatre debut.

JULIA PACE (Hanna) is a second-year Master's of Music in Opera Performance student from Azle, TX. Credits: OU University Theatre: Mrs. Gleaton, Susannah; Music On Site, Inc.: La Conversa I, La Conversa II, Suor Angelica; Opera Seme: Suor Pазie, Mese Mariano; Chorus, Die Zaubertflöte.

MARCOS OCHOA (Camille, Count de Rosillon) is a first-year MM vocal performance candidate, with an opera concentration, from Carrollton, TX. Credits: The Dallas Opera: Ernesto, *The Billy Goats Gruff*. Portland Opera: Ricardo, *Un Camino de Fe*. Music on Site: Tamino, *Die Zaubertflöte*. Southern Illinois Music Festival: Ferrando, *Così fan tutte*. University of North Texas: Jimmy O'Keefe, *Later the Same Evening*; Arturo, *Lucia di Lammermoor*; Gherardo, *Gianni Schicchi*; Monostatos, *Die Zaubertflöte*.

RYAN SMITH (Kromow) is a Vocal Performance junior from Keller, TX. Credits: OU University Theatre: Chorus, *Susannah*; Monastatos, *Magic Flute*; Cimarron Opera: Sir Roderik, *Ruddigore*; Painted Sky Opera: Chorus, *La Bohème*; FIO Italia: Rinuccio, *Gianni Schicchi*; Le Chevalier, *Dialogues of the Carmelites*.

KATE SNOWDEN (Olga) is a first-year Masters of Music vocal performance student, with opera concentration, from Bartlesville, OK. Credits: OU University Theatre: Orfeo, *Orfeo ed Euridice*; Mrs. Ott, *Susannah*; Lady in Waiting, *The Magic Flute* (abridged); Goodwife, *The Scarlet Letter*.

MITCHELL WAGGONER (Chorus) is a vocal performance and music education junior from Wichita, KS. Credits: OU Opera Theatre: Man 2, *Susannah*. Cimarron Opera: Richard Dauntless, *Ruddigore*. Crown Arts Collaborative: Ensemble, *The Wedding Singer*.

WHO'S WHO BEHIND THE SCENES

KASEY ALLEE-FOREMAN has served as Associate Producer/Production Manager for over 90 productions in the Weitzenhoffer Family College of Fine Arts at the University of Oklahoma. She is currently the VP for Conferences for USITT. A short listing of her professional theatre credits include: SphinxCON, a conference promoting Diversity in the Arts; Canterbury Choral: Bernstein's Mass; Houston Grand Opera: Renée Fleming's premiere *La Traviata* (world premiere); Stages Repertory Theatre (Houston); Houston Shakespeare Festival; Shakespeare Festival at Tulane (New Orleans); Theatre West (Los Angeles). Professional film credits include: *Mystery, Alaska, Lost and Found; Austin Powers: The Spy who Shagged Me*. She is proud to have served on the USITT Board of Directors as the VP for Conferences, the VP for Education and Training and as a Director. She has served USITT on the Conference Committee chair and member, IDEAS Committee chair and member, is the co-founder of the Gateway Program, and has been the Co-chair of the Women in Theatre Network. Kasey received her MFA in Costume Design and Technology and Lighting Design and Technology from the University of New Orleans and he BA in Theatre Arts from Furman University.

McKENNA BOWMAN (Associate Stage Manager) is a stage management sophomore from Prosper, TX. Credits: OU University Theatre: Associate Stage Manager, *Susannah*.

GIOVANNI CORRODUS (Chorus Master) began tertiary music training in Jamaica at Northern Caribbean University under Dr. Kaestner Robertson, pursuing both the BA degree in Music and the BSc degree in Computer Science. Upon completing undergraduate study, Giovanni continued his academic work in the United States, earning the MM degree in Choral Conducting from Andrews University. He is currently pursuing the DMA in Choral Conducting at OU where he holds a choral graduate assistantship. Giovanni has held conducting engagements throughout Jamaica and the United States.

WHO'S WHO BEHIND THE SCENES

REBECCA HERRIN (Choreographer) Ms. Herrin danced professionally throughout the United States before joining the OU School of Dance ballet faculty in 2005. She enjoys working with OU Opera Theatre; previous projects include *Don Giovanni*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Lakmé*, *Eugene Onegin*, and *Susannah*. She holds an MFA from Montclair State University and an MBA from the University of Oklahoma.

EMILY HESKITT (Costume Designer) is a costume design junior from Lake Charles, LA. This is her OU University Theatre debut.

MARY MARGARET HOLT (Producer) began her early ballet training in Austin, Texas at Austin Civic Ballet, receiving a Ford Foundation scholarship for study with the San Francisco Ballet at the age of 15. Subsequently, she received a Ford Foundation scholarship for study at the School of American Ballet, also appearing with the New York City Ballet. Holt accepted a soloist contract the New York City Ballet upon completing her BFA in Ballet Performance. While a member of Houston Ballet, by choreographers including Stevenson, Van Manen, Van Danzig, Petipa, Balanchine, Taras, Dolin, Boris, Clouser, Franklin, Ivanov, de Mille, and O'Donnell. She also performed principal roles in Terekhov's *The Firebird*, *The Snow Maiden*, and *Don Quixote*. She has performed as a guest artist, teacher, and choreographer with ballet and opera companies across the United States.

Holt joined the dance faculty of the University of Oklahoma School of Dance as an assistant professor, following Miguel Terekhov as chair in 1991, and an appointment as director in 1998. As director of Oklahoma Festival Ballet, Holt has choreographed over forty ballets and operas and led Oklahoma Festival Ballet on tours to France (six), the Internationale Haydnstage in Austria (two), Mexico (three), Taiwan, China, and Ecuador. Holt choreography includes the music of Franck, Haydn, The Beatles, Porter, Weill, Mozart, Ginastera, Ikard, Holley, Satie, Bartok, Orff, and Debussy and her ballets have been seen across the U.S. as well as in South America, the United Kingdom, and Europe. Under Holt's leadership, Oklahoma Festival Ballet performed works from the national repertoire by Joffrey and Balanchine as well as de Mille's, *Rodeo*. Her students have performed with Miami City Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Ballet Arizona, Ballet Austin, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Orlando Ballet, Oklahoma City Ballet, and Tulsa Ballet, and as finalists and semifinalists in the International Ballet Competition. At the University of Oklahoma, Holt taught every course in the ballet curriculum and her continuing studies in ballet pedagogy include studying Bournonville Technique with Tage Wendt; and Vaganova Technique at the Bolshoi Academy at Vail; and in St. Petersburg and Minsk, Russia.

Holt was an honoree at the second national RDA Festival in Pittsburgh in 2007, and she received the CORPS de Ballet International Lifetime Achievement Award in 2020. She has served on the Dance Panel of the National Endowment for the Arts and been a panelist on Women in the Academy at Oxford. She is the recipient of the Governor's Arts Award, the Presidential Professorship, and the Regents' Professorship at OU where she also holds the John and Mary Nichols' Chair in Dance.

TAYLOR HUTCHINSON (Vocal Coach) joined the faculty of the University of Oklahoma School of Music in 2023. She enjoys a versatile career, frequently performing alongside both singers and instrumentalists in repertoire ranging from Baroque opera to contemporary chamber music and musical theatre. Her international career has included performances in the Czech Republic, France, and Germany.

In great demand as a vocal coach and partner of singers, in Summer 2023 Dr. Hutchinson joined the music staff of Painted Sky Opera, and has previously been on faculty with the Prague Summer Nights Young Artists Music Festival, and she was the music director of Opera at Truman. She has also performed and coached with the Bay View Music Festival, Musiktheater Bavaria, the Druid City Opera Workshop, and the Franco-American Vocal Academy. She is an alumni of the NATS intern program and a former SongFest fellow.

Dr. Hutchinson's recent projects include the world premiere of *Honk!*, a new work for tuba and piano, *Don Giovanni* and *La Bohème* with Painted Sky Opera, art song performances with longtime collaborator baritone Jarrett Porter, musicals including *Sweeney Todd* and *Bright Star*, and multiple productions of *Le Nozze di Figaro*.

WHO'S WHO BEHIND THE SCENES

EMILY MATTHEWS (Associate Stage Manager) is a stage management freshman from Flower Mound, TX. This is her OU University Theatre debut.

DR. NICOLE KENLEY-MILLER (Stage Director) is known for her colorful and embodied productions of opera and music theatre, both on stage and film. Her work has premiered off-Broadway in New York and has been featured on The Kennedy Center's Arts Across America Series.

She previously served as production manager and stage director for University of Houston's Moores Opera Center, where she regularly directed mainstage student productions. She also created two opera films for Moores during the pandemic, which garnered multiple awards from national and international film competitions and took First Place in both The American Prize and National Opera Association Opera Production Competitions. A highlight of her time at UH was the direction of the first musical produced by the College of the Arts at University of Houston, a collaborative production of *Little Shop of Horrors* between the Schools of Music and Theatre and Dance.

Most recently, she served as the first new stage director in the forty-year history of Houston's Gilbert and Sullivan Society, directing *The Pirates of Penzance* in the summer of 2023. She has also directed professionally for Houston's Opera in the Heights in a sold-out production of *Amahl and the Night Visitors* and will be returning there to direct *La Bohème* this Spring. As Co-Founder and Artistic Director of Sugar Land Opera, she helped establish the former Imperial Theatre, the first professional theatre space in Fort Bend County.

Her latest creative venture is the founding of Intersection Arts, an organization which explores the convergence of different art forms to speak to social and cultural issues of our day. Its first production was *The Women Have Something to Say*, a newly-composed theatrical music work that premiered in 2021 in Houston which celebrates women's voices. The work has been featured by The Kennedy Center and performed off-Broadway in New York. It recently won Third Place in The American Prize for Vocal Chamber Music Composition.

Nicole lives in Midwest City with her partner and poet, Andy Miller.

EMILY MORRIS (Associate Lighting Designer) is a Theatrical Design freshman, with emphasis in lighting. Credits: OU University Theatre: Associate Lighting Designer, *Heathers*; Lighting Designer, *Young Choreographers Showcase*.

S. KATIE NOELKER is a second year DMA Orchestral Conducting student studying with Dr. Jonathan Shames. Originally from Danville, Kentucky, Noelker pursued her Bachelors Degree in Piano Performance and a Masters in Orchestral Conducting from Eastern Kentucky University. After graduating, Noelker served as Visiting Professor and Orchestra Conductor at Eastern Kentucky University where she led through the 2020-2021 season. Noelker has served as Assistant Director/Director and Conductor of the Heritage Area String Program Youth Orchestra from 2018-2021 and Director of Orchestras at Foster Music Camp for the 2021 season.

Ms. Noelker is currently the music director and conductor of the University of Oklahoma Civic Orchestra. This is her fourth show with the OU Opera Theatre serving as Assistant Conductor.

JENNA NORTON (Stage Manager) is a stage management junior from Coeur d'Alene, ID. Credits: OU University Theatre: Associate Stage Manager, *Orfeo ed Euridice*; Associate Stage Manager, *The Wild Party*. Coeur d'Alene Summer Theatre: Stage Manager, *Footloose*. Cimarron Opera: Stage Manager, *Ruddigore*.

ABIGAIL PIRTLE (Scenic Designer) is a Scenic Design sophomore from Norman, OK. Credits: Props Lead, *Susannah*; Props Lead, *Everybody*; Co Arts: Scenic Assistant, *Good For Her*.

LORNE RICHSTONE (Vocal Coach) joined the School of Music at the University of Oklahoma in 2006 as Professor of Opera and Vocal Coaching. From 1982 to 2006, Richstone was on the vocal coaching staff of the Deutsche Oper Berlin, Germany, where he played under a host of prominent conductors and appeared in performances with many of the world's leading singers. In addition, he taught vocal repertoire at the Hochschule für Musik "Hanns Eisler" and the China, the United States, and Canada. His recordings include *Carmina Burana* (Orff) and *Salome* (Strauss) for Deutsche Gramophon, *La Vita Nuova* (E. Wolf-Ferrari) for Koch-Schwann, and *Jakob Lenz* (W. Rihm) for Harmonia Mundi.

WHO'S WHO BEHIND THE SCENES

JONATHAN SHAMES (Artistic Director/Conductor) began his conducting career at the age of 19 with the Opera Company of Boston, and has since conducted throughout the United States, holding music directorships of orchestras and festivals in Washington and Wyoming, as well as serving on the faculties of the University of Michigan, Oberlin Conservatory and Cornell University. At the University of Oklahoma, he has led the orchestra and opera programs since 2005, conducting over 20 different opera productions, and with the orchestra, introducing Oklahomans to works by such recent composers as Crumb, Andriessen, Nono, Dutilleux, Zimmermann, Durand, Schoenberg and Webern. Dr. Shames also maintains a career as a concert pianist, launched when he won a Finalist-Diploma in the 1982 Tchaikovsky International Competition in Moscow. His recent activities have included a return appearance with the Clermont-Ferrand Conservatoire Orchestra in France, piano master classes at the Festival International de Música Académica at the Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León in Monterrey, Mexico.

KAIT STAPP (Lighting Designer) is a lighting and sound design senior from Bartlesville, OK. Credits: OU University Theatre: Lighting Designer, *Heathers: The Musical*; Lighting Designer, *Deux Amours*; Train of Thought (OFB '23); Lighting Designer, *At Once Returned*; *Divine Divergence*; *Funny How Time Slips Away* (YCS '23); Lighting Designer, *Radium Girls*; Lighting Designer, *This Old House*; *The Way You Hide* (CDO '22); Lighting Designer, *The Sleeping Beauty*, Act II (OFB '22)



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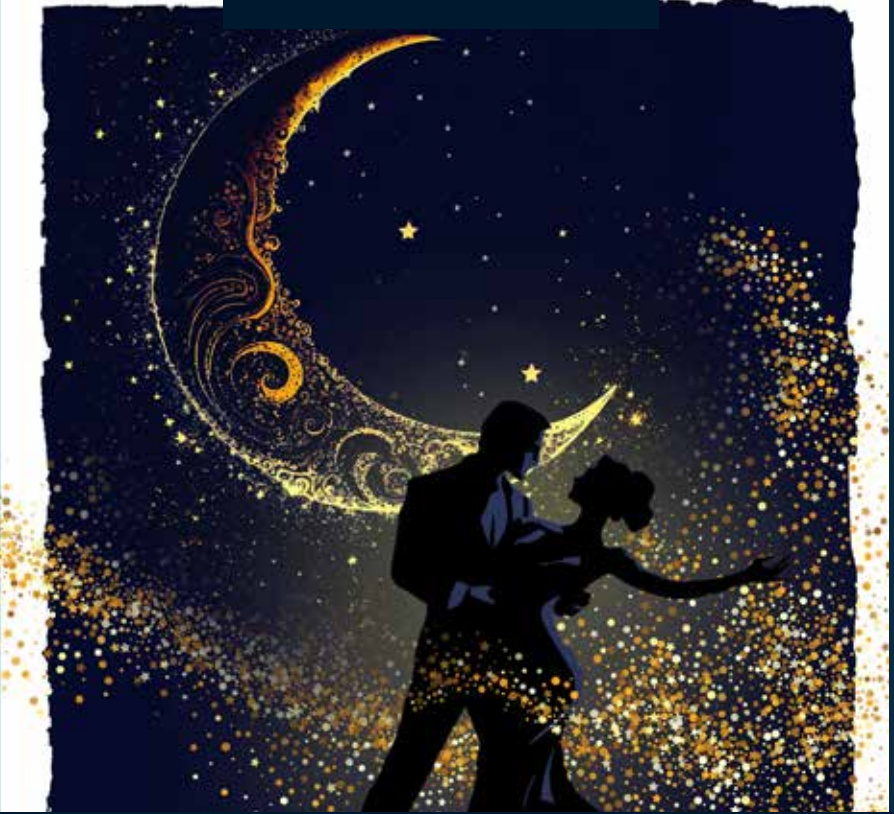
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