

**Washington National Opera's Cafritz Young Artists Program Present  
Menotti's *Old Maid and the Thief*, April 16 at 7 p.m.**

*Audiences invited to attend with an accessible "pay what you can" donation*

**(Washington, D.C.)**—Washington National Opera's Cafritz Young Artists Program will perform Gian Carlo Menotti's *The Old Maid and the Thief* on Thursday, April 16 at 7 p.m. at the WNO Studio in Washington, D.C. Audiences are invited to "pay what you can," with a suggested donation starting at \$15 to support the Cafritz Young Artist Program (CYAP). *Tickets are required; visit <https://washnatopera.org/productions>.*

The production is Cafritz Young Artists Program's "Project Presentation," in which Young Artists are purposely given very little time to learn and rehearse a production to simulate the real-world experience of stepping into an opportunity on short notice—a skill that is often very necessary for professional opera singers. "WNO's Cafritz Young Artists Program's Project Presentation gives our Young Artists the unique opportunity to prepare and perform a full production in just under a week," says CYAP Director **Christopher Cano**. "At some point in their careers, every artist is called upon to step in at the last minute, often under challenging circumstances. This program allows them to stretch their creative wings, take on new roles, and develop that essential flexibility in a supportive and empowering environment."

The *Old Maid and the Thief* by Gian Carlo Menotti is a witty and satirical one-act opera that explores morality, temptation, and the allure of the forbidden. Set in a small town, the story centers on two seemingly respectable women—Miss Todd, played by **Veronica Siebert**, and her maid Letitia, played by **Viviana Goodwin**—whose curiosity and hunger for excitement lead them into increasingly questionable behavior when they harbor a handsome drifter, Bob, played by **Chandler Benn**. As gossip spreads, the town busybody Miss Pinkerton, played by **Anneliese Klenetsky**, fuels suspicion and intrigue. What follows is a comedic unraveling that cleverly suggests it is often those who appear most proper who are quickest to abandon their principles.

"Washington National Opera's Cafritz Young Artists Program is at the heart of WNO's mission to nurture the next generation of operatic talent," says WNO General Director **Timothy O'Leary**. "This year's class of artists is exceptional, both their appearances through the D.C. community and in vital roles in main stage productions. With this performance, we're pleased to open wide the doors of WNO's rehearsal studio, which enables us to make this event accessible through our 'pay-what-you-can' approach."

"We're proud to highlight this production as part of our ongoing commitment to American works," says WNO Artistic Director **Francesca Zambello**. "Menotti has a deep and meaningful connection to WNO as we have produced many of his operas over the years. It's especially gratifying to rekindle that relationship and celebrate his legacy as a composer who created a kind of American *verismo* style."

## COMPLETE EVENT DETAILS

### *The Old Maid and the Thief (CYA Project Presentation)*

**Music and libretto by Gian Carlo Menotti**

Thursday, April 16, at 7pm (Doors open at 6:30pm)

WNO Rehearsal Studio – 2625 Willow St. NW, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Washington, D.C. 20012

*In English*

Letitia	Viviana Goodwin*
Bob	Chandler Benn*
Miss Pinkerton	Anneliese Klenetsky*
Miss Todd	Veronica Siebert*
Stage Direction	Alison Pogorelc
Music Director/Pianist	Deven Shah*

*\*Cafritz Young Artist*

### ABOUT WASHINGTON NATIONAL OPERA

(WNO) is one of the world's leading opera companies. Led by General Director Timothy O'Leary, Artistic Director Francesca Zambello, and Music Director Robert Spano, WNO presents a wide-ranging repertory spanning beloved classics, contemporary works, and newly commissioned operas, collaborating with many of opera's greatest luminaries, including Christine Goerke, Denyce Graves, Renée Fleming, J'Nai Bridges, and Ryan McKinny. Founded in 1956, WNO celebrates its 70th anniversary in 2026, a year that also marks its return to operating as a fully independent company. Recent seasons have featured acclaimed productions of *Aida*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, and a landmark *Turandot* with a newly commissioned ending by Christopher Tin and Susan Soon He Stanton. WNO's legacy includes Zambello's internationally celebrated Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* cycle, the D.C. premiere of Jenine Tesori's *Blue* and *Grounded*—a WNO co-commission—and the world premiere of Philip Glass' *Appomattox*.

WNO is also internationally recognized for its education and community engagement initiatives, including the American Opera Initiative, the Cafritz Young Artist Program, the WNO Opera Institute, and Opera in the Outfield, which advance its mission to make opera vital, accessible, and artistically ambitious in the nation's capital. Beyond the main stage, WNO artists bring opera into the community through initiatives such as workshops with incarcerated youth at the Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Center, educational programs at the Library of Congress exploring themes from the season's repertory, and performances and musical events in venues throughout the Washington region.

### **MEDIA CONTACT:**

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