



American Opera Initiative Three 20-Minute Operas

May 22, 2026
WNO REHEARSAL STUDIO



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WNO REHEARSAL STUDIO
MAY 22, 2026

WASHINGTON NATIONAL OPERA

Timothy O'Leary Francesca Zambello Robert Spano
General Director Artistic Director Music Director

PRESENTS

**American Opera Initiative
Three 20-Minute Operas**

The Curse of the Magi
Music by Christopher Dietz
Libretto by Faiza Alex Manaa

The Mold and I
Music by Dan VanHassel
Libretto by Hannah Nikka Odsinada

Mickey Dee and the Eclipse
Music by David Ragland
Libretto by Anita Gonzalez

In English with projected English titles
This performance is approximately 60 minutes, with no intermission.

The American Opera Initiative is generously supported by Denise Littlefield Sobel.

THANK YOU TO OUR SEASON SPONSORS

GENERAL DYNAMICS

Jacqueline Badger Mars
Dallas Morse Coors

Welcome Letter



Dear Friends,

Welcome! We are on a new journey as a company and we are thrilled to have you join us in our rehearsal and costume shop home. This is where so much work for our seasons always takes place. And now it feels fitting to be welcoming you here to the 15th edition of the American Opera Initiative (AOI), as we continue our celebration of American music themes and stories that have been the focus for the Washington National Opera this spring with

The Crucible, *Treemonisha* and *West Side Story*. This triptych has shown some of the best of American music, a focus that will continue into the fall with repertory for next season.

We are particularly proud of this program, its homegrown projects. and the showcasing of emerging librettists and composers. Over the last 15 years, more than 50 short operas have been commissioned for the stage through AOI. Many of the composers and librettists have gone on to key commissions from operas, symphonies, and orchestras across America and Europe.

The teams chosen for AOI work with expert mentors and WNO staff to write and refine their operas in a little less than a year. Our own Music Director, Robert Spano, is passionate about new works and led the process this year alongside mentors Anthony Davis and Thulani Davis, with director Chloe Treat, who describes herself as a director and choreographer of “big-ass-musicals and opera.” Pulling everything together is our own Christopher Cano, AOI director.

One of the things I like about AOI is the short timeline from inspiration to premiere. Interestingly, I’ve found that stories that are most specific and timely for the creators often become the most universal, moving art. This year is no exception as the operas you will see tonight wrestle with topics that touch nearly everyone.

As a director, I remember how hard it was for me to find opportunities to practice my craft. You can only learn to direct opera by directing opera and it’s tough to get a foot in the door. The same is true of writing opera. With AOI, we hope to bridge the gap. Our composers and librettists learn to write for professional opera singers by writing for professional opera singers. They learn how to create characters that live and breathe by workshopping and discussing their pieces over several days. They learn about the potential of the art form by watching their work unfold in real time with the support of staging, costumes and lighting. They learn to balance orchestra and voices by hearing their work played by members of the WNO Orchestra. They learn what an audience responds to by putting something in front of an audience.



Michelle Mariposa, Tiffany Choe, and Kresley Figueroa in the 2025 AOI premiere of *Mud Girl*

A 20-minute opera tests a creative team in all the ways a full-length piece does; in fact, some mentors have confided that they feel the 20-minute form is more challenging than a longer work. These teams have risen to the challenge magnificently and I can’t wait to see what they do next. I look forward to the day when I—and the WNO family—can say, “I was there at the beginning.”

Thank you for joining us as we welcome the future. What an exciting time for new opera!

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Francesca".

Francesca Zambello
Artistic Director of WNO

Cast & Creative Team

Three 20-Minute Operas

May 22, 2026 at 7 p.m. and 9 p.m.

The Curse of the Magi

Music by **Christopher Dietz**
Libretto by **Faiza Alex Manaa**

WIFE | **Anneliese Klenetsky***
CONSULTANT | **Michelle Mariposa***
HUSBAND | **Robert Frazier***

The Mold and I

Music by **Dan VanHassel**
Libretto by **Hannah Nikka Odsinada**

KERRY | **Lauren Carroll***
THE MOLD | **Nicholas Huff***
DEVON | **Chandler Benn***

Mickey Dee and the Eclipse

Music by **David Ragland**
Libretto by **Anita Gonzalez**

KATREESHA | **Viviana Goodwin***
SOPHIE | **Michelle Mariposa***
COSMO | **Hakeem Henderson***
GEORGE | **Thandolwethu Mamba***
ANDRÉS | **Atticus Rego***

Washington National Opera Orchestra

Creative Team

CONDUCTOR | **William Long**
ARTISTIC ADVISOR | **Kelley Rourke**
COMPOSER MENTOR | **Anthony Davis**
LIBRETTIST MENTOR | **Thulani Davis**
DIRECTOR | **Chloe Treat**
COVER CONDUCTOR | **Ken Weiss**
LIGHTING DESIGNER | **A.J. Guban**
STAGE MANAGER | **Sean Corcoran**
SURTTITLES CREATOR | **Corinne M. Hayes**

Notes from the Creators

The Curse of the Magi

When marriage counseling is too time-consuming and Christmas gifts get more expensive by the second, what other option is there but to take drastic measures? Our protagonists, a husband and wife, decide that they are done with compromise and self sacrifice—instead, they have decided to sacrifice their marriage.

Only neither one of them knows.

The wife, once charmed by her husband's spontaneity, has come to resent his shortsightedness and disorganization. The husband, once enamored by his wife's confidence, has grown to feel demeaned by her headstrong personality. Rather than seek marital counseling, each spouse secretly meets with an unusual consultant for help in bringing their marriage to an end.

This piece explores what it means to exhaust all options in a struggling relationship. In an increasingly individualistic society, when do you cut your losses, and when do you hold on tighter than ever?

While our characters begin their story seemingly at the end, we maintain curiosity and conviction that there is more to see after an "after." Even when at extreme odds, or at the end of one's rope, or in the depths of despair, there is hope. As in the Quran, verse 65:3, The Divorce: "And whoever is mindful of God, He will make a way out for them."

Or as the librettist says, "Don't rush to break a window if you haven't checked that the door's unlocked."

The Curse of the Magi is an homage to O. Henry's "The Gift of the Magi," with a macabre twist.

—Christopher Dietz, composer, and Faiza Alex Manaa, librettist

The Mold and I

We can't think of many stories today that are set during the COVID-19 pandemic. The reason for this is probably simple: it still hits too close to home. We emerged from that era having changed in significant ways, and we don't want to revisit the uncertainty and pain that defined this period of physical and emotional isolation. We lived through it once—why would we decide to go back? *The Mold and I* is a pandemic story, but it doesn't linger on sordid details to mourn. Instead, it dives headfirst into the absurd, and we hope it makes you laugh.

Living in isolation has taken a toll on Kerry. She should be excited to finally move

Notes from the Creators

in with Devon, but instead she is terrified. She knows a fuller life must await her elsewhere, but choosing it means relinquishing her isolated bubble of certainty for good. And the Mold—a sentient, organic manifestation of her apartment’s desperation to keep *someone* under its roof—competes directly with Devon for Kerry’s love, manipulating her insecurities in an attempt to make her stay.

The music of *The Mold and I* employs two contrasting sound worlds: a lush, harmonically-rich landscape crafted by the Mold, who sings in seductive, flowing lines; and a noisy, percussive soundscape representing the “real world” in all its business and anxiety. A comforting sustained chord in the lush opening movement is suddenly interrupted by a single cough from Kerry, which builds into a web of loud, rhythmic material in the orchestra which underlies the action throughout the opera—at times churning in the background, at others surging to the forefront.

Kerry’s vocal production varies wildly as she struggles to decide whether to leave or stay in the familiar yet toxic confines of her apartment, ranging from the pure noise of her coughing to bravura singing, to sprechstimme and speech. Devon, hapless, is caught somewhere in between, his passionate (if a bit clueless) bel canto style gradually stagnating as he loses the ability to sing, left only with speech as he is cut out of the conversation.

We’ve found that everyone has their own interpretation of what the Mold represents, and we invite you to consider what the Mold means to you.

The Mold and I reflects our shared desire to see more comedies on the modern operatic stage. A story’s depth of meaning need not come at the expense of a willingness to be silly. After all, we could all use an extra belly laugh or two—and in times like these, they become necessary.

—Dan VanHassel, composer, and Hannah Nikka Odsinada, librettist

Mickey Dee and the Eclipse

Mickey Dee and the Eclipse was inspired by the creative team’s experiences with the solar eclipse of 2024. Time seemed to slow down. Everyone was suddenly wearing silly cardboard protective glasses to avoid sunlight. We remembered what happened when observers, in the middle of the day, paused to take in the sky. Did human beings experience each other differently? In the moment of the eclipse, people who had never really spoken marveled at the universe and started to converse with one another.

Notes from the Creators

The opera explores musical and emotional tensions between the ordinary and the extraordinary. Scored for a Britten chamber orchestra—string quintet, wind quintet, piano, and percussion—the score navigates two contrasting worlds. Music interchanges between the commercial, everyday reality of a fast-paced burger shack and the limitless realm of the cosmos. Modernist techniques—particularly within the percussion writing—help create the sonic landscape of the bustling burger shack and umbrous mystery of an eclipse.

Composer Dave Ragland wanted to honor one of his lifelong musical heroes—Richard Smallwood. His spirit and influence appear at a pivotal moment between the mother and daughter Sophie and Katreesha. Furthermore, Cosmo serves as a guiding force in both the narrative and the music. A “master of music,” Cosmo’s arrival brings liberation, self-discovery and a sense of freedom, as he encourages the ensemble of characters to “look up.”

Librettist Anita Gonzalez was inspired by a short play, *Pullman Car Hiawatha*, written by Thornton Wilder, the author of *Our Town*. Travelers in the Wilder story board a train where they first learn about each other’s lives, and then locate themselves in the universe by looking up. The roof of the train disappears as they gaze at the magnificence of the planets.

The opera also emerged from ongoing conversations between Dave and Anita about how we might bring a polyglot collective of working-class people together for a brief moment in time. The characters developed as we considered the challenges of stepping out of the day-to-day and releasing the mind from its preoccupations with daily anxieties.

The character of Cosmo was an expansion of thinking about how music might enter the consciousness of the characters without their knowing. We wanted to introduce a somewhat magical being into the quotidian space of a fast-food restaurant. The Caribbean pitchy patchy man, a whimsical carnival figure, came to mind. He would be able to disrupt the burdened thoughts of the characters with sound.

Mickey Dee and the Eclipse is a hopeful take on what might happen if Earth-bound humans really stopped, saw one another and took the time to reimagine what their life might be.

—Dave Ragland, composer, and Anita Gonzalez, librettist

The Process

Bringing 20-Minute Operas To The Stage

The three operas presented this evening were created under the American Opera Initiative (AOI). The comprehensive commissioning program was founded in 2012 by Washington National Opera to stimulate, enrich, and ensure the future of contemporary American opera by providing talented composers and librettists with mentorship and opportunities to write for the stage.

Each year, AOI commissions three 20-minute operas from teams of composers and librettists selected from across the country. Each team workshops its opera throughout the development cycle at WNO and has the invaluable experience of witnessing its work performed.

A key element of the American Opera Initiative is connecting the composers and librettists to professional mentors who have successfully brought new American operas to the stage. Mentors have included composers Anthony Davis, Ricky Ian Gordon, Jake Heggie, Laura Kaminsky, John Musto, Kevin Puts, Kamala Sankaram, Carlos Simon, and Gregory Spears; librettists Deborah Brevoort, Thulani Davis, Mark Campbell, Kimberly Reed, Gene Scheer, and Tracy K. Smith; and conductors David Bloom, John DeMain, George Manahan, Anne Manson, David Neely, Steven Osgood, and Robert Spano. The mentor team, which rotates from year to year, works closely with WNO Artistic Director Francesca Zambello and AOI Artistic Advisor Kelley Rourke.

A YEAR-LONG PROCESS

Around the beginning of each calendar year, mentors and program staff select the three composers and three librettists who will be offered commissions to write short operas that will premiere one year later. Members of this 2025–2026 cohort were selected from more than 100 applicants.

After the composer-librettist pairings are announced, each team develops and submits three “pitches.” With help from the mentor team, they consider dramatic and musical opportunities for each scenario, working within a 20-minute time frame. After deciding upon and refining a concept, they begin mapping out the “beats” of their opera, considering not only the dramatic action, but also the musical structures through which it is conveyed: aria, recitative, ensembles, recurring musical themes, etc. According to Rourke, this collaborative outlining process is new for many AOI participants, who may be playwrights without opera experience, or composers without dramatic experience.

Once the team is satisfied with the outline, the writing begins in earnest. Each commissioned work is scored for a chamber ensemble of musicians drawn from the WNO Orchestra and singers from the Cafritz Young Artist program. First versions of the scores (with piano only) are unveiled in a four-day workshop with the Cafritz Young Artists and mentors, usually sometime in September, giving the composers

The Process

and librettists a chance to hear their music performed and do some intensive rewrites from the feedback received. While in D.C., teams also meet with WNO percussionist John Spirtas to strategize about creating a percussion plot that meets the needs of all three operas, and with WNO Librarian Shelley Friedman, who reviews guidelines for producing full score and orchestral parts.

The workshop is a learning opportunity for both creators and performers, says Rourke. So often, opera singers are performing works by dead composers; here, they have the opportunity not only to ask composers and librettists about their intentions for the characters, but also to articulate information about what makes a part challenging (or gratifying) to sing. The revisions that take place during the workshop may involve tweaking the vocal lines, developing characters more fully, clarifying dramatic beats, or even landing punchlines more clearly. (Not to mention, working on meeting the 20-minute limit in length.)

Revised piano-vocal scores serve as a basis for orchestrated scores, which are completed in the final months of the calendar year, with input from the conductor who will lead the world premiere AOI performances. Clarity in the score and libretto can ease the rehearsals that begin in early January—just as the incoming composers and librettists begin working on their pitches for a new set of mentors.

About Cafritz Young Artists

These performances of new operas created under the American Opera Initiative feature members of the Cafritz Young Artists Program. This WNO initiative offers coaching, career guidance, and performance opportunities for singers and pianists/coaches on the verge of international careers. Each season Cafritz Young Artists are also spotlighted in mainstage productions.

Cafritz Young Artists graduates have gone on to successful careers including performances with the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, LA Opera, The Glimmerglass Festival, Santa Fe Opera, Carnegie Hall, Bayreuth Festival, Glyndebourne Festival, Vienna State Opera, and Berlin State Opera. Cafritz Young Artist Michelle Mariposa, mezzo-soprano, was a Grand Finals winner of the 2025 Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition.

For more on the Cafritz Young Artists, visit the WNO website at washnatopera.org/cafritz-young-artists.



The 2025–2026 Cafritz Young Artists

Meet the Mentors



Anthony Davis
COMPOSER MENTOR

WNO History: AOI (Composer Mentor), 2020–2021

Past: An internationally recognized composer of operas, symphonic and choral music and chambers works, Anthony Davis has been on the cutting edge of improvised music and jazz for over four decades. He has written eight operas, including *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X* (1986), *Under the Double Moon* (1989), *Amistad* (1997), *Wakonda's Dream* (2007), and *The Central Park Five* (2020 Pulitzer Prize for Music). He was elected as a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 2021 and inducted into Opera America's Opera Hall of Fame in 2023.



Thulani Davis
LIBRETTIST MENTOR

WNO History: WNO debut

Past: An interdisciplinary scholar, veteran journalist, and a writer working in theater, fiction, and non-fiction, Thulani Davis is currently working on a study entitled *Improviser Country: Itinerant Black Performance in the Mississippi Valley*. She has received the 2023 MAAH Stone Book Award, a Lila Wallace-Readers Digest Writers Award, PEW Foundation National Theatre Artist Residency, Charles H. Revson Fellowship on the Future of New York City, and was an inaugural fellow of the Leon Levy Center for Biography in New York. Davis was the first woman to win a Grammy for liner notes and is a two-time Grammy nominee as opera librettist.

Meet the Composers



Christopher Dietz
COMPOSER | *THE CURSE OF THE MAGI*

WNO History: WNO debut

Past: Christopher Dietz composes music inspired by a wide variety of sources, both real and conceptual. Poetry, sound as sculpture and color, how toddlers play, deep time and the cosmos, rhythm as geometry, religion and politics, animal behavior, and the music of others have informed his musical imagination. His music has been performed by contemporary ensembles including Alarm Will Sound, Tacet (!), and Ensemble Échappé as well as traditional ensembles such as L'Orchestre de la Francophonie and the San Jose Chamber Orchestra, among others. He teaches composition at Bowling Green State University in Ohio.



Dan VanHassel
COMPOSER | *THE MOLD AND I*

WNO History: WNO debut

Past: Composer and multi-instrumentalist Dan VanHassel's music has been presented by the MATA Festival, Gaudeamus Music Week, ICMC, Bowling Green New Music Festival, Bang on a Can Summer Festival, and ensembles including Splinter Reeds, UCSC Wind Ensemble, and Transient Canvas. He is artistic director and guitarist of the Hinge Quartet and was a founding member of Wild Rumpus (now Ninth Planet). He studied composition at UC Berkeley, New England Conservatory, and Carnegie Mellon, and is currently assistant professor of composition at the Boston Conservatory at Berklee.

Meet the Composers



David Ragland
COMPOSER | *MICKEY DEE AND THE ECLIPSE*

WNO History: WNO debut

Past: David Ragland is a four-time Emmy-nominated composer, vocalist, and educator. Honors include the 2022 Adams-Owens Composition Prize, Antinori Grand Prize of The Atlanta Opera's 96-Hour Opera Project, and First Place in the 2021 American Prize in Composition. He was the 2020 Grady-Rayam Composer-In-Residence. As artist-in-residence for OZ Arts Nashville, he premiered his opera *Steal Away*. Operas include *One Vote Won*, Nashville Opera; *Beatrice*, Portland Opera; *Charlie and the Wolf*, Cedar Rapids Opera. Recent orchestral premieres include *African Queens*, Naples Philharmonic; *Harmony of the Unheard*. Oakland Symphony.

Meet the Librettists



Faiza Alex Manaa
LIBRETTIST | *THE CURSE OF THE MAGI*

WNO History: WNO debut

Past: Faiza Alex Manaa is a Brooklyn-based Egyptian-American writer. She is passionate about arts accessibility, and highlighting Arab and Muslim culture, women empowerment, and intersectionality in her work. Projects include *Middle Eastern in the Midwest*, *Windy*, *Another Cousin's Wedding*, and *Illest Dance*. Her works have been performed at 54 Below, Joe's Pub, Goodspeed Opera House, and more. She graduated from Northwestern University and earned a master's in fine arts from NYU Tisch.



Hannah Nikka Odsinada
LIBRETTIST | *THE MOLD AND I*

WNO History: WNO debut

Past: Hannah Nikka Odsinada is a writer and vocalist based in Seattle. As a librettist, she has received commissions from Seattle Opera and is an alum of Seattle Opera's Jane Lang Davis Creation Lab and Guerilla Opera's Libretto Lab. Influenced by an extensive education in voice and theater, her stories follow characters who yearn for belonging in worlds that never quite accepted them. *The Mold and I* is her fourth opera. She holds a bachelor's degree in voice performance.

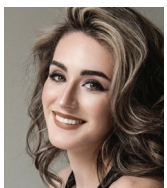


Anita Gonzalez
LIBRETTIST | *MICKEY DEE AND THE ECLIPSE*

WNO History: WNO debut

Past: Anita Gonzalez is a professor at Georgetown University and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. From Opera America she has received a 2025 Women Composers commissioning grant for *Finding the Light* and a 2024 IDEA grant for *Faces in the Flames*. Librettos: *Brathwaite's Mecca*, *Forever Entwined*, American Opera Projects; *Faces in the Flames*, Atlanta Opera 96-Hour Opera Project; *Courthouse Bells*, Boston Opera Collaborative; *Finding the Light*, Opera Ebony; Musicals: *Kumanana*, Gala Hispanic; *Ybor City*, Latiné Musical Theatre Lab; She was a 2023–2025 fellow with American Opera Projects Composers and the Voice.

Meet the Cast



Anneliese Klenetsky

SOPRANO | WIFE, *THE CURSE OF THE MAGI*

WNO History: *The Crucible* (Sarah Good/Ruth Putnam), *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* (Chrisann Brennan), American Opera Initiative (Connie in *Tati*), *Macbeth* (Lady-in-Waiting), *Gods & Mortals*, 2024–2025

Past: *Alcina* (Alcina), Yale Opera; *Cold Mountain* (Ada), Music Academy of the West; *La traviata* (Violetta, cover), *Der Rosenkavalier* (Dressmaker, cover), Santa Fe Opera; *Turn of the Screw* (Governess); *Clori, Tirsi e Fileno* (Clori); *L'enfant et les sortilèges* (La Bergère); district winner of The Metropolitan Opera's Laffont Competition, finalist of the Butler International Competition



Michelle Mariposa

MEZZO-SOPRANO | CONSULTANT, *THE CURSE OF THE MAGI*
SOPHIE, *MICKY DEE AND THE ECLIPSE*

WNO History: *The Crucible* (Rebecca Nurse), *The Little Prince* (The Fox / A Rose), *The Marriage of Figaro* (Marcellina), 2025–2026; *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* (Teacher), American Opera Initiative (Poly 2 in *Mud Girl*), *Jungle Book* (Raksha), *Gods & Mortals*, 2024–2025

Past: *The Nose* (Ensemble, Countess, Podtochina cover), Chicago Opera Theater; winner, 2025 Metropolitan Opera Eric and Dominique Laffont Competition, the Lynne Cooper Harvey Foundation Award in the Musicians Club of Women 2024 Vocal Competition, the Sullivan Award from the Sullivan Foundation



Robert Frazier

BASS-BARITONE | HUSBAND, *THE CURSE OF THE MAGI*

WNO History: *The Crucible* (Reverend John Hale), *The Marriage of Figaro* (Figaro), 2025–2026

Past: *The Marriage of Figaro* (Figaro); *Così fan tutte* (Don Alfonso, Guglielmo); *The Magic Flute* (Sarastro, Sprecher); *Cendrillon* (Pandolfe); *Dialogues des Carmélites* (Marquis de la Force); John Carroll's *Troubleshooting* (Rory); Leigha Amick's *Rhiannon's Condemnation* (Iorwert); *Salome* (Cappadocian), *American Apollo* (Jimmy O'Donnely/Mr. Carhart), Des Moines Opera



Lauren Carroll

SOPRANO | KERRY, *THE MOLD AND I*

WNO History: *The Crucible* (Abigail Williams), *The Little Prince* (The Rose / A Rose), *Aida* (Priestess), *The Marriage of Figaro* (Barbarina), 2025–2026

Past: *The Marriage of Figaro* (Babarina), *Roméo et Juliette* (Juliette, cover), *La traviata* (Violetta, cover), Palm Beach Opera; *Così fan tutte* (Fiordiligi), Aspen Music Festival; *Carmen* (Frasquita, cover), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Helena, cover), Des Moines Metro Opera; National Semifinalist, Metropolitan Opera Eric and Dominique Laffont Competition; third prize winner, 2025 Houston Grand Opera's Eleanor McCollum Competition for Young Singers

Meet the Cast



Nicholas Huff

TENOR | THE MOLD, *THE MOLD AND I*

WNO History: *The Crucible* (Giles Corey), *The Little Prince* (The Drunkard / Lamplighter/ Baobab / Hunter), *The Marriage of Figaro* (Don Basilio), *Aida* (Messenger), 2025–2026; *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* (Steve Wozniak), American Opera Initiative (Zach in *Cry, Wolf*), *Jungle Book* (Shere Khan), *Macbeth* (Malcolm), 2024–2025

Past: *Don Giovanni* (Don Ottavio), *The Turn of the Screw* (Peter Quint), *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Mitch), Florida Grand Opera; *If I Were You* (Fabian Hart), Merola Opera; *The Magic Flute* (Tamino), Opera Fort Collins; *L'elisir d'amore* (Nemorino), Miami Lyric Opera



Chandler Benn

BARITONE | DEVON, *THE MOLD AND I*

WNO History: *The Crucible* (Thomas Putnam), *The Little Prince* (The Pilot), *The Marriage of Figaro* (Antonio), 2025–2026

Past: *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay* (Joe Kavalier), world premiere co-production, Metropolitan Opera and Indiana University Jacobs School of Music; title roles, *Don Giovanni* and *The Marriage of Figaro*; *The Merry Widow* (Danilo Danilovich)



Viviana Goodwin

SOPRANO | KATREESHA, *MICKY DEE AND THE ECLIPSE*

WNO History: *Treemonisha* (title role); *The Little Prince* (The Water / A Rose), *The Marriage of Figaro* (Susanna), 2025–2026; *Porgy & Bess* (Clara), *American Rhapsody*, American Opera Initiative (Maysoon in *Tati*), *Macbeth* (Crowned Child), *Gods & Mortals*, *Jungle Book* (Hyena), 2024–2025

Past: *Orphée et Eurydice* (Eurydice), *The Rake's Progress* (Anne Truelove), *Don Giovanni* (Donna Elvira), *Die tote Stadt* (Marietta), *La bohème* (Musetta), and *Charlie And The Wolf*, Cedar Rapids Opera



Hakeem Henderson

TENOR | COSMO, *MICKY DEE AND THE ECLIPSE*

WNO History: *Treemonisha* (Andy), *The Little Prince* (The Snake / Vain Man / Baobab / Hunter), *The Marriage of Figaro* (Don Curzio), 2025–2026

Past: *Treemonisha* (Cephus), *The Marriage of Figaro* (Don Curzio), *The Cask of Amontillado* (Fortunato), *Into the Woods* (Rapunzel's Prince), Bernstein's *MASS* (Street Chorus), *West Side Story* (Big Deal) at 2019 Edinburgh International Festival



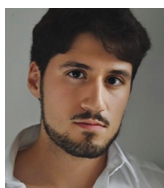
Thandolwethu Mamba

BARITONE | GEORGE, *MICKY DEE AND THE ECLIPSE*

WNO History: *Treemonisha* (Simon), *The Little Prince* (The Businessman / Baobab / Hunter), *The Marriage of Figaro* (Count Almaviva), 2025–2026

Past: *X: The Life and Times of Malcom X* (Afrofuturistic Ensemble), Metropolitan Opera; *La Fanciulla del West* (Sonora), North Carolina Opera; *The Marriage of Figaro* (Figaro), *Gianni Schicchi* (Gianni), *La traviata* (Baron Duophol), *Carmen* (Dancaïro), performances with Opera Orlando, Opera Wilmington, Frost Opera Theater, Si parla, si canta, Opera Theatre of St. Louis and Florida Grand Opera

Meet the Artists



Atticus Rego

BASS | ANDRÉS, *MICKY DEE AND THE ECLIPSE*

WNO History: *The Crucible* (Francis Nurse), *The Little Prince* (The King / Baobab / Hunter), *The Marriage of Figaro* (Dr. Bartolo), 2025–2026

Past: *The Marriage of Figaro* (Dr. Bartolo), *Agrippina* (Claudio), *Sweeney Todd* (Judge Turpin, cover), *Carmen* (Zuniga, cover), *The Marriage of Figaro* (Dr. Bartolo, cover), performances with Chautauqua Opera Company, Wolf Trap Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago Chorus, Cincinnati Opera Chorus

Meet the Creative Team



William Long

CONDUCTOR

WNO History: *Carmen* (conductor), 2021–2022; cover conductor for *The Crucible*, 2025–2026; *La bohème*, 2022–2023; *Eugene Onegin*, 2018–2019; *Candide*, *Proving Up*, WNO Gala, 2017–2018; *Champion*, 2016–2017

Past: London Symphony Orchestra; Met Orchestra Chamber Ensemble at Carnegie Hall; *Hansel and Gretel*, Houston Grand Opera; *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, Opera Theater of Saint Louis/Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra; *L'enfant et les sortilèges*, Music Academy of the West; Metropolitan Opera assistant conductor, 2021–present; San Francisco Opera assistant conductor, 2018–2023; Solti Foundation Grant Recipient 2023 and 2025



Chloe Treat

DIRECTOR

WNO History: American Opera Initiative, 2024–2025

Past: Chloe Treat is a New York-based director and choreographer whose credits include *Natasha*, *Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812* (Shanghai Grand Theatre), American Opera Initiative, and *The Zionists* (Miami New Drama). She was listed as one of the Broadway Women's Fund "Women to Watch" in 2020 and received a grant from Opera America for women stage directors and conductors in 2022. Her ultimate goal as a director is to create spaces that value equally both artistic excellence and treating people well.

Ken Weiss

COVER CONDUCTOR

WNO History: Weiss has been involved in dozens of WNO productions since 1999 in roles including assistant conductor, cover conductor, diction coach, pianist, chorus master, music coach, and more.

Past: Weiss has served as music administrator, coach of the Cafritz Young Artists, assistant conductor, cover conductor, and principal coach with the Washington National Opera for over 20 years. He has also served as a lecturer at the Smithsonian Institute.

Production Team



Sean Corcoran[▲]

STAGE MANAGER

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