

NATIONAL COUNCIL 2020-21 SEASON

# EASTERN

REGION AUDITIONS

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2021

The Met  
ropolitan  
Opera



The 2020 National Council Finalists PHOTO: FAY FOX / MET OPERA

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**National Semifinals**

Sunday, May 9, 2021

**Grand Finals Concert**

Sunday, May 16, 2021

For up to date auditions results, alumni news, and other general information, follow @MONCAuditions on Facebook and Instagram.

**NATIONAL COUNCIL AUDITIONS**

The Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions program cultivates young opera singers and assists in the development of their careers. The Auditions are held annually in 39 districts and 12 regions of the United States, Canada, and Mexico—all administered by dedicated National Council members and volunteers. Winners of the region auditions advance to compete in the national semifinals. National finalists are then selected and compete in the Grand Finals Concert. During the 2020–21 season, the auditions are being held virtually via livestream. Singers compete for prize money and receive feedback from judges at all levels of the competition.

Many of the world’s greatest singers, among them Lawrence Brownlee, Anthony Roth Costanzo, Renée Fleming, Lisette Oropesa, Eric Owens, and Frederica von Stade, have won the Auditions. More than 100 former auditioners appear on the Met roster each season.

The National Council is grateful to its donors for prizes at the national level and to the Tobin Endowment for the Mrs. Edgar Tobin Award, given to each first-place region winner.

Support for this program is generously provided by the Charles H. Dyson National Council Audition Program Endowment Fund at the Metropolitan Opera.

**EDUCATION FUND**

Education Fund grants are available to contestants of the National Council Auditions who reach the semifinal round or further and demonstrate improved skills in a follow-up audition; each eligible contestant may be granted a total of up to \$5,000 upon multiple hearings within three years from when the contestant competed in the National Council Semifinals.

To learn more about donating to the National Council Auditions or the Education Fund, please visit [metopera.org/MONCSupport](http://metopera.org/MONCSupport).

**SINGERS**

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Aaron Crouch



Adanya Dunn



Melissa Joseph



Ben Reisinger



Jacob Scharfman

**NEW YORK DISTRICT**



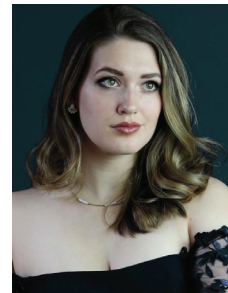
Alec Carlson



Chuanyuan Liu



Kara Mulder



Emily Sierra

**PITTSBURGH DISTRICT**



Véronique Filloux



Edith Grossman



Courtney Johnson



Chelsea Laggan

**REPERTOIRE | FEBRUARY 13, 2021**

IN PERFORMANCE ORDER

**ADANYA DUNN, MEZZO-SOPRANO, 30****TORONTO, ON**

Ces lettres	WERTHER	Massenet
Wie du warst	DER ROSENKAVALIER	R. Strauss
I bought this suitcase in New York	FLIGHT	Dove
Deh, per questo istante solo	LA CLEMENZA DI TITO	Mozart

**JACOB SCHARFMAN, BARITONE, 29****BOSTON, MA**

Hai già vinta la causa	LE NOZZE DI FIGARO	Mozart
Lieben, Hassen, Hoffen, Zagen	ARIADNE AUF NAXOS	R. Strauss
Mein Sehnen, mein Wähnen	DIE TOTE STADT	Korngold
Batter my heart	DOCTOR ATOMIC	Adams

**VÉRONIQUE FILLOUX, SOPRANO, 27****REDWOOD CITY, CA**

Die Wiener Herrn	ARABELLA	R. Strauss
Se giunge un dispetto	AGRIPPINA	Handel
Par le rang...Salut à la France!	LA FILLE DU RÉGIMENT	Donizetti
His name is Jan	BREAKING THE WAVES	Mazzoli

**ALEC CARLSON, TENOR, 29****RED OAK, IA**

Questa o quella	RIGOLETTO	Verdi
Ah! fuyez, douce image	MANON	Massenet
È la solita storia del pastore	L'ARLESIANA	Cilea
Vidino divná, přesladká	RUSALKA	Dvořák

**MELISSA JOSEPH, SOPRANO, 28****ATLANTA, GA**

I am Moses the liberator	HARRIET TUBMAN: WHEN I CROSSED THAT LINE TO FREEDOM	Okoye
Depuis le jour	LOUISE	Charpentier
Signore, ascolta	TURANDOT	Puccini
Non mi dir	DON GIOVANNI	Mozart

**CHELSEA LAGGAN, MEZZO-SOPRANO, 28****HOLLAND, PA**

Podrugi milyye	THE QUEEN OF SPADES	Tchaikovsky
Give him this orchid	THE RAPE OF LUCRETIA	Britten
O ma lyre immortelle	SAPHO	Gounod
Sein wir wieder gut	ARIADNE AUF NAXOS	R. Strauss

**REPERTOIRE (CONT'D) | FEBRUARY 13, 2021**

IN PERFORMANCE ORDER

**CHUANYUAN LIU, COUNTERTENOR, 23****CHANGCHUN, CHINA**

Dawn, still darkness	FLIGHT	Dove
Vivi, tiranno	RODELINDA	Handel
Welcome, wanderer...I know a bank	A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM	Britten
Me voici dans son boudoir	MIGNON	Thomas

**COURTNEY JOHNSON, SOPRANO, 29****CHESAPEAKE, VA**

Je dis que rien me m'épouvante	CARMEN	Bizet
Mi tradì, quell'alma ingrata	DON GIOVANNI	Mozart
Signore, ascolta	TURANDOT	Puccini
Tacea la notte placida	IL TROVATORE	Verdi

**EMILY SIERRA, MEZZO-SOPRANO, 22****CHICAGO, IL**

Deh, per questo istante solo	LA CLEMENZA DI TITO	Mozart
Ich lade gern mir Gäste ein	DIE FLEDERMAUS	J. Strauss
Allez, laissez-moi seul...Coeur sans amour	CENDRILLON	Massenet
Waiting	THE GREAT GATSBY	Harbison

**AARON CROUCH, TENOR, 22****BOWIE, MD**

Dopo notte	ARIODANTE	Handel
Dein ist mein ganzes Herz	DAS LAND DES LÄCHELNS	Lehár
Ya lyublyu vas	EUGENE ONEGIN	Tchaikovsky
Tarquinius does not wait	THE RAPE OF LUCRETIA	Britten

**KARA MULDER, SOPRANO, 27****PHILADELPHIA, PA**

Glück das mir verblieb	DIE TOTE STADT	Korngold
Ain't it a pretty night	SUSANNAH	Floyd
Come scoglio	COSÌ FAN TUTTE	Mozart
Song to the moon	RUSALKA	Dvořák

**BEN REISINGER, BARITONE, 25****ROCHESTER, NY**

Per me giunto	DON CARLO	Verdi
Avant de quitter ces lieux	FAUST	Gounod
Largo al factotum	IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA	Rossini
O vin, dissipe la tristesse	HAMLET	Thomas

REPERTOIRE (CONT'D) | FEBRUARY 13, 2021  
IN PERFORMANCE ORDER

**EDITH GROSSMAN, MEZZO-SOPRANO, 28**

**ELMA, NY**

I've read every word

IF I WERE YOU

Heggie

Svegliatevi nel core

GIULIO CESARE

Handel

Va! laisse couler mes larmes

WERTHER

Massenet

Parto, parto

LA CLEMENZA DI TITO

Mozart

## JUDGES

### **ALEX FLETCHER** | PRESIDENT, FLETCHER ARTIST MANAGEMENT

Alex Fletcher serves as president of Fletcher Artist Management, a firm he founded in December 2009. As president, Mr. Fletcher works closely with a selective roster of classical singers, conductors, and directors. FAM responded strongly to the COVID-19 pandemic, partnering with Artist Relief Tree on an April 2020 fundraising concert that raised \$9,000, and developing a new platform for subscribers called Fletcher Artist Management Entertainment (FAME), which showcases roster artists in dynamic and original programming.

Prior to the establishment of his company, Mr. Fletcher began his career at Neil Funkhouser Artists Management, where he eventually assumed the position of artist manager. A Business Member of Opera America, he has been a panelist for that organization's "Making Connections" series in New York and Philadelphia. He has been a member of the jury for the McCammon Voice Competition in Fort Worth, Texas, the Opera Birmingham Competition in Alabama, and since 2018, regularly serves as a judge for the District and Regional levels of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

Mr. Fletcher has held internships with the public relations department of Washington National Opera and with the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra in Alexandria, Virginia. He received his bachelor's degree in Business Administration, cum laude, from the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Virginia, where he also studied vocal performance. He is a native of Fairfax, Virginia.

### **RYAN TAYLOR** | PRESIDENT AND GENERAL DIRECTOR, MINNESOTA OPERA

Ryan Taylor serves as President and General Director of Minnesota Opera, where he is also a graduate of its Resident Artist Program.

Ryan previously worked with Arizona Opera as General Director, ADA Artist Management as Artist Manager, and Wolf Trap Opera as Manager of Community Development. He also held posts as General Director of Berkshire Opera Company, Artistic Director of Singers Beyond Borders and Co-founder of the Southeastern Festival of Song. Ryan enjoyed a 10-year career as a baritone, singing in the United States, Germany, Canada, and across Asia, also working as a stage director and producer before moving into arts administration.

As a consultant, guest lecturer and educator, Ryan maintains relationships with a number of schools, training programs, and arts organizations. He is currently on the Board of OPERA America, for whom he also co-chairs the New General Director's Roundtable, and is the current President of the Arts Partnership in St. Paul, Minnesota. He remains particularly interested in the advancement of emerging artists, and in the health and development of arts organizations for whom he leads strategic planning to improve creative environments for artists, staff, boards, and communities.

## **MELISSA WEGNER | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, METROPOLITAN OPERA NATIONAL COUNCIL AUDITIONS**

Melissa Wegner is the Executive Director of the Metropolitan Opera's National Council Auditions (MONC) where she is responsible for identifying and awarding the most promising operatic talent in North America. At the Met, she hears artists in stage and screening auditions and is responsible for casting the Met's New Opera Commissions workshops. She is the casting consultant for the upcoming Ricky Ian Gordon/Lynn Nottage opera INTIMATE APPAREL at Lincoln Center Theater.

In addition to the District, Regional and National rounds of MONC, Ms. Wegner has adjudicated the Belvedere Competition, the McCammon Voice Competition, the Nicola Martinucci Competition, and the NATSAA Competition Finals. A faculty member of Ravinia's Steans Music Institute, she has also been visiting faculty for Bard College's Graduate Vocal Arts Program. She is in demand as a clinician and lecturer at top conservatories, universities, and festivals throughout the country.

In 2019 Ms. Wegner was named one of Musical America's Top 30 Professionals of the Year, received the Maria Callas Prize from Melos International, and was named an official ambassador for Opera America's 50th Anniversary.

Ms. Wegner is a member of Families of FANA WNY, which supports the orphanage in Colombia from which she was adopted. She serves on the boards of SUNY Potsdam and Bard College's Conservatory of Music, and is an advisor for Turn The Spotlight, a mentoring organization for exceptional women, people of color, and other equity-seeking groups.

## **PIANISTS**

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KEVIN BYLSMA  
NATHALIE DOUCET  
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SERGEY IOROV  
JAMES LESNIAK  
GLENN LEWIS

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ADAM NIELSEN  
RICHARD RAUB  
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TING TING WONG

## **SPECIAL THANKS**

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\*THE JAMES MCCRACKEN AND  
SANDRA WARFIELD PRIZES

## THE JAMES MCCRACKEN AND SANDRA WARFIELD PRIZES

**JAMES MCCRACKEN** (tenor) and **SANDRA WARFIELD** (mezzo-soprano) were that great rarity in the world of opera- two international stars acclaimed for their vocal, dramatic and artistic prowess, happily married (to each other) for thirty-four years, singing lead roles in the world's greatest opera capitals (New York, London, Vienna, Berlin, Zurich, Venice, Buenos Aires, San Francisco, Barcelona), deeply committed to singing together whenever they could, and fierce champions of each other's talent. Among Jim's most famous roles were Otello, Calaf, Manrico, Radamès, Canio, Don José, Samson, and Florestan. Sandra's signature roles included Carmen, Amneris, Dalila, Azucena, Octavian, Santuzza, and Prince Orlofsky. While Jim primarily played heroic figures, Sandra, as a mezzo, split her time equally temptresses, hideous crones, or men. If she wasn't cast as Jim's lover, she was likely to play his mother.

Opening nights, thunderous applause, floral tributes, award-winning recordings, singing for Presidents and Heads of State, collaborating with the most famous conductors and artists in the world-- these were the trappings of success. But their journey to stardom was far from quick, straightforward, or easy. To read more about the incredible struggles they endured on their road to success, please visit [nycmonc.org/news](http://nycmonc.org/news).

Jim and Sandra wish all of today's contestants the best of luck. If they could, they would tell them to work hard, be prepared, dream big, believe in yourself, and never give up. Oh, and in their own, inimitable, mid-Western way, they would undoubtedly urge them all to "Sing pretty!"

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