

NATIONAL COUNCIL 2020-21 SEASON

UPPER MIDWEST

REGION AUDITIONS

SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 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/SupportMONC.

SINGERS

IOWA DISTRICT



Manli Deng



Shaina Martinez



Virginia Sheffield



Johanna Will

NEBRASKA DISTRICT



Gabrielle Gilliam



Edwin Joseph



Evan Lazdowski



Jazmine Olwalia

WISCONSIN DISTRICT



Brad Bickhardt



Avery Boettcher



Evan Hammond



Helaine Liebman

REPERTOIRE | MARCH 20, 2021
IN PERFORMANCE ORDER

AVERY BOETTCHER, SOPRANO, 28

APPLETON WI

Amour, ranime mon courage	ROMEO ET JULIETTE	Gounod
Stridono lassù	I PAGLIACCI	Leoncavallo
Non mi dir	DON GIOVANNI	Mozart
Ah, fors'è lui...Sempre libera	LA TRAVIATA	Verdi

EDWIN JOSEPH, BARITONE, 27

DELHI, INDIA

Per me giunto	DON CARLO	Verdi
L'orage s'est calme	LES PÊCHEURS DE PERLES	Bizet
Ya vas lyublyu	THE QUEEN OF SPADES	Tchaikovsky
Captain Ahab? I must speak with you	MOBY-DICK	Heggie

GABRIELLE GILLIAM, SOPRANO, 28

HOUSTON, TX

Ach, ich fühl's	DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE	Mozart
No word from Tom	THE RAKE'S PROGRESS	Stravinsky
Quando m'en vo	LA BOHÈME	Puccini
Ah, fors'è lui...Sempre libera	LA TRAVIATA	Verdi

JOHANNA WILL, SOPRANO, 29

DRESDEN, GERMANY

Pace, pace mio Dio	LA FORZA DEL DESTINO	Verdi
Glück, das mir verblieb	DIE TOTE STADT	Korngold
Leise, leise	DER FREISCHÜTZ	Weber
Come scoglio	COSÌ FAN TUTTE	Mozart

BRAD BICKHARDT, TENOR, 25

COLUMBIA, NJ

Salut! demeure chaste et pure	FAUST	Gounod
De' miei bollenti spiriti	LA TRAVIATA	Verdi
Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön	DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE	Mozart
Fra poco a me ricovero	LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR	Donizetti

HELAINÉ LIEBMAN, SOPRANO, 29

HIGHLAND PARK, IL

Donde lieta uscì	LA BOHÈME	Puccini
Come scoglio	COSÌ FAN TUTTE	Mozart
Depuis le jour	LOUISE	Charpentier
Take me back	OUR TOWN	Roem

REPERTOIRE (CONT'D) | MARCH 20, 2021

IN PERFORMANCE ORDER

EVAN LAZDOWSKI, BASS-BARITONE, 23**MOULTONBOROUGH, NH**

Sibilar gli angui d'Aletto	RINALDO	Handel
Papagena! Papagena! Papagena!	DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE	Mozart
Quand la flamme de l'amour	LA JOLIE FILLE DE PERTH	Bizet
Hear me, O Lord	SUSANNAH	Floyd

SHAINA MARTINEZ, SOPRANO, 27**GERMANTOWN, MD**

Non so le tetre immagini	IL CORSARO	Verdi
Ah! je ris	FAUST	Gounod
The trees on the mountain	SUSANNAH	Floyd
Tanto amore segreto...Tu che di gel sei cinta	TURANDOT	Puccini

JAZMINE OLWALIA, MEZZO-SOPRANO, 27**FORT WORTH, TX**

O ma lyre immortelle	SAPHO	Gounod
Smanie implacabili	COSÌ FAN TUTTE	Mozart
We had one room	ELIZABETH CREE	Puts
Ah, Tanya, Tanya	EUGENE ONEGIN	Tchaikovsky

VIRGINIA SHEFFIELD, SOPRANO, 26**PITTSBURGH, PA**

Il est doux, il est bon	HÉRODIADE	Massenet
Dich, teure Halle	TANNHÄUSER	Wagner
Somehow I never could believe	STREET SCENE	Weill
Tutte nel cor vi sento	IDOMENEO	Mozart

EVAN HAMMOND, BARITONE, 26**LEXINGTON, AL**

Oh! Oh! qu'est-ce que c'est?	PELLÉAS ET MÉLISANDE	Debussy
She called him Curt	THREE DECEMBERS	Heggie
Bella siccome un angelo	DON PASQUALE	Donizetti
Lieben, Hassen, Hoffen, Zagen	ARIADNE AUF NAXOS	R. Strauss

MANLI DENG, SOPRANO, 25**CHONGQING, CHINA**

Pleurez mes yeux	LE CID	Massenet
Ah! je ris	FAUST	Gounod
Signore, ascolta	TURANDOT	Puccini
Ach, ich fühl's	DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE	Mozart

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | MARCH 20, 2021

JUDGES

DANIEL BIAGGI | INTERIM ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, PORTLAND OPERA & ARTISTIC ADVISOR, ATKINS YOUNG ARTISTS PROGRAM, MARIINSKY THEATRE, SAINT PETERSBURG

Founder of Daniel Biaggi Consulting, Daniel currently serves as *Interim Artistic Director* at Portland Opera, where he focuses on artistic planning & resident artist program oversight; as *Artistic Advisor* to the Atkins Young Artists Program at the Mariinsky Theater in Saint Petersburg, with focus on career guidance and curriculum building for the Atkins fellows; and as *Creative Consultant* to Drax Productions in New York, which invests in commercial theater, films, TV, and streaming productions.

Prior to opening his consulting firm, Daniel led Palm Beach Opera (PBO) for 10 years as General Director, having originally joined PBO as Director of Artistic Operation. From 2009 to 2019, he orchestrated an artistic, financial, and organizational turnaround despite the economic crisis in his initial years. Under his leadership, PBO produced its first world premiere, *Enemies, A Love Story* by Ben Moore and Nahma Sandrow; initiated free outdoor opera concerts; built up a 3-tier artist training program with 18 young artists per season selected from national auditions and up to 12 local high school students; reinitiated a Gala concert series with internationally renowned artists; and significantly increased the impact and number of community engagement and education programs.

Previously, Daniel Biaggi was Associate Director at Guy Barzilay Artists Management, served on the faculties of Manhattan School of Music and Mannes College of Music, and worked with the Metropolitan Opera Guild's Education Programs. He holds degrees from the Manhattan School of Music, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and University of Bern, Switzerland, as well as certificates from the Harvard Business School and New School.

PAUL HOPPER | ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC ADMINISTRATOR, THE METROPOLITAN OPERA

Paul Hopper serves as Associate Artistic Administrator at The Metropolitan Opera where he oversees the casting of supporting roles and all covers for roughly twenty-five productions per season. Previously, he was the Assistant Artistic Director at Houston Grand Opera where he assisted in long term artistic planning and casting, managed special artistic initiatives, and guided a variety of audiences in learning more about opera, including numerous events in support of the company's first Ring Cycle. As principal dramaturg for the company he worked closely with composers and librettists in the commissioning and development of new works and oversaw the supertitles for all productions. Passionate about redefining the perception of what opera is capable of achieving, Paul forged new working relationships with Houston Methodist Hospital, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, The Rothko Chapel, and the Women's Home. He has been a guest speaker at the OPERA America Conference, University of Houston, Houston Seminar, Czech Center Houston, and the Houston-Leipzig Sister City Association. A graduate of the Eastman School of Music and the University of Houston, he previously held positions at the Santa Fe Opera and ADA Artist Management.

RUSSELL THOMAS | TENOR & ARTIST IN RESIDENCE, LOS ANGELES OPERA

With a “heroically shining tone of exceptional clarity and precision” (*Opera Magazine*) and “gorgeously burnished power” (*The New York Times*), Thomas uses his signature elegance and intensity to create vivid character portrayals on the world’s most important stages. He has recently been appointed Artist in Residence at the Los Angeles Opera, where he will take a major artistic advisory and curatorial role with the company.

He has earned particular acclaim for interpretations of Verdi’s leading men, including the roles of Don Alvaro in *La forza del destino* (Deutsche Oper Berlin), Manrico in *Il trovatore* (Lyric Opera of Chicago, Bayerische Staatsoper), Otello (Canadian Opera Company, Washington National Opera, Deutsche Oper), Adorno in *Simon Boccanegra* (Royal Opera House Covent Garden), and Don Carlo (Washington National Opera, Deutsche Oper).

Thomas has also enjoyed successes in bel canto roles such as Roberto Devereux (San Francisco Opera) and Pollione in *Norma* (Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia), and verismo repertoire including Turiddu in *Cavalleria rusticana* (Deutsche Oper) and Rodolfo in *La bohème* (Metropolitan Opera).

He has had the privilege of collaborating with celebrated conductors such as Teodor Currentzis, Gustavo Dudamel, Sir Mark Elder, Ricardo Muti, Andris Nelsons, Sir Simon Rattle, Donald Runnicles, and Michael Tilson Thomas. Future engagements include returns to San Francisco Opera, Houston Grand Opera, The Metropolitan Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, and the Los Angeles Opera.

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