



Donald Chen Young Artist Award
2012 Competition

March 31, 2012, 3:00 p.m.

**Trinity United Methodist Church
1024 Lake Avenue, Wilmette, IL**

WELCOME!

The North Shore Choral Society welcomes you to the Donald Chen Young Artist Award competition.

Dr. Donald Chen retired in 2008, at the end of the North Shore Choral Society's 72nd season, after twenty-four years as our Music Director. Donald patiently led us from singing choppy notes to shaping melodic lines; challenged us with repertoire from Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* to Fanshawe's *African Sanctus*; gave us fresh perspective by comparing Brahms to wool and Duruflé to silk; and above all embodied for us the truth that music and learning and joy are intertwined. In his honor, the North Shore Choral Society established the **Donald Chen Young Artist Award**, which rewards a talented young singer with a solo role in one of our concerts each season. Thank you, Donald, for your inspired teaching and superb musicianship.

This year nine finalists have been selected from applications by singers ages 19-26 who reside in the Chicago area. Our panel of judges will hear each of the finalists sing an operatic aria and a contrasting art song or oratorio aria of his or her choice. The judges will give awards for first, second, and third prizes at the conclusion of today's competition. The first-prize winner will also be awarded a solo performance in an upcoming North Shore Choral Society concert.



The North Shore Choral Society is supported in part by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, an agency of the State of Illinois.

For further information about North Shore Choral Society, please visit our website, www.northshorechoral.org.

PROGRAM

Welcome

Anne Harkonen,
North Shore Choral Society President

Please hold your applause until each set is concluded.

Kelsey Betzelberger, soprano

Il bacio Luigi Arditi
Ah! Je veux vivre (from *Romeo et Juliette*) Charles Gounod

Mitchell Owens, tenor

Vainement, ma bien-aimée (from *Le roi d'Ys*) Édouard Lalo
If with all your hearts (from *Elijah*) Felix Mendelssohn

Rebecca Robinson, mezzo soprano

Que fais-tu, blanche tourterelle (from *Romeo et Juliette*)
Charles Gounod
Von ewiger Liebe Johannes Brahms

Corey Fretz, soprano

Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen (from *Cantata 51*) J.S. Bach
Aint it a pretty night? (from *Susannah*) Carlisle Floyd

Sarah Litchfield, mezzo soprano

Nobles seigneurs, salut! (from *Les Huguenots*)
Giacomo Meyerbeer
Anzoleta avanti la regatta (from *La regata veneziana*)
Gioachino Rossini

Christian Ketter, tenor

Dies Bildnis ist bezaubern schön (from *Die Zauberflöte*)
W. A. Mozart
Cäcilie Richard Strauss

Kasey King, soprano

Regnava nel silenzio/Quando rapito (from *Lucia di Lammermoor*)
Gaetano Donizetti
Spring Waters Sergei Rachmaninoff

Laura Sauer, mezzo soprano

Prastite Vy, Xalmy (from *The Maid of Orleans*) Pyotr Tchaikovsky
Widmung Robert Schumann

Gillian Hollis, soprano

Zerfliesse mein Herze (from *St. John Passion*) J.S. Bach
Der Hölle Rache (from *Die Zauberflöte*) W. A. Mozart

Closing Remarks

Julia Davids,
North Shore Choral Society Music Director

Awards

Donald Chen

Our Thanks

North Shore Choral Society would like to thank the distinguished panel of judges for today's competition: Dr. Donald Chen, Dr. Julia Davids, and Dr. Anne Heider. The Society is grateful to Sharon Rich Peterson, our accompanist for many years, for providing piano accompaniment for all of the competitors. Thanks also to Lenore Dupuis, Anne Harkonen, Julie McDowell, Ellen Pullin, Karen Rigotti, Phoebe Segal and Steve LaTour for their assistance in producing today's event. We are grateful to Trinity United Methodist Church for the use of their sanctuary.

Support for the Donald Chen Young Artist Award

The Choral Society maintains a separate fund to support the Donald Chen Young Artist Award. Donations may be made directly to this fund and are acknowledged in our concert program booklets. You can help make future awards possible by putting cash or a check in the designated basket in the narthex, or by sending a contribution to North Shore Choral Society, P.O. Box 103, Evanston, Illinois 60204-0103. We appreciate your support!

COMPETITORS

Kelsey Betzelberger, soprano, is a second year Masters student at Northwestern University in Chicago. She attended Chautauqua Opera's Young Artist Program in the summers of 2010 and 2011 where she made her debut as Papagena. She recently performed the role of Rosalinde in NU's winter production of *Die Fledermaus*, as well as the role of Anna Murrant in NU's 2011 production of *Street Scene*. In 2010, she was seen as Marie Antoinette in *The Ghosts of Versailles*, and she placed third at the Metropolitan Opera National Council regional auditions in Chicago. She spent the summers of 2009 and 2011 in Germany studying the language. She currently studies with Pamela Hinchman and Alan Darling, and will next be seen as

Tatyana in NU's concert production of *Eugene Onegin*. She will be spending the summer at Opera North playing Miss Silverpeal in *The Impresario* and covering Tuptim in *The King and I*.

Mitchell Owens, tenor, recently completed the required coursework for the Master of Music in Voice Performance program at North Park University, where he studies with Karen Bauer and coaches regularly with Nyela Basney. In addition to winning the 2010 North Park University Performance Awards, he has appeared at North Park in the role of Macheath in Britten's *The Beggar's Opera*, as well as in opera scenes recitals and as a soloist with both University Choir and Chamber Singers. He will also be seen in April of 2012 as Tamino in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. Other Chicago area performances include an opera scenes recital for the Chicago German Language Society under the direction of Kit Bridges and several benefit concerts at area churches. A native of Detroit, Mitchell moved to Chicago after completing a Bachelor of Music at Wayne State University in Detroit. He performed extensively at Wayne State, including roles such as The Count in *The Marriage of Figaro* and the Witch in *Hansel and Gretel*. He was also a featured soloist with Wayne State's Concert Chorale and Symphonic Chorus, performing such works as Mozart's *Regina Coeli* and *Coronation Mass* as well as Faure's *Requiem* and Dave Brubeck's *To Hope! – A Celebration*. As a soloist in the greater Detroit area, he has sung the tenor solos for Handel's *Messiah* and Saint-Saëns' *Christmas Oratorio*. In addition to performing classical repertoire, Mitchell has significant experience on the dramatic stage. Past musical theatre credits include Henrik in Sondheim's *A Little Night Music* with Wayne State University and Jean Valjean in *Les Miserables*. He has also acted in several theatrical productions, including Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* as Petruchio.

Mezzo-soprano **Rebecca Robinson** is a graduate of DePaul University and is currently a member of the Chicago Symphony Chorus. This summer she'll be joining Central City Opera as a Studio Artist. In 2011, Rebecca sang the role of Hänsel in German with the Janiec Opera Company at Brevard Music Center. Prior to that, she sang the alto solo in Mahler's Resurrection Symphony with the Redlands (CA) Symphony Orchestra and the mezzo-soprano solos in Haydn's *Missa in Angustiis* and Mozart's *Missa Brevis* with the Whatcom Chorale & Sinfonia of Bellingham, WA. Prior engagements have included Berlioz's "*Les Nuits d'Ete*" with Western Piedmont Symphony (Hickory, NC), Cole Porter songs with Northwest Indiana Symphony (Munster, IN), and the Third Lady in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* in Bruges, Belgium. Shortly after graduating from DePaul, she joined the chorus in Chicago Opera Theater's production of *Mose in Egitto*. She has served as the soloist and section leader at Resurrection Lutheran Church in Chicago

since 2007 and was a winner in Classical Singer's college division competition in 2009. Ms. Robinson has studied under the tutelage of renowned artists including Jane Bunnell, Susanne Mentzer, Karen Beardsley Peters, and the late Beverly Bower.

Lyric soprano **Corey Fretz** completed her Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance at North Park University in the spring of 2009. She began graduate studies at DePaul University's School of Music last fall. Corey has made multiple appearances with the North Park Opera program, most notably as Josephine in *Comedy on the Bridge*. In the summer of 2010 she performed the role of Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* with the Southeast Wisconsin Performing Arts. This past spring she received a Bella Voce and Bravo award from The Bel Canto Foundation of Chicago. Most recently, she was heard singing the roles of Grisostomo in *Don Quichotte auf der Hochzeit des Comacho* by Telemann and Chocholka in *The Cunning Little Vixen* with DePaul Opera Theatre.

Sara Litchfield is thrilled to be a finalist in this year's North Shore Choral Society Donald Chen Young Artist Competition. A New Mexico native, Sara began singing opera when she was 15 years old with Opera Southwest of New Mexico. Since then, she has sung with several companies across the country and throughout the Chicago area, including New Orleans Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, The Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Co. of Chicago, Opera in the Ozarks, Cedar Rapids Opera Theater and Elgin Opera. This year, Sara will begin her fifth season with the Chicago Symphony Chorus and her second season with American art song ensemble S O N G. Ms. Litchfield is very passionate about opera education and bringing opera into schools throughout the Midwest. She is currently touring with Opera for the Young, singing the role of Mother/Witch in their production of *Hansel and Gretel*, an opera in which she previously performed the role of Hansel with the Chicago-based outreach company Opera Playhouse. Other roles Sara has performed include Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Ciesca in *Gianni Schicchi*, The Duchess in *The Gondoliers*, Constance in *The Sorcerer* and Stephano in *Roméo et Juliette*. Sara received her Master of Music from the Chicago College of Performing Arts, Roosevelt University, and her Bachelor of Music from Loyola University New Orleans. She currently studies with Tracy Watson. When she is not performing around the city, Sara enjoys spending a lot of time in Wilmette, babysitting and teaching music.

Tenor **Christian Ketter** most recently had the pleasure of being musically coached and staged by composer Carlisle Floyd in a concert celebrating his works. In 2011, Mr. Ketter reprised the role of Che in Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Evita* with the Southwest Michigan Symphony Orchestra; Mario Cavaravossi in scenes from Puccini's

Tosca with the Calumet City Chamber Ensemble; and performed Radames' "Celeste Aida" from Verdi's *Aida* in a gala commissioning concert with Music by the Lake. He has sung Gaylord Ravenal in a concert performance of Jerome Kern's *Show Boat*; a televised concert of the music of Bernard Hermann and Nino Rota; and several Lyric Opera of Chicago chapter concerts. In 2010 Mr. Ketter performed various arias and duets at Ravinia in a benefit concert for the Misericordia Foundation. Recent television appearances include WGN; ABC's 190 North; and ESPN, as an opening-ceremony soloist for the UIC Flames and Northwestern Wildcats. Mr. Ketter has studied under and sung in master classes with renowned artists: legendary stage director Tito Capobianco; baritone Nathan Gunn; soprano Diana Soviero; Maestro Enrique Patrón de Rueda; the Metropolitan Opera's Joan Dornemann; film conductor David Friedman; and Verdi baritone Sherrill Milnes. With an array of musical interests from jazz piano to composition, he has two musicals in working progress with writing partner Paul W. Thompson. Mr. Ketter fulfills a personal mission of outreaching opera as an accessible art, by presenting an original five-week course to middle school students entitled "Opera's Relevance Today." In addition, he is the Artistic Director for the Chicago-based Broadway Vocal Arts Intensive (BroadwayVAI.com).

Kasey King, soprano, is a second-year Masters student at Northwestern University, studying voice and opera with Theresa Brancaccio and Richard Boldrey. During her time at Northwestern she has performed in *The Magic Flute* as Queen of the Night and in *Street Scene* as Greta Fiorentino. Other previous roles include the title role in Puccini's *Suor Angelica*, Micaela in *Carmen*, and Pamina in *The Magic Flute*. Kasey spent last Summer covering the role of Queen of the Night at Chautauqua Opera and has been a contender in many competitions, including first place in the Chicago NATS Competition. Kasey will make her next operatic appearance on the Northwestern stage performing the challenging role of Lady Billows in Britten's *Albert Herring*. She recently received an Encouragement Award from the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and an offer to attend the prestigious Boston Opera Institute in the Fall.

Laura Sauer, mezzo-soprano, is from Woodridge, IL. In the 2011-2012 season, she debuted with the Downers Grove Choral Society (Saint-Saens' *Christmas Oratorio*, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*), Salt Creek Sinfonietta (excerpts from Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* and Handel's *Messiah*) and North Shore Chamber Orchestra. A recent graduate of Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music, Laura earned both her Masters and Bachelors Degrees in Voice & Opera Performance, graduating with honors. She has sung as an apprentice with Lorin Maazel's Castleton Festival (Florence Pike cover,

Albert Herring 2009.) Chautauqua Opera (Clotilde cover, *Norma* 2010,) Sarasota Opera (Rebecca Nurse cover, *The Crucible* 2011,) and Des Moines Metro Opera (Mother Jeanne in *Dialogues of the Carmelites* 2011). Ms. Sauer has also appeared in concert with The University of Chicago's Rockefeller Concert Series, the Peninsula Music Festival, and various Northwestern University ensembles. She has received awards from Des Moines Metro Opera, the Bel Canto Foundation, the National Association of Teachers of Singing, and The American Friends of Austria. This summer, Laura will return to Des Moines Metro Opera to cover Madame Larina in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*. She will also perform excerpts from *Norma*, *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, and *Madama Butterfly*.

Gillian Hollis, soprano, is finishing her graduate work at Northwestern University, where she studies with Pamela Hinchman. She has appeared as Adele in *Die Fledermaus* and Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute*, a role she also covered for Verismo Opera Company in 2011. She has also appeared in the title role of Daisy with the Young Patronesses of the Opera in Miami, Florida, and Papagena with Florida Grand Opera's In-School Opera Program. In 2011, Ms. Hollis received the Virginia Cooper Maier Award from the Chicago Musician's Club of Women. She recently released an album of original art songs with composer Dale Trumbore. Hollis and Trumbore are currently touring the album and will appear in Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, and Maryland this year. Ms. Hollis is covering Queen of the Night this summer with Ash Lawn Opera in Charlottesville, Virginia.

PREVIOUS WINNERS

Chris Albanese, tenor
Sammi Block, mezzo-soprano
Corey Grigg, baritone
Simonetta Pacek, soprano
Anne Slovin, soprano
Sean Stanton, baritone
Alison Wahl, soprano