



School of Music  
University of Missouri

2022-2023 Series | Special Event

---

**MU School of Music presents  
Show-Me Opera**

# **Staged Arias and Duets**

**Christine Seitz, Stage Director,  
Production Manager, and Supertitle Translation  
Zack Kierstead and Tenson Liang, Pianists  
David Myers, Audio and Video production  
Eliza Brooks, Lighting Design  
Caitlin Kenney, Supertitle cueing**

**Saturday, April 15, 2023 | 7:00pm  
Sheryl Crow Hall**

## PROGRAM

(Characters in each scene are listed in order of vocal appearance)

**Fidelio (1814)**..... **Ludwig van Beethoven**  
Libretto by Joseph Sonnleithner and Friedrich Treitschke (1770-1827)

Duet – “Jetzt, Schätzchen, jetzt sind wir allein”  
Jacquino – Sam Varnon  
Marzeline – Haley Mesz

“Jetzt, Schätzchen, jetzt sind wir allein” opens *Fidelio*, Ludwig van Beethoven’s only opera. This duet is between the jailer’s assistant Jacquino and the jailer’s daughter Marzeline, who Jacquino wants to marry. Marzeline is in love with the title character *Fidelio*, but she feels sorry for Jacquino and attempts to politely decline his proposal. However, Jacquino takes her avoidance for acceptance, and even once he is clearly rejected, he hopes to change Marzeline’s mind. – Sam Varnon

**Berenice (1737)** ..... **George Frideric Handel**  
Libretto by Antonio Salvi (1685-1759)

Aria – “Sì, tra i ceppi”  
Demetrio – Preston Bell  
Supers: Elise Cressey, Faith Fullen, Kennedy Kinnick

Queen *Berenice* is approached by a man named Fabio, who tells her that the senate wishes to wed her to a man named Alessandro. *Berenice* refuses because she is betrothed to a man named Demetrio. Later, Demetrio informs her that he has fallen for her sister. Furious, *Berenice* sends Demetrio to prison to await his execution. Demetrio sings “Sì, tra i ceppi” amidst the chains and tortures of his jailers. – Preston Bell

**Der Freischütz (1821)** ..... **Carl Maria von Weber**  
Libretto by Friedrich Kind (1786-1826)

Aria – “Kommt ein schlanker Bursch gegangen”  
Ännchen – Elise Cressey  
Agathe (super) – Faith Fullen

Hello, my name is Elise Cressey and I will be performing the role of Ännchen in Weber’s “*Der Freischütz*”. In this scene Ännchen sings “*Kommt ein schlanker Bursch gegangen*” to try and cheer up her cousin, Agathe. Agathe is deeply saddened and worried, waiting for the arrival and safety of her lover, Max. Ännchen’s main goal is to cheer Agathe up with a fun and flirty song full of many jests. – Elise Cressey

**Amadigi di Gaula (1715)** ..... **George Frideric Handel**  
Libretto by Friedrich Kind

Aria – “Pena tiranna”  
Dardano – Megan S. Lyon

Companions turned rivals, *Amadigi* and Dardano are both infatuated with Oriana. A sorceress tricks Oriana into temporarily thinking Dardano is *Amadigi*, and Oriana displays her affection for who she thinks is *Amadigi*. In an impulsive and confident mindset, Dardano challenges *Amadigi* to a duel over Oriana and is slain by *Amadigi*. This Aria is Dardano's expression of heartache of an unrequited love. – Megan S. Lyon

**Werther (1892)** ..... **Jules Massenet**  
Libretto by Édouard Blau, Paul Milliet, and Georges Hartmann (1842-1912)

Aria – “Frères, voyez!... Du gai soleil”  
Sophie – Vaysia Knust  
Werther (super) – Sam Varnon

Sophie's aria "Du Gai Soleil" is a beautiful and uplifting piece of music from the opera "Werther" by Jules Massenet. The aria is sung by Sophie, the younger sister of Charlotte, the woman who the main character, Werther, loves. In the aria, Sophie is excited to dance and celebrate with her friends. Sophie expresses her joy and happiness at the arrival of spring, as well as her love for nature and the beauty of the world around her. The music is light and airy, with a lively and cheerful melody that captures the spirit of spring. Sophie's lyrics encourage Werther to appreciate the sunshine and forget his sorrows. – Vaysia Knust

**Gianni Schicchi (1918)** ..... **Giacomo Puccini**  
Libretto by Giovacchino Forzano

Aria – “O mio babbino caro”  
Gianni Schicchi – Preston Bell  
Lauretta – Erin Brage

In this aria, Lauretta is attempting to convince her father, Gianni Schicchi, to allow her to marry her love interest, Rinuccio. Gianni is against the marriage due to his hatred for Rinuccio's vile aunt. Lauretta tells her father that if he doesn't approve of their marriage, she will throw herself off of the Ponte Vecchio, which translates to “old bridge.” Gianni has to consider whether it is just an empty threat or if his decision could lose him his daughter. – Erin Brage

**Giulio Cesare in Egitto (1724)** ..... **George Frideric Handel**  
Libretto by Nicola Francesco Haym

Aria – “L'angue offesa”  
Sesto – Lucas Gonzaga da Silva

Sesto is the son of Cornelia and Pompeo, seeking revenge for his father's death. He attempts to challenge the Pharaoh Tolomeo but is unsuccessful. In the aria, Sesto enters the garden of the palace, wishing to fight Tolomeo for killing his father. He expresses his anger and thirst for revenge, swearing to avenge his father's death and not rest until he has done so. – Lucas Gonzaga da Silva

**Les contes d'Hoffmann (1881)** ..... **Jacques Offenbach**  
Libretto by Jules Barbier (1819-1880)

Aria – “Les oiseaux dans la charmille”  
Olympia – Wendy Kleintank  
Guests – Entire Cast

In this aria, Spalanzani, the inventor of Olympia the doll, winds up Olympia to sing for his guests, keeping the guests under the impression that she is his daughter. She sings this song about birds and how they sing to the young girl of love. Hoffman, not realizing that Olympia is a doll, falls head over heels in love with her and is very disappointed when she falls over at the end of the aria, needing to be wound up again. – Wendy Kleintank

***Suor Angelica (1918)*.....Giacomo Puccini**

Libretto by Giovacchino Forzano

Aria – “Senza mamma”

Suor Angelica – Jessica Scarce

La Principessa (super) – Tara Boydston

Suor Angelica, the daughter of a noble family, was forced to become a nun due to her giving birth to an illegitimate child. After being away from her child for seven years, her aunt announces that Suor Angelica’s child has died. After hearing the news, Angelica collapses and mourns the death of her son and how he will never know what it’s like to have a mother’s love. Due to being in so much pain, Suor Angelica decides to poison herself so that she can be with her son again. – Jessica Scarce

***Little Women (1998)*.....Mark Adamo**

Libretto by Mark Adamo

(b. 1962)

(based on the novel by Louisa May Alcott)

Aria – “Things change, Jo”

Meg – Faith Fullen

Jo (super) – Kennedy Kinnick

Mark Adamo’s *Little Women* opens in the March family attic in the 1870s with Jo standing alone. A young man, Laurie, who is married to Jo’s sister Amy, arrives. They reflect on their own past relationship and begin the flashbacks that make up the rest of the opera. Three years earlier, in the same attic, the March sisters and Laurie are holding a meeting of the Barristers’ Club. After the sisters leave, Jo and Laurie stay behind to talk. Jo becomes upset at the thought of marriage breaking up their family. A few weeks later, Jo and Laurie are out walking when they see her sister Meg and friend Brooke walking together. Brooke is telling Meg a story hinting at his love for her, which Jo interrupts. Before they leave, Brooke asks to speak with Meg’s father. Back at home, Beth sings a hymn she has composed as Jo teases Meg, who says that she will refuse Brooke if he proposes, since her father thinks she is too young to marry. But when he appears, she hesitates, but with Jo prompting her from behind the curtains, she refuses him. The girls’ wealthy Aunt Cecilia arrives, and as Brooke talks to Meg’s parents, Cecilia warns Meg not to throw herself away on a poor man and hints that Brooke is only interested in Meg because of Cecilia’s money. When Meg responds that she will only marry for love, Cecilia storms off, telling Meg she will be written out of her will. Meg accepts Brooke, then tries in vain to get Jo to accept her decision ("Things change, Jo"). – Faith Fullen

**INTERMISSION**

***L’elisir d’amore (1832)* .....Gaetano Donizetti**

Libretto by Felice Romani

(1797-1848)

Aria – “Quanto è bella”

Nemorino – Sam Varnon

Adina (super) Haley Mesz

“Quanto é bella” is the opening aria in the opera *L’Elisir d’Amore* by Gaetano Donizetti. This aria is sung by Nemorino, a poor villager who is infatuated with the beautiful farm owner Adina. In the aria, Nemorino admires Adina as she reads to other peasants, but then he hopelessly concludes Adina’s intelligence makes her unattain-

able to him. – Sam Varnon

***Fidelio* (1814)..... Ludwig van Beethoven**

Aria – “O wär ich schon mit dir vereint”  
Marzelline – Maya Anand

Marzelline, the daughter of a prison warden, falls in love with Fidelio, who is recently employed by her father. Upon recently declining a wedding proposal from her father’s assistant, Jacquino, Marzelline sings about her love for Fidelio and the future she envisions for the two of them. – Maya Anand

***Le roi d’Ys* (1888)..... Édouard Lalo**  
Libretto by Édouard Blau (1832-1892)

Aria – “Vainement, ma bien-aimée”  
Mylio – Ricky Messner  
Door Guards (supers) – Haley Mesz and Sam Varnon

Mylio, a knight who has just returned from war, is betrothed to the lovely Rozenn, one of two daughters of the King of Ys. Before the wedding ceremony with his beloved, he sits outside her chambers. He is head over heels for Rozenn, but she’s both very traditional and nervous, not allowing him to see her until their wedding. Rozenn is currently being protected by two guards, and Mylio, determined to see his love before they’re wed and blocked from doing so, proclaims his love for Rozenn from outside the room, hoping her nerves will calm and she’ll allow him to see her beforehand. – Ricky Messner

***Mignon* (1866)..... Ambroise Thomas**  
Libretto by Jules Barbier and Michel Carré (1811-1896)

Aria – “Connais-tu le pays?”  
Mignon – Brenna Donnelly  
Wilhelm Meister (super) – Ricky Messner

“Connais-tu le pays?” meaning “Know’st thou not that fair land?” is an aria from the opera *Mignon* by Ambroise Thomas. The song, performed by the titular character, tells the story of how she was kidnapped by gypsies as a child, and how she dreams of being reunited with her homeland. Mignon describes fleeting memories of her childhood to Wilhelm Meister, a kind man who saved her from being beaten by a stick when she refused to dance. Wilhelm pays the gypsy band for her freedom. Touched by his kindness, Mignon begins to fall in love with him. – Brenna Donnelly

***Regina* (1935)..... Marc Blitzstein**  
Libretto by Marc Blitzstein (1905-1964)  
(based on the play *The Little Foxes* by Lillian Hellman)

Aria – “What will it be for me?”  
Alexandra (Zan) – Kate Wyman  
Birdie (super) – Vaysia Knust

In this aria, Alexandra, or Zan, is talking with her aunt Birdie. Birdie takes Zan aside and warns her that the family is plotting to marry her to Birdie’s son Leo. Zan refuses to marry Leo, but she begins to wonder about

the person she'll fall in love with and what her future will look like. – Kate Wyman

***Le nozze di Figaro* (1786) . . . . . Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**  
Libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte (1756-1791)

Aria – “Voi, che sapete”  
Cherubino – Kennedy Kinnick  
Countess (super) – Jessica Searce  
Susanna (super) – Vaysia Knust

“Voi che sapete” in *The Marriage of Figaro* is about Cherubino, a young man who has a passion for love. He is so passionate about love he writes a song about it. He gives this song to every woman in sight. The piece somehow lands in the hands of the woman he loves the most, the Countess. Unfortunately, the Count is not very happy that Cherubino has an interest for his wife, so he prepares to send him off to the military. In this scene, Cherubino is singing his popular love song to the Countess before he leaves for his service. – Kennedy Kinnick

***Così fan tutte* (1790). . . . . W. A. Mozart**  
Libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte

Aria – “In uomini, in Soldati”  
Despina – Sophie Heimerl  
Fiordiligi (super) – Kate Wyman  
Dorabella (super) – Faith Fullen

*Così fan tutte* is an opera by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart that tells the story of two officers, Ferrando and Guglielmo, going under disguise in an attempt to seduce each other's fiancées, Dorabella and Fiordiligi, and prove their disloyalty. Ferrando and Guglielmo claim to have gone out to war, and instead return in their new disguises. This aria, “In uomini, in soldati” is sung by Despina, the maid, who mocks Dorabella and Fiordiligi for their initial despair over their lovers leaving for the war, and claims that all men have the same deceitful intent. – Sophie Heimerl

***Don Carlo* (1873). . . . . Giuseppe Verdi**  
Libretto by Joseph Méry and Camille du Locle (1813-1901)

Aria – “O don fatale”  
Princess Eboli – Tara Boydston

Princess Eboli is the lady in waiting for Queen Elisabeth de Valois, wife of King Phillip II of Spain. Eboli mistakenly receives a love letter from Don Carlos, the king's son, meant for the queen, and thinks she is the one he loves. Despite already having an affair with King Phillip, she decides to pursue Carlos anyway, and when he rejects her, she gets her vengeance by telling the king of his son and the queen's affair. This aria is her lamenting her pride and beauty after Carlos is sent to be imprisoned by the inquisition, as a consequence of her actions. – Tara Boydston

### Special Thanks To:

Rachel AuBuchon  
Peter Miyamoto  
Lucy Urlacher

### MU Voice Faculty:

Christina Ray  
Christine Seitz  
Kyle Stegall  
Steven Tharp

### MU Voice Area Graduate Assistants:

Faith Fullen  
Lucas Gonzaga da Silva

MU School of Music  
Dr. Julia Gaines, Director

### Staff:

Brooke Danielsen  
Victoria Deutsch  
Patricia Garmon  
Joanna Griffith  
David Myers  
Lucy Urlacher  
Susan Worstell

## SINGER BIOGRAPHIES

**Maya Anand**, soprano, is from Saint Louis, Missouri and is currently a sophomore at the University of Missouri. She is a dual major, pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Music and a Bachelor of Journalism. She studies voice with Christina Ray. Anand has also studied Indian classical voice and has given concerts in her hometown, as well as in India.

**Preston Bell**, bass, is a 1st-year music education major. Raised surrounded by music, it has always been woven into his genes. He has participated in choir since the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Throughout high school, he attended choral competitions and groups such as the KC Metro All-District Honor choir, and State Solo and Ensemble Festival. In his freshman year, he was awarded a silver medal for his state solos, and gold from his sophomore to senior years. Preston also participated in musical theater since the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. In his senior year in high school, he was part of a competitive one-act where he was awarded the State's best-supporting actor as the Marshal in the one-act play, *Elephant's Graveyard*. At the end of his senior year, he was awarded the National School Choral Award, the highest honor given to high school choral performers. Standing among his peers, this moment lit a fire inside him. He is motivated to continue to perform and improve himself. At the collegiate level, Preston performed in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as Snug. He hopes to continue his path of music education and bring those feelings to the next generation.

**Tara Boydston**, mezzo-soprano, is from Kansas City, Missouri. She is a senior attending the University of Missouri for Vocal Performance and Psychology, studying under Prof. Christine Seitz. She is also a member of MU's University Singers, with director Paul R. Crabb, as well as the Show-Me Opera program. She has sung many roles, including Hermia from Britten's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Marcellina from Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, and Bradamante from Handel's *Alcina*. She has also done solo work including *Efteraaslied* by Hans Abrahmsen with the Mizzou New Music Ensemble, and Mozart's *Requiem* Movement IV: Domine Jesu performed at St. Stevens in Vienna, Austria. She also qualified as a semi-finalist in the NATS regional competition both her freshman and sophomore year.

**Erin Brage**, mezzo-soprano, is from Kansas City, Missouri. She is a freshman studying Business Administration and Music with an emphasis in Composition. With her degree, she hopes to help other musicians by increasing the accessibility of music creation and performance. She attributes much of her success in singing to her first voice teacher, Jill Hemann, and her current voice professor, Christina Ray. In high school, Erin qualified to Missouri's State Solo and Ensemble competition (2019, 2020, and 2022) in both events. Though this is her first opera, she has been involved in shows since 5th grade; to name a few, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Annie Get Your Gun* (Dolly Tate), *Oklahoma* (Virginia and Ado Annie Understudy), *Into the Woods* (Assistant Stage Manager), *Fools* (Yenchna), and *Tarzan* (Snipes). In addition, for 4 years, Erin was in her school's Reader's Theatre that qualified multiple times to the State Competition (2019, 2020, and 2022); her school was declared MSHSAA Reader's Theatre State Champions (2019 and 2022). Erin has been involved in choir since 7th grade and was part of her high school chamber choir (2019 - 2022), as well as being a soprano section leader (2021 - 2022). She was a member of the KC Metro All-District Choir (2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022) as a soprano, a member of the Missouri All-State Choir (2022) and qualified to the State Sight Singing Bee (2022). She is currently part of University Singers under the direction of R. Paul Crabb, as well as Canticum Novum under the direction of Jack Grant and Megan Lyon. Erin is looking forward to being in more operas inside and outside of Mizzou.

**Elise Cressey**, soprano, is from Kansas City, Missouri and is a transfer student at the University of Missouri. She is pursuing a BA in music, as well as double majoring in Communications and a minor in Psychology. She is studying voice with Christina Ray and has also performed in a variety of shows. Since attending Mizzou, she has participated in University Singers, the university's Bach Collegium Choir, Canticum Novum, and Show-Me Opera. She competed at state festivals for solo and ensemble throughout her high school years, as well as receiving superior "1" ratings throughout them, as well as being in the 2019 Missouri All State Choir.

**Brenna Donnelly**, mezzo-soprano, is a senior at the University of Missouri who hails from Wichita, KS. Ms. Donnelly is a double major, pursuing a Bachelor of the Arts in Music as well as a Bachelor of Journalism. Ms. Donnelly is studying voice with Steven Tharp and is a member of Show-Me Opera under the direction of Christine Seitz. Ms. Donnelly has most recently been seen in Show Me-Opera's 2022 Opera Scenes as Prince Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus* and Moth in Show Me-Opera's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, as well as the 2022 Staged Arias performing the Griserie Ariette from *La Perichole*. She has played roles such as: Miles from *Turn of the Screw* and Suor Osmina from *Suor Angelica* in Show-Me Opera's 2020 Opera Scenes performances. Ms. Donnelly also covered the role of Cherubino in Show-Me Opera's production of *Le nozze di Figaro*.

**Faith Fullen**, mezzo-soprano, is from Columbus, Ohio, and is currently a first year graduate student at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Having received her Bachelor's of Music in Music Industry from Capital University, Ms. Fullen is now pursuing her Master's in Vocal Performance. Ms. Fullen is a current section leader of the



University of Missouri's University Singers, and studies voice under Kyle Stegall. Most recently, Ms. Fullen has been seen in the roles of Tom Snout in Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Show-Me Opera, Joy from Roger's and Hammerstein's *Cinderella* with Easley and Muha Productions, Dr. Alexander Manette in Jill Santoriello's *A Tale of Two Cities*, and covered the role of Lucille in Jason Robert Brown's *Parade* at Capital University.

Sopranist **Lucas Gonzaga** is from São Paulo, Brazil, and is currently a graduate student and Teaching Assistant in the Voice Area at the University of Missouri-Columbia. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music Education and is pursuing a Master of Music in Vocal Performance under Professor Steven Tharp. Gonzaga began his studies in music in 2002, studying violin for 9 years and harp for 10. As a violinist, he was named concertmaster of the Municipal Youth Orchestra of São Paulo at the age of fifteen. As a harpist, he studied with the Italian harpist Paola Baron, played on Andrea Bocelli's Brazilian tour, and has been playing professionally in orchestras ever since. Gonzaga is a former harpist of the São Paulo State Youth Orchestra as well as a former soprano at the Academic Choir of the São Paulo State Symphony Orchestra (OSESF). He was one of the winners of the 2023 Emerging Artist Competition of University of Missouri and is a member of the Show-Me Opera, having sung the role of Oberon in Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in the Spring of 2023.

**Sophie Heimerl**, soprano, is in her third year of vocal music education at the University of Missouri-Columbia, having participated in many musical activities in her time here—including University Singers, the Ars Nova ensemble, Canticum Novum, and a soprano section leader at the Columbia United Church of Christ. Her prior endeavors in Show-Me Opera include roles as an ensemble member in both Giuseppe Verdi's *Falstaff* and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, as well as Cobweb in Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

**Kennedy Kinnick**, mezzo, is from Raymore, Missouri and is a freshman at the University of Missouri. Kennedy is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance. They have been involved in University Singers and Canticum Novum. Kennedy currently studies voice with Kyle Stegall. Roles they have performed include: Winnifred the Woebegone in *Once Upon A Mattress*, Ariel Moore in *Footloose The Musical*, and most recently they performed in the opera *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as Hippolyta. They also received superior "1" ratings on all of their solos at the State Solo and Ensemble Festival and were a two year member of the Missouri All-State Choir. Kennedy also got first place in the NATS Tri-State competition for lower-level treble voices. They are absolutely thrilled to show you their growth as a musician in tonight's performance.

**Wendy Kleintank** started playing the violin when she was five years old and began singing in her Senior year of high school. She started her musical journey in Wabash, Indiana, under the instruction of Julie Sadler. While in Indiana, Wendy participated in multiple orchestras as well as chamber ensembles. She served as concertmaster for four of said orchestras, and principal second for two. When Wendy was twelve years old, she was accepted into the Manchester Symphony Orchestra, with the honor of being the youngest member to have been accepted. At age fifteen she was asked to join the Huntington University Orchestra as assistant concertmaster. Wendy has had the privilege to perform at many prestigious theaters, including Carnegie Hall with the National Youth Orchestra of the United States of America, the Kauffman Center, the Honeywell Center, the Honeywell House, the Rhinehart Music Center, and the Foellinger Theater. In 2019 Wendy competed and won first place for the MMTA State Competition in the High School Senior Strings Division on violin, she received an honorable mention from the Odyssey Aria and Concerto Competition in her senior year of high school on voice, and she received an honorable mention at the MMTA Vocal Competition in her Freshman year of college. Wendy was soprano soloist for the Farnham and Byas Playhouse's performance of Handel's *Messiah* and was asked to join the Manchester Choir in the Spring of 2022 to perform *A Family*

*Portrait* at Carnegie Hall, led by Debra Lynn. She was also asked in the Fall of 2022 to return to Carnegie Hall to play for a masterclass led by musicians from the Berlin Philharmonic and will be returning to Carnegie Hall in the Summer of 2023 to play a reunion concert with the National Youth Orchestra of the United States of America. Recently, Wendy performed the role of Tytania in Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Missouri Theater with the MU Show-Me Opera. Wendy is currently a sophomore and triple-majoring at the University of Missouri studying violin performance with Eva Szekely, voice performance with Christine Seitz, and Health Science to go into physical therapy for musician related injuries.

**Vaysia Knust**, soprano, is a sophomore at the University of Missouri Columbia where she studies Vocal Performance under Professor Christine Seitz. Vaysia has been a part of many choirs at Mizzou. She started out in only University Singers her freshman year, but is now a part of Concert Chorale, Hitt Street Harmony, and one of Mizzou's Newest ensembles, Sankofa Chorale. Outside of choir, Vaysia is also part of the University of Missouri's opera program, Show-Me Opera. She has been in this ensemble for 4 semesters and has played the parts of Iolanthe from the opera *Iolanthe*, Despina from *Così fan tutte*, Baby Doe from *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, and Lisette from *La Rondine* for Show-Me opera's scenes as well as their staged arias performance. Vaysia's most recent role has been the fairy Mustardseed in Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which was performed by Show-Me opera for the 2023 Spring Semester.

**Megan S. Lyon**, mezzo-soprano, is from Independence, Missouri. She is in her fourth year at the University of Missouri-Columbia, pursuing a B.M. in Vocal Music Education with a minor in Spanish. She is a proud student of Steven Tharp. In high school, she was a member of the auditioned chamber choir and played Little Red in *Into the Woods* her senior year. Since coming to Mizzou, she has participated in many choral ensembles, including Ars Nova, Choral Union, Concert Chorale, Canticum Novum, Hitt Street Harmony, Premiere Vocal Artists and University Singers. Megan has been working as a Conservatory Singer at Missouri United Methodist Church since Fall 2021, under the direction of Nathan Lange. This semester, she is continuing her work as an administrative assistant for Columbia Youth Choirs to further her conducting experience and work with amazing musicians in the area. Megan is also the co-conductor of student-led ensemble Canticum Novum, where she leads and gains more conducting experience while rehearsing advanced repertoire. This is her second semester in the Show-Me Opera program. She recently completed her first role as Puck in Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. She's excited to be performing in staged arias for the first time!

**Ricky Messner**, tenor, is a Senior at MU, and is currently on route to graduate with a Bachelors in Music. He hasn't been a part of any operatic productions, but has some experience doing musicals (*Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and *Peter and the Starcatcher* to name a few) and is excited to be a part of the program!

**Haley Mesz**, soprano, is from Lee's Summit, Missouri and is currently a junior at the University of Missouri-Columbia pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Music and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. She is studying voice with Christine Seitz and has been singing with the Show-Me Opera, performing the role of Helena in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, covering the role of Marcellina in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, singing soprano in the chorus of Verdi's *Falstaff*, and performing scenes, including the roles of Vitellia in Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito*, Orfeo in Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, Romilda in Handel's *Serse*, and soprano in the chorus of *Iolanthe* by Gilbert and Sullivan. In high school, Haley performed in a few shows including portraying the role of Urleen in *Footloose* and Miss Phillips in *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*. Along with that, Haley sang soprano in the Kansas City All-District Choir three years in a row. She also had the chance to intern and sing soprano in the Collegiate Choral Scholars Choir at the Kantorei Summer Choir Institute of Kansas City. Haley has competed in the local NATS competition, receiving honorable mention, and has been involved in ensembles here at Mizzou including Dr. R. Paul Crabb's University Singers, University Concert Chorale, student led Canti-

cum Novum Chamber Ensemble, and has been a part of Bach Collegium Choir.

**Jessica Scearce** is a soprano from Gower, Missouri. She is currently a junior at the University of Missouri, where she is pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in Hospitality Management, as well as a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music. She is studying with Professor Christine Seitz and has been a member of the Show-Me Opera for three years. This semester she played the role of Peter Quince in Benjamin Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, during the Show-Me Opera's annual show production. She has also sung the roles of Romilda in Handel's *Serse*, as well as Vitellia in Mozart's *La Clemenza de Tito* during the opera scenes programs. She has also performed in the chorus of Verdi's *Falstaff* as well as Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*. In addition, she has received Honorable Mention from the Missouri Music Teachers Association competition. Also, she did several productions with the East Buchanan High School Theater, and she performed in the Missouri All-State Honor Choir during high school.

**Sam Varnon**, tenor, is from Cape Girardeau, Missouri. He is a junior at the University of Missouri, where he is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Music and studies voice with Christine Seitz. As a member of Show-Me Opera, he covered the role of Lysander in the recent production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and he sang the role of Don Curzio in last year's production of *Le nozze di Figaro*. He has also sung the roles of Hawthorne in *Love in a Village*, Slender in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and Colin in *L'amant anonyme* in opera scenes programs. Sam is a member of the MU University Singers and currently serves as Vice President of the ensemble. He has previously sung in University Glee Club, Canticum Novum, and Hitt Street Harmony. Last year, Sam received the MU School of Music Sophomore Award of Merit. Additionally, in 2021, he won the Missouri Music Teachers Association voice competition in the undergraduate lower division, and he was a semifinalist in the Central Region National Association of Teachers of Singing competition in the lower classical division. Last summer, Sam spent two weeks singing in New York as a selected participant in the NYU Classical Voice Intensive.

**Kate Wyman**, soprano, is from Dexter, Missouri. She is currently a senior at the University of Missouri pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music in addition to a Bachelor of Journalism degree with a Strategic Communication emphasis. Kate is a proud voice student of Professor Kyle Stegall, and she is currently a member of University Singers and the Show-Me Opera workshop. In high school, she was a member of the Missouri All-State Choir and the Southeast Missouri All-District Choir, and was selected as Top Vocalist in her district by the National Federation of Music Clubs (NFMC) during her senior year. Kate has also been involved in a number of musical theater productions, including *High School Musical 2* at the Sikeston Little Theater, where she played the lead role of Gabriella Montez. In 2020, Kate was named as a semi-finalist in the Mid-Missouri Central Region NATS competition in the art song category. Wyman was a chorus member in the Show-Me Opera's 2021 production of *Falstaff*, and she sang the role of Due Donne in the Show-Me Opera 2022 production of *Le nozze di Figaro*. Last year, she played Euridice in a scene from Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* at the 2022 Staged Arias concert.