



PRESENTS

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JEANNETTE SEGEL



FOURTEENTH ANNUAL
JANUARY 16 – MARCH 5 | APRIL 6 – APRIL 25, 2026

GREETINGS FROM THE LEADERSHIP OF THE TUCSON DESERT SONG FESTIVAL

As TDSF enters our fourteenth season, we thank all of you for being with us on this journey! Our supporters, led by an outstanding board of directors and a generous community of donors, have made it possible for our festival to transform cultural life in Tucson. The vision of founders Jack Forsythe and Cecile Follansbee, plus tons of hard work by a devoted group of music lovers, created something unique and lasting, establishing the Tucson Desert Song Festival as *America's Winter Festival of the Voice*.

Fourteen years ago, it was hard to imagine Tucson's performing arts organizations, coordinating and collaborating with mutually supportive programming. Few could dream of Tucson being regarded as a cultural destination for many of the greatest singers in the world. Today, we are grateful to be able to say we achieved both of those goals, and with your continued support, we will continue to grow.

For 2026, TDSF brings to Tucson the premiere of a Festival-commissioned song cycle by lauded American composer Gregory Spears, extraordinary vocalists from the most important venues in the world share the stage with Tucson's performing arts groups, and education and outreach continue to expand, inspiring future musicians and music lovers.

We are honored to be part of this wonderful organization and grateful to the supporters who have made it possible for TDSF to bring great voices to Tucson.



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Jeannette J. Segel
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Julia Pernet

Julia Pernet
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Artistic Advisory
Committee Co-Chair



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Juliana Osinchuck
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***In Memoriam*

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Arizona Friends of Chamber Music	<i>arizonachambermusic.org</i>
Arizona Opera	<i>azopera.org</i>
Arizona Theater Company	<i>atc.org</i>
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Tucson Guitar Society	<i>tucsonguitarsociety.org</i>
Tucson Jazz Festival	<i>tucsonjazzfestival.org</i>
Tucson Symphony Orchestra	<i>tucsonsymphony.org</i>
University of Arizona School of Dance	<i>dance.arizona.edu</i>
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OVERVIEW OF PERFORMANCES

JAN 16–18 | “MUSIC OF THE PIONEERS” FEATURING WILL LIVERMAN, BARITONE

4pm Jan 16, Valley Presbyterian Church | 4pm Jan 17, Catalina United Methodist Church
3pm Jan 18, Catalina Foothills High School | True Concord Voices & Orchestra | Tickets: trueconcord.org

This All-American program—performed by the True Concord Choir and Chamber Players with soloist Metropolitan Opera star **Will Liverman**—includes Copland’s *Old American Songs*, featuring *Shall We Gather at the River* and the beloved *Simple Gifts*, as well as folk songs by Stephen Foster, Spiritual arrangements by William Grant Still, and music of the Sacred Harp tradition, perhaps the oldest form of truly American music.

JAN 20 | RECITAL: WILL LIVERMAN, BARITONE WITH PIANIST MADELINE SLETTEDAHL

7pm | Holsclaw Hall, UA School of Music | True Concord Voices & Orchestra | Tickets: trueconcord.org

In a “breakout performance” (*The New York Times*) opening the Met’s 21-22 season, “velvet-voiced baritone” (NPR) **Will Liverman** headlined Terence Blanchard’s celebrated *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, which won the 2023 GRAMMY Award for Best Opera Recording. Hailed as “glorious” (*BBC Music*) and “spellbinding” (*San Francisco Classical Voice*), his album *Show Me The Way* was nominated in 2025 for GRAMMY for Best Classical Solo Vocal Album. Don’t miss this rare, intimate performance of “a voice for this historic moment” (*The Washington Post*) in a program of American composers.

JAN 23 & 25 | DEBUSSY’S LA MER AND BERLIOZ’S CLÉOPÂTRE FEATURING ANGELA BROWER, MEZZO-SOPRANO

7:30pm Jan 23 | 2pm Jan 25 | Linda Ronstadt Music Hall | Tucson Symphony Orchestra | Tickets: tucsonsymphony.org

Globe-trotting mezzo-soprano **Angela Brower** is the soloist for Berlioz’s cantata *Cléopâtre*, studded with lush orchestral sections and dramatic vocal writing as she depicts the heroine’s final moments. Debussy’s impressionistic symphonic tone poems, *La mer* and *Ibéria*, are featured in this all-French–Iberian Peninsula program. Maestro Gomez also introduces the music of Messiaen with the grief-stricken *Le tombeau resplendissant*.

JAN 23 | CONCERT: VOCALIST DEE DEE BRIDGEWATER WITH PIANIST BILL CHARLAP

7:30pm | Fox Theatre Tucson | Tucson Jazz Festival | Tickets: tucsonjazzfestival.org

The Tucson Jazz Festival welcomes two GRAMMY winners, **Dee Dee Bridgewater** and **Bill Charlap**, to the Fox Tucson Theatre. Bridgewater, an NEA Jazz Master and fearless jazz vocalist, joins Charlap, one of today’s premier pianists, for a rare duo concert. Together, they bring their acclaimed 2023 album *Elemental* to life, blending virtuosity, storytelling, and improvisation in an unforgettable evening of world-class jazz.

OVERVIEW OF PERFORMANCES

JAN 25 | **RECITAL: ELENA RIVERA, SOPRANO WITH GUITARIST JOAQUIN CLERCH**

7pm | Holsclaw Hall, UA School of Music | Tucson Guitar Society | Tickets: tucsonguitarsociety.org

Mexican soprano **Elena Rivera** has performed to acclaim in major venues throughout Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas in opera, concert, and recital. In 2020, Rivera and the string quartet Cuarteto Latinoamericano received a Latin GRAMMY nomination for Best Classical Album. Joining her onstage is **Joaquín Clerch**, an award-winning Cuban classical guitarist, composer, and educator. He is a leading guitar pedagogue, and his work as a performer has taken him to leading concert halls around the world.

JAN 25–FEB 14 | **AIN'T MISBEHAVIN': A MUSICAL REVUE TRIBUTE TO FATS WALLER & THE GOLDEN AGE OF JAZZ**

Full schedule of performances available at atc.org | Temple of Music & Art | Arizona Theater Company | Tickets: atc.org

This three-time Tony Award-winning revue is a jubilant tribute to Fats Waller's legacy and the enduring charm of swing and jazz. Get ready to jump, jive, and groove as a cast of extraordinary performers brings Waller's timeless music of the Golden Age of Jazz to life. From the sassy to the soulful, you'll be swept away by iconic hits in this dazzling tribute to the music of the Harlem Renaissance.

JAN 28 | **NEW DIRECTIONS IN SONG FEATURING SINGERS FROM THE UA SCHOOL OF MUSIC**

12pm | Holsclaw Hall, UA School of Music | Free Admission

Singers from the UA School of Music present a recital of contemporary art song, featuring new trends and discoveries. Hosted by faculty artist and Chair of Vocal Studies **Dr. Kristin Dauphinais**.

JAN 28 | **RECITAL: KAREN SLACK, SOPRANO & MIRÓ QUARTET FEATURING A WORLD PREMIERE BY TAMAR-KALI**

7:30pm | Leo Rich Theater | Arizona Friends of Chamber Music | Tickets: arizonachambermusic.org

GRAMMY Award-winning soprano **Karen Slack** and **Miró Quartet** collaborate with heralded composer Tamar-kali—whose work spans contemporary pop, classical, and film scores—to create this special celebration of the life, times, and compositions of Margaret Bonds. Tamar-kali's new work, co-commissioned by Arizona Friends of Chamber Music, sets the inspirational poetry of women of the Harlem Renaissance. The program features additional repertoire by Florence Price, William Grant Still, and George Walker.

JAN 31 & FEB 1 | **MOZART'S REQUIEM**

2pm Jan 31 & Feb 1 | 7:30pm Jan 31 | Catalina Foothills High School | Tucson Symphony Orchestra
Tickets: tucsonsymphony.org

Mozart died at the age of 35 before he was able to complete his masterful *Requiem*. Maestro Gomez has conceived a "completion" by commissioning local composer Dan Coleman to create a work, connecting the *Requiem* to Mozart's choral gem *Ave verum corpus*. A distinguished quartet of soloists joins the TSO Chorus: **Angela Brower**, mezzo-soprano; **Zoe Allen**, soprano; **Omar Najmi**, tenor; and **Edward Vogel**, baritone.

OVERVIEW OF PERFORMANCES

FEB 7 | **PUCCINI'S MADAMA BUTTERFLY**

2pm | Linda Ronstadt Music Hall | Arizona Opera | Tickets: azopera.org

Immerse yourself in Puccini's timeless masterpiece, *Madama Butterfly*—a story of hope, longing, and ultimate sacrifice—sung by a distinguished cast led by **Karen Chia-ling Ho** as Cio-Cio-San, **Terrence Chin Loy** as Lt. Pinkerton, **Alice Chung** as Suzuki, and **Alexander Birch Elliott** as Sharpless. With some of the most exquisite arias and tender duets ever composed, this is an operatic journey of unmatched beauty and emotional depth that has captivated audiences for generations.

FEB 8 | **RECITAL: DAVÓNE TINES, BASS-BARITONE & RUCKUS, "WHAT IS YOUR HAND IN THIS?"**

3pm | Grace St. Paul's Episcopal Church | Arizona Early Music | Tickets: azearlymusic.org

Curated by acclaimed bass-baritone **Davóne Tines**, "What is Your Hand in This?" takes audiences on a powerful journey through four centuries of songs, hymns, ballads, and newly commissioned works by Tines and **Ruckus**, an NYC-based ensemble fusing early-music's questing spirit with the grit and groove of American roots music. As the nation reflects on the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, this program asks: How can this fragile American experiment hold? Can we find compassion for others? Can you find compassion for yourself?

FEB 19–22 | **BROADWAY SINGER / DANCER D. JEROME & THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA TRAVELING DANCE ENSEMBLE**

7pm Feb 19, 20, & 21 | 1pm Feb 21 & 22 | Stevie Eller Dance Theatre, UA School of Dance

University of Arizona School of Dance | Tickets: dance.arizona.edu

The 2026 UA School of Dance Student Success Scholarship Series features performances by the U of A Traveling Dance Ensemble, original works by faculty and students, and guest artist up-and-coming Broadway singer, dancer, and actor **D. Jerome**. Considered a "formidable triple threat" and skilled choreographer, Jerome has performed to acclaim in *MJ the Musical* on Broadway, the 22-23 national tour of *Hamilton*, and currently as the Tin Man in the first national tour of *The Wiz*!

FEB 27–MAR 1 | **"DESERT VOICES" FEATURING HIMIKO WITH ERIKA BURKHART, SOPRANO & DUO CHINOISERIE; & THE WORLD PREMIERE OF DESERT DWELLER, ACCOMPANIED BY THE COMPOSER, GUITARIST MISAEL BARRAZA-DÍAZ**

7pm Feb 27 & 28 | 2pm Feb 28 & Mar 1 | Temple of Music & Art | Ballet Tucson & Tucson Guitar Society

Tickets: ballettucson.org

Ballet Tucson continues its longtime partnership with TDSF and Tucson Guitar Society with the highly anticipated return of Chieko Imada's *Himiko*, featuring a blend of ballet and traditional Japanese dance, set to the music by Yusuke Nakanishi performed by celebrated ensemble **Duo Chinoiserie** (**Bin Hu**, guitar & **Jing Xia**, guzheng) and soprano **Erika Burkhardt**. The program will also include the World Premiere of *Desert Dweller* by Tucson native Margaret Mullin, set to the music of renowned guitarist **Misael Barraza-Díaz**, who will accompany the performance.

OVERVIEW OF PERFORMANCES

MAR 5 | RECITAL: JAMIE BARTON, MEZZO-SOPRANO WITH PIANIST KATHLEEN KELLY

7pm | Holsclaw Hall, UA School of Music | Arizona Opera | Tickets: azopera.org

Arizona Opera presents **Jamie Barton**, celebrated mezzo-soprano, in recital. Critically acclaimed by virtually every major outlet covering classical music, Barton is a winner of the Beverly Sills Artist Award, Richard Tucker Award, and BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition. Joining Barton at the piano is distinguished conductor, pianist, and coach **Kathleen Kelly**.

MAR 6 | JAMIE BARTON MASTERCLASS

11am | Holsclaw Hall, UA School of Music | Arizona Opera | Free & open to the public

Singers from the UA School of Music participate in a masterclass led by celebrated mezzo-soprano **Jamie Barton**.

APR 6 | IN CONVERSATION WITH JENNIFER JOHNSON CANO & CHRISTOPHER CANO

6:30pm | Holsclaw Hall, UA School of Music | True Concord Voices & Orchestra | Free Admission

Join us for a lively discussion with the husband-wife duo of **Jennifer Johnson Cano**, mezzo-soprano and pianist **Christopher Cano** about the World Premiere of a new TDSF-commissioned song cycle by composer Gregory Spears. The work will premiere the following evening, April 7th, at 7pm in Holsclaw Hall as part of a larger program.

APR 7 | RECITAL: JENNIFER JOHNSON CANO, MEZZO-SOPRANO WITH PIANIST CHRISTOPHER CANO FEATURING THE WORLD PREMIERE OF A TDSF-COMMISSIONED SONG CYCLE BY GREGORY SPEARS

7pm recital | 6pm pre-concert talk with the composer | Holsclaw Hall, UA School of Music
True Concord Voices & Orchestra | Tickets: trueconcord.org

With credentials too numerous to list, **Jennifer Johnson Cano's** performances range from the Chicago Symphony and Los Angeles Philharmonic to Houston Grand Opera, Santa Fe Opera, and more than 100 performances on stage with the Metropolitan Opera. Distinguished soloist, collaborative artist, and coach **Christopher Cano** joins her at the piano. This exciting program includes the World Premiere of a new song cycle by lauded American composer **Gregory Spears**.

APR 25 | ROSSINI'S LA CENERENTOLA

2pm | Linda Ronstadt Music Hall | Arizona Opera | Tickets: azopera.org

Step into the magic of Rossini's *Cinderella* in this delightful semi-staged production brimming with humor, charm, and enchanting melodies with a cast led by mezzo-soprano **Katherine Beck** as Angelina, **Andrew Morstein** as Don Ramiro, **Matt Boehler** as Don Magnifico, and **Yichen Xue** as Dandini. Perfect for audiences of all ages, this vibrant retelling of the beloved fairytale promises laughter, romance, and soaring arias the whole family will adore.

THE JACK AND TERRY FORSYTHE RECITAL SERIES

by James Reel

The History of the Tucson Desert Song Festival

Tucson has a long tradition of classical music leadership in the Southwest. The University of Arizona has offered instruction in music since the late 1800s, and the Tucson Symphony Orchestra is the oldest continuing professional performing arts organization in Arizona. With these and other artistic partners as a foundation, the Tucson Desert Song Festival was formed in 2010 as a Section 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation by a group of music-loving volunteers.

The driving force behind the festival was Jack Forsythe. Under Jack's leadership, TDSF was founded to coordinate, subsidize, and publicize a unique classical voice festival highlighting Tucson's rich musical tradition with the aim of bringing to Tucson internationally renowned vocal performers to celebrate and advance vocal music as an art form.

A Vision Realized

Throughout the winter and spring of 2026, the Tucson Desert Song Festival will present its 14th season, showcasing, in collaboration with our performing partners, one of the widest array of world-class vocal performers since the festival's inception.

Clearly, Jack Forsythe's vision has been realized, enriching Tucson's cultural life in a way that will impact our community for generations to come. The arts are indispensable to who we are as a society. They inspire beauty, kindle new ideas, reveal new truths, and bind us together.



Honoring Jack and Terry Forsythe

We are committed to continuing Jack's work, and we are deeply dedicated to preserving the imprint Jack has made on our community. Toward this end, the Board of Directors of the Tucson Desert Song Festival, led by President Jeannette Segel, has established The Jack and Terry Forsythe Recital Series to honor Jack and Terry.

Our goal is to raise funds for the specific purpose of continuing the tradition of including world-class classical voice recitals as a key part of the Tucson Desert Song Festival for years to come.

Become a supporter of The Jack and Terry Forsythe Recital Series

You can do so by visiting TucsonSongFest.org/donate or by sending a check made out to the Tucson Desert Song Festival with "Jack and Terry Forsythe Recital Series" noted on the check's memo line to:

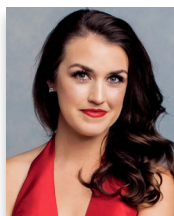
Tucson Desert Song Festival
P.O. Box 65866
Tucson, AZ 85728

GUEST ARTISTS



Praised by *Opera News* for her “sweet soubrette” and “tender yet elegant” vocal style, soprano **Zoe Allen** is an avid interpreter of classical and contemporary music. Notable performances include *Candide* at Tanglewood Festival and Ravinia Festival, *L'enfant et les sortilèges* at the Aspen Music

Festival, and *Street Scene* with Virginia Opera. She is a member of NYC-based Fourth Wall Ensemble and St. Bartholomew's Choir and performs regularly as a soloist and ensemble singer throughout New York City.



Hailed by the *Boston Globe* as “balmy-voiced” and “uniformly excellent,” former Marion Roose Pullin Studio Artist mezzo-soprano **Katherine Beck** returned to Arizona Opera in the 23/24 season to create the role of Elizabeth in the world premiere of Gregg Kallor's *Frankenstein*. Beck also appeared as an Apprentice Artist

with Santa Fe Opera and Lyric Opera of Chicago and in recent seasons has performed leading roles with companies throughout the United States. She is a winner of the prestigious George London Foundation Award.



Over the course of a multifaceted career spanning five decades, three-time GRAMMY-winning jazz giant **Dee Dee Bridgewater** has ascended to the upper echelon of vocalists, putting her unique spin on standards and re-envisioning jazz classics. She also pursues a parallel career in musical theater, notably having won a Tony

Award for her portrayal of Glinda in *The Wiz*. Having recently completed a celebrated run as Billie Holiday in the off-Broadway production of *Lady Day*, Bridgewater can be found touring worldwide.



Soprano **Erika Burkhart** has been praised for having a voice that is “simply sublime,” with “a breadth of colors...from bright and mischievous to somber and resonant” (*Arizona Daily Star*). She is a regular soloist and ensemble member with GRAMMY-nominated True Concord Voices & Orchestra, and for several

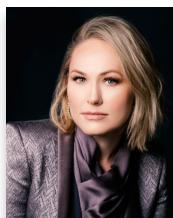
seasons, she has been a summer soloist with CORO Vocal Artists at the Des Moines Choral Festival. Burkhart is a winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions Arizona District.



Critically acclaimed by virtually every major outlet covering classical music, celebrated mezzo-soprano **Jamie Barton** is a winner of the Beverly Sills Artist Award, Richard Tucker Award, and BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition. Praised by *Gramophone* as having “the sort of instrument you could listen to all day, in any sort of repertoire,” Ms. Barton enjoys a major international career that includes leading roles at the world's most-loved opera houses and concert venues.



Bass and composer **Matt Boehler** is known for his captivating and dynamic performances and his reputation as an inventive collaborative artist. A frequent performer of contemporary opera, he has premiered roles with Dallas Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, and Opera Philadelphia, among others. Equally at home on the concert stage, he has appeared as a soloist with leading orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and Oratorio Society of New York.



Hailed by *The New York Times* for her “plush, full sound, yet also youthful brightness,” American mezzo-soprano **Angela Brower** is one of the most sought-after lyric mezzo-sopranos of her generation. A former member of the Bayerische Staatsoper ensemble and alumna of their studio, she continues to bring her compelling artistry and musicianship to the world's leading opera houses and concert venues, including the Metropolitan Opera, Opéra national de Paris, Dutch National Opera, and Covent Garden.



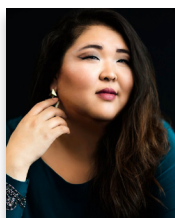
Recitalist, soloist, and collaborative pianist **Christopher Cano** has performed to acclaim throughout the United States, Europe, Asia, Mexico, and Israel. He is a sought-after coach for leading singers, having prepared vocalists for performances at the Metropolitan Opera, Teatro alla Scala, and Chicago Lyric Opera, among others. Cano is currently the Director of the Cafritz Young Artist Program and the American Opera Initiative at Washington National Opera of the Kennedy Center.

GUEST ARTISTS



Jennifer Johnson Cano has garnered critical acclaim for performances of both new and standard repertoire, lauded by *The New York Times* for her “rich-toned mezzo-soprano” and by *Opera News* as a “matchless interpreter of contemporary opera.” She has appeared in more than 100

performances on the stage at the Metropolitan Opera, and her portrayal of Michele in the 2024 world premiere of *The Righteous* by Gregory Spears at Santa Fe Opera earned her accolades from numerous major outlets.



American mezzo-soprano **Alice Chung** is recognized for her “operatic tonal glamour” (*Parterre Box*) and as “a force of nature” (*San Francisco Classical Voice*). Last season, Chung made role debuts as Amneris in *Aida* with Boston Lyric Opera, Dinah in *Trouble in Tahiti* with Annapolis Opera, and the title role in *Carmen* with

Hawai'i Opera Theatre. Chung is a two-time alumna of the prestigious Merola Opera Program and graduate of the Academy of Vocal Arts.



Mezzo-soprano **Kristin Dauphinais** is highly regarded for her artistry and versatility. She has worked in a variety of genres, including musical theater, opera, oratorio, chamber music, and song repertoire. Her performance career has taken her throughout the United States as well on tours in Italy, China, and Australia with additional

concert performances in Germany, Spain, Austria, England, and Luxembourg. Dauphinais is the Chair of Vocal Studies at the University of Arizona.



Founded in 2016, **Duo Chinoiserie** continues to captivate audiences with their transcendent performances, embracing a passion for innovation and welcoming interdisciplinary collaborations. Spearheaded by the exceptional talents of Chinese guzheng virtuoso Xia Jing and classical guitarist Hu Bin, Duo Chinoiserie's visionary

spirit is reshaping the landscape of contemporary music through their award-winning recordings and performances throughout Asia, Europe, and the United States.



GRAMMY Award-winning jazz pianist **Bill Charlap** has performed with many of the leading artists of our time, including Phil Woods, Gerry Mulligan, and Wynton Marsalis. Known for his interpretations of American popular song, his album in collaboration with Tony

Bennett, *The Silver Lining: The Songs of Jerome Kern*, was awarded the GRAMMY for Best Traditional Pop Album in 2016. From 2004 to 2023, Charlap was Artistic Director of New York City's Jazz in July Festival. He continues to enjoy a dynamic performance schedule.



Joaquín Clerch is a Cuban classical guitarist, composer, and educator. He is a leading guitar pedagogue and currently serves as a Professor of Guitar at Robert Schumann University Düsseldorf. In a career spanning over four decades, his work as a guitarist has taken him to leading concert halls around the

world, and his composition *Yemaya* won first prize in both the 1987 National Cuban Composition Competition and the 1987 Toronto International Guitar Competition.



Born in Hermosillo, Sonora, **Misael Barraza-Díaz** is recognized as one of the most outstanding Mexican guitarists of his generation. He has received 10 first prizes in international competitions and has performed as a soloist throughout the United States, Mexico, Canada, and

Europe. During the summer of 2019, Misael was part of the prestigious European tour organized by EuroStrings with an elite cast of guitarists who had won important European competitions.



Baritone **Alexander Birch Elliott** has garnered praise for his “heated intensity and beguiling timbre” (*New York Times*). 25/26 season highlights include a return to the Metropolitan Opera as Schaunard in *La Bohème*, his debut as Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* with Arizona Opera,

and a return to Opera Omaha as Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. A graduate of the prestigious Merola Opera Program, Elliott has also recently appeared with Houston Grand Opera, Ravinia Festival, and in concert with the American Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall.

GUEST ARTISTS



The Venezuelan-born, Spanish conductor **José Luis Gomez** began his musical career as a violinist but was catapulted to international attention when he won first prize in the 2010 International Sir Georg Solti Conductor's Competition in Frankfurt, Germany, where he secured a sensational and rare unanimous decision. In 2016, he was named Music Director of the Tucson Symphony Orchestra. Gomez consistently crafts compelling programs, enriching the orchestral arena with new commissions and diverse repertoire.



Widely acclaimed for her portrayal of Cio-Cio-San in *Madama Butterfly*, soprano **Karen Chia-Ling Ho** brings her signature role to Arizona Opera this season. Other recent engagements include Meretaten in *Akhnaten* and the Crowned Child in *Macbeth* at the Metropolitan Opera and the title role of *Tosca* at Hong Kong's "More Than Music" Festival. An alumna of the prestigious Merola Opera Program, Ho was a winner of San Francisco Opera's Manetti Shrem Emerging Stars Competition in 2024.



New York City-based choreographer **Dell Howlett** is Co-Head of Dance at the NYU Tisch School of the Arts and is a recent winner of the prestigious Suzi Bass Award for Choreography. Dell is in active demand as a choreographer, and his performance highlights include: *Aida* (Broadway), *Bombay Dreams* (Broadway), *Pippin* (National Tour), and *West Side Story* (International Tour). Dell is currently the Artistic Director for Young Performers of America.



Considered a "formidable triple threat" and skilled choreographer, up-and-coming Broadway singer, dancer, and actor **D. Jerome** has performed to acclaim in *MJ the Musical* on Broadway, the 22/23 National tour of *Hamilton*, and currently as the Tin Man in the first National Tour of *The Wiz*, which will be presented by Broadway in Tucson from Jan 6-11. Proficient in various performance techniques and possessing exceptional creativity, Jerome fosters transformative experiences on stage and as an educator.



Soprano **Francesca Herrera** is currently a Marion Roose Pullin Studio Artist with Arizona Opera and was previously a Studio Artist with Wolf Trap Opera. A recent graduate of Duke University with a major in music and minors in computer science and psychology, she was the recipient of an Encouragement Award in the 2025 Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition North Carolina District and the 2025 Tommy Trotter Memorial Scholarship from the Opera Guild for Atlanta.



Conductor **Eric Holtan**, the founding and acting Music Director of GRAMMY-nominated True Concord Voices & Orchestra, previously served as Associate Conductor of the Southern Arizona Symphony Orchestra and as Assistant Director of the Tucson Symphony Orchestra Chorus. He also continues his work in church music, which he began as an organist at age 12, as Minister of Music, Art, and Liturgy at Dove of Peace Lutheran Church in Tucson.



Japanese-born choreographer **Chieko Imada** currently serves as Assistant Artistic Director of Ballet Tucson. She has staged many classical ballets and has also created numerous original contemporary works during her more than three decades with Ballet Tucson. Imada has danced professionally with companies internationally, including Inoue Ballet of Tokyo and Ballet Arizona, and has passionately instructed dance for almost forty years.



A highly respected pianist, conductor, and coach, **Kathleen Kelly** is both deeply experienced in the classical canon and engaged in new creation, with projects ranging from Mozart to newly-commissioned works. Kelly began her career at San Francisco Opera before beginning a long association with the Metropolitan Opera and a historic appointment as Director of Musical Studies at the Vienna State Opera, the first woman and first American in that position. Since returning to the United States in 2015, Kelly has maintained a vibrant conducting schedule.

GUEST ARTISTS



Sam Krausz is quickly gaining notice as a tenor with “shining security” (*Opera Today*). He is currently engaged as a Marion Roose Pullin Studio Artist and was also a young artist at Des Moines Metro Opera and Wolf Trap Opera. Competition credits include a 2023 Central Region Encouragement

Award in the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition and participation in the semi-finals of the 2023 Lotte Lenya Competition. Krausz is a graduate of Northwestern University and the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music.



Bass-baritone **Wanchun Liang** earned a performance diploma from Boston University under James Demler, William Lumpkin, and Matthew Larson and his master's degree from the New England Conservatory where he was a student of Michael Meraw. Currently a member of the Marion Roose Pullin Studio, he received the

Best New Artist Award at the 3rd Paulo Coni International Vocal Music Competition and an Encouragement Award in the 2023 Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition.



In a “breakout performance” (*The New York Times*) opening the Metropolitan Opera’s 21/22 season, “velvet-voiced baritone” (*NPR*) **Will Liverman** headlined the widely celebrated *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* by Terence Blanchard, which won the 2023 GRAMMY Award for Best Opera Recording. Liverman, who has since received

three more GRAMMY nominations, is praised internationally for his versatility in dramatic and comedic roles and for his vision as a composer, curator, and advisor.



Miró Quartet (Daniel Ching, violin; William Fedkenheuer, violin; John Largess, viola; and Joshua Gindele, cello) is one of America’s most celebrated string quartets. For 30 years, the GRAMMY-nominated ensemble has performed on the world’s

most prestigious concert stages, earning accolades from critics and audiences alike. Based in Austin, TX, Miró takes pride in finding new ways to communicate with audiences of all backgrounds while cultivating the longstanding tradition of chamber music.



Praised by the *Cincinnati Enquirer* as “a leader of exceptional musical gifts,” conductor **Kelly Kuo** brings a dynamic versatility to a diverse and expansive repertoire of both symphonic and operatic works. His affinity for interpreting contemporary scores has led him to become

a trusted musical authority in the development of new works. Recent highlights include productions with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Seattle Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, and Glimmerglass Opera.



Mezzo-soprano **Sedona Libero** is known for the authenticity, playfulness, and passion that she brings to the operatic stage. She has appeared as a Young Artist with Opera Southwest, an Emerging Artist at the Seagle Festival, and currently as a Marion Roose Pullin Studio Artist at Arizona Opera. Libero

made her professional debut with the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival in 2018 as Dinah in Trouble in *Tabiti* and has been a regular guest artist with Chandler Opera Company.



American tenor **Terrence Chin-Loy**, praised by *Opera News* for his “beautiful lyric voice,” makes two role debuts in the 25/26 season, first as Rodolfo in *La bohème* with Madison Opera and as Pinkerton in *Madame Butterfly* with Arizona Opera. Last season, he made his European debut as Gualtiero

in Vivaldi’s *Griselda* with Danish National Opera. Chin-Loy holds a BA in Music from Yale University, where his studies concentrated on Music Theory and Musicology, and a Performer Diploma from Indiana University.



American tenor **Andrew Morstein**, winner of “Best Male Newcomer” at the Österreichischer Musiktheater Preise in Vienna, is a recent graduate of the Junges Ensemble Theater with the Theater an der Wien. In the 25/26 Season, he will sing Don Ramiro in *La Cenerentola*

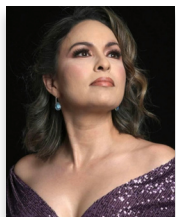
with Arizona Opera, Master Ford in *Falsstaff* with Chicago Opera Theater, and make his role debut as Alfredo in *La Traviata* with Pensacola Opera. Morstein is a former member of two critically acclaimed acapella groups, Straight No Chaser and Gentleman’s Rule.

GUEST ARTISTS



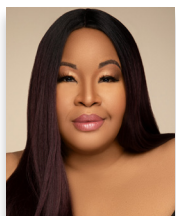
Tucson-native **Margaret Mullin** was named Artistic Director of Ballet Tucson in the spring of 2022 after concluding her career as a principal dancer with Pacific Northwest Ballet in Seattle. She was the recipient of a Dance Fellowship Award from the Princess Grace Foundation USA in 2011 and a CityArtist Award

from the City of Seattle Office of Arts and Culture in 2018. Mullin has choreographed works for a variety of distinguished companies and schools of dance, including Pacific Northwest Ballet, Kansas City Ballet, and Ballet Tucson.



Mexican soprano **Elena Rivera** has performed to acclaim in major venues throughout Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas in opera, concert, and recital. In 2020, Rivera and the string quartet Cuarteto Latinoamericano received a Latin GRAMMY nomination for Best Classical Album for *The Juliet Letters*. She has sung leading

roles in numerous operas, including *La Traviata*, *Rigoletto*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Die Fledermaus*, and *Don Pasquale* and zarzuelas *The Guest from Seville*, *The African Duet*, and *Marina*.



Praised as “one of opera’s strongest voices at present—both as a singer and a shaper of its culture” (*The Washington Post*), soprano **Karen Slack** is a recipient of the 2022 Sphinx Medal of Excellence and a 2025 MPower Artist Grant. She is a sought-after performer, curator, and artistic advisor, known for her fiery charisma and groundbreaking

approach to engagement. Her debut album, *Beyond the Years: Unpublished Songs of Florence Price*, won the 2025 GRAMMY Award for Best Classical Solo Vocal Album.



GRAMMY-nominated artist **Omar Najmi** maintains a vibrant schedule as an operatic tenor and composer. In the upcoming season, he will debut with The Spoleto Festival as Peter Quint in *The Turn of the Screw*, Boston Modern Orchestra Project as Demler in *Frederick Douglass*, and he will

return to Boston Lyric Opera as Enoch Snow in *Carousel*. A member of Washington National Opera’s 2025 American Opera Initiative, his new opera *Mud Girl* was premiered at the Kennedy Center to great acclaim.



Ruckus is a shapeshifting, collaborative baroque band with a visceral and playful approach to early music. The New York City-based ensemble aims to fuse the early music movement’s questing, creative spirit with the grit, groove, and jangle of American roots music, creating a unique sound of “rough-edged

intensity” (*New Yorker*). The group’s virtuosic membership consists of continuo players on keyboard, guitar, cello, bassoon, and bass, and soloists on the violin, flute, and oboe.



Pianist **Madeline Slettedahl** is an enthusiastic collaborator, recitalist, and highly sought after operatic coach. A current member of the Houston Grand Opera music staff, additional appointments include Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Wolf Trap Opera, and Lyric Opera of Chicago, where she received training with the

Ryan Opera Center. An avid recitalist, she has made appearances with today’s leading opera singers at Carnegie Hall’s Citywide Concert Series, the Art Institute of Chicago’s Lieder Lounge, and the Cincinnati Song Initiative Recital Series.



Director and creative collaborator **Madeleine Snow** is passionate about reimagining classical music for contemporary audiences. She has directed many site-specific performances, including collaborations with composers Ricky Ian Gordon and Ben Moore, and in 2023, Snow won second place in the American Prize for Directing for her inventive production of *La Calisto* with Eastman

Opera Theatre. Other credits include productions with Perelman Performing Arts Center NYC, Palm Beach Opera, Boulder Opera, and Loveland Opera Theatre.

GUEST ARTISTS



New York-based composer **Gregory Spears**, whose music has been lauded as “astonishingly beautiful” (*The New York Times*), is regularly commissioned by leading American opera companies and orchestras, including the New York Philharmonic, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Santa Fe Opera, and Houston Grand Opera. His opera

The Righteous, written in collaboration with former U.S. Poet Laureate Tracy K. Smith, was shortlisted for an International Opera Award in 2024, and his 2016 opera *Fellow Travellers* has been produced across the United States to great success.



Baritone **Davone Tines**, winner of the 2020 Sphinx Medal of Excellence, is a pathbreaking artist whose work encompasses a diverse repertoire, ranging from early music to new commissions. A creator, curator, and performer at the intersection of many histories, cultures, and aesthetics, he is engaged in

work that blends opera, art song, spirituals, contemporary classical, gospel, and protest songs as a means to tell a deeply personal story of perseverance, connecting to all of humanity.



Conductor **Gary Thor Wedow** has established a reputation for dramatic, exciting, and historically informed performances with opera companies, orchestras, festivals, and choirs throughout North America, including Florida Grand Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Glimmerglass Opera,

the New York Philharmonic, Seattle Symphony, and Santa Fe Symphony. He is the former Associate Conductor of Boston's Handel and Haydn Society and has served on the Juilliard School faculty since 1994.



companies, including Staatsoper Unter den Linden in Berlin, the National Centre for the Performing Arts in China, Santa Fe Opera, and Minnesota Opera.



Tamar-kali is a Brooklyn-born vocalist and award-winning composer with roots in the coastal Sea Islands of South Carolina. Whether with her alt-rock power quintet or all femme chamber ensemble, she speaks her lyrical truth with passion and soulful intensity. *Sonic Scoop* has described her music as “an ambitious new adventure into metal, classical, and progressive styles.” Tamar-kali's compositions have been premiered at major venues like Lincoln Center, and her catalog includes Oscar-nominated and Emmy Award-winning film scores.



With a voice described as “velvet-toned” (*BBC Music Magazine*) and praised for its “forthright agility and bold declamation” (*Musical America*), baritone **Edward Vogel** is recognized as a sensitive, versatile performer. Recent highlights include solo appearances with GRAMMY-winning Apollo's Fire and his

solo debut with the New York Philharmonic in Handel's *Israel in Egypt*. An avid recitalist and in-demand ensemble singer, Vogel's specialties include 20th-century British art song, music of Medieval and Renaissance Iberia, and works by Mahler.



Yichen Xue is a baritone from Anshan, China. In 2023, he was the recipient of Opera Index Competition's Emerging Artist Award, and in 2024, he received a Schuyler Foundation Career Bridges Grant. Xue was also a 2024 finalist and grant winner in the renowned Gerda Lissner Competition. In the summer of

2024, he joined Wolf Trap Opera as a Studio Artist, followed by a residency with Arizona Opera as a Marion Roose Pullin Studio Artist. This season, he appears with AZO in *Madama Butterfly* and *La Cenerentola*.

Mo Zhou is a versatile director whose career encompasses opera, theater, dance, and film. As a faculty member at the University of Michigan Ann Arbor, she is dedicated to revitalizing the classical canon while championing new and innovative works. Her artistic endeavors have been showcased by esteemed

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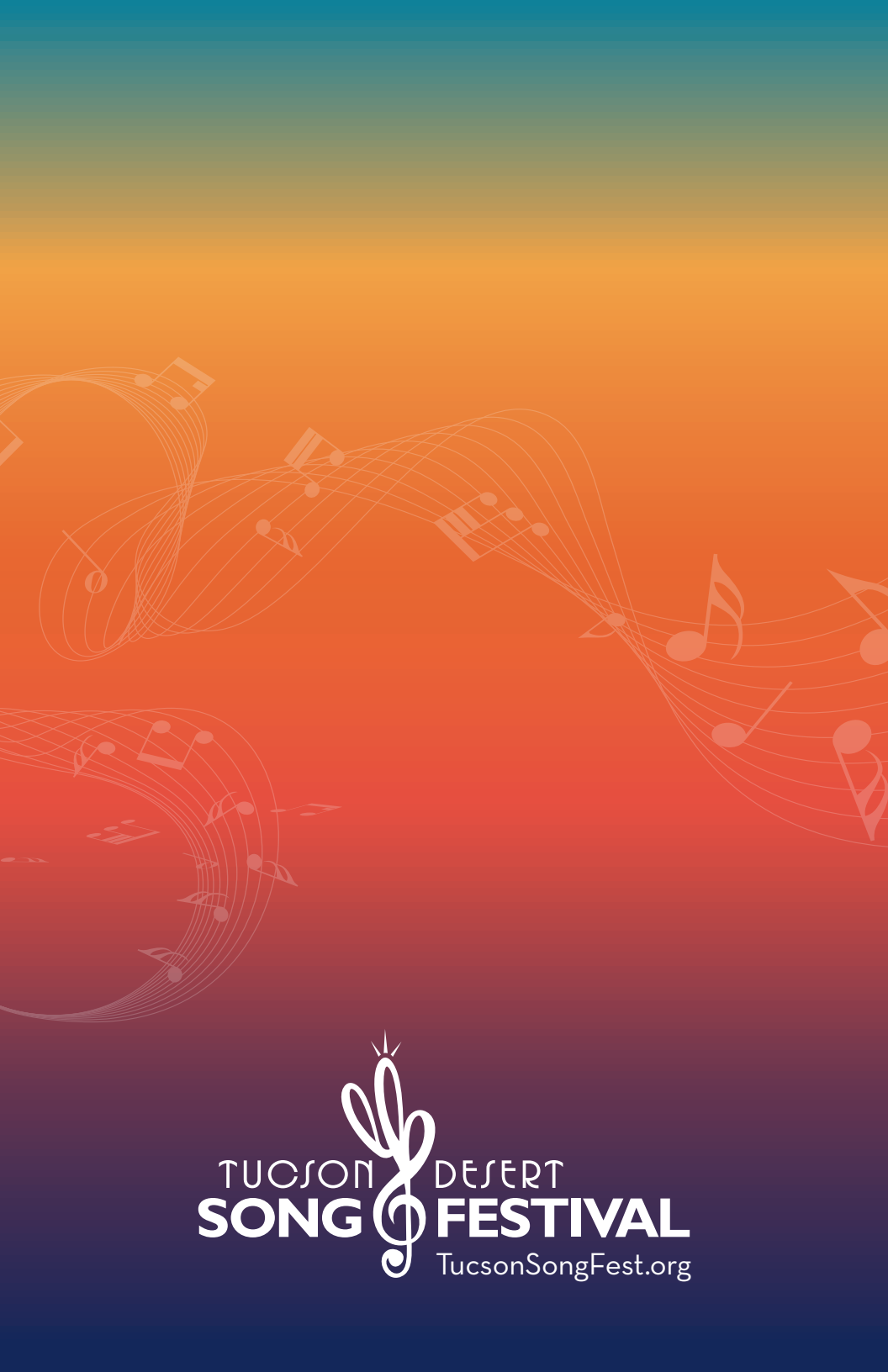


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