

OPERA

GALA

DIRECTOR
ISABEL
BAYRAKDARIAN

CONDUCTOR
BRENT
WILSON

CHOREOGRAPHER
CHRISTINA
MCCARTHY

MAY 15, 2024 | 4:00 PM

Casa Dorinda (abridged performance)

MAY 16, 2024 | 7:30 PM

Helen Yunker Auditorium, Ventura College Performing Arts Center

MAY 17, 2024 | 7:30 PM

Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall, UC Santa Barbara

TO OUR DONORS

This production is made possible with support from our generous donors and co-sponsors. The Ventura College Performing Arts Department would like to offer our gratitude to the following:

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Miriam Schwab

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BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE BEGINS

We ask you to silence all electronic devices.

Unauthorized recording and photography is prohibited.

OPERA GALA

MAY 15 - 17, 2024

Isabel Bayrakdarian, *Director*
Brent Wilson, *Conductor*
Christina McCarthy, *Choreographer*
John Ballerino, *Keyboard*
Jamie Birkett, *Tech Director/Production, Lighting, and Sound Design*
Marisol Miller-Wave, *Hair & Make-up*
Jessica Haro, *Stage Manager*
Cari Frantz, *Follow Spot Operator*
Tyson Sauthoff and Josh Stover, *Assistant Stage Managers*
Mi-Young Kim, *Rehearsal Pianist*
Ovanes Arakelyan, *Supertitles*

UCSB Featured Soloists In Order of Vocal Appearance

Olivia Lyon Barker, DMA Graduate Student
Lorenzo Johnson Jr., DMA Graduate Student
Christina Pezzarossi, DMA Graduate Student
Colin Ramsey, MM/DMA Graduate Student
Ariana Horner Sutherland, DMA Graduate Student
Valdis Jansons, DMA Graduate Student
April Amante, UCSB Alumna, DMA Voice '23

PROGRAM

Part I: George Friderick Handel (1685–1759)

Praise the Lord with Harp and Tongue Solomon HWV 67 (Act III)

Chorus

Arrival of the Queen of Sheba

Dancers

Tornami a vagheggiar Alcina (Act I)

Olivia Lyon Barker (Alcina)

Dell'Iberia al soglio invitto Rodrigo (Act I)

Lorenzo Johnson Jr. (Giuliano)

Dancers

Amelia Fischer, Maddison Griffith, Ana Konovaloff

Janie Landgraff, Emily Levin, Linn Molin

Jillian Silva, Bella Sorokwasz, Ava Taylor

Jenna Turner, Amanda White

Part II: Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714–1787)

Orphée et Euridice (1774)

Overture

Scene I: Ah! Dans ce bois

Act I

Pantomime

Christina Pezzarossi (Orphée)

Chorus & Dancers

J'ai perdu mon Euridice

Act IV

Christina Pezzarossi (Orphée)

Dancers

Bella Sorokwasz, soloist

Milana Beck, Amelia Fischer

Corelle Gabay, Maddison Griffith

Ana Konovaloff, Janie Landgraff

Tess Lethen, Emily Levin

Linn Molin, Jillian Silva

Ava Taylor, Jenna Turner

Amanda White, Paige Young

PART III: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

Le Nozze di Figaro (K. 492)

Ricevete, oh padroncina

Act III

Chorus

Ehi capitano...Non più andrai

Act I

Colin Ramsey (Figaro)

E Susanna non vien!...Dove Sono

Act III

Ariana Horner Sutherland (Countess)

Dov'è l'appuntamento...Sull'aria

Act III

Ariana Horner Sutherland (Countess),
Olivia Lyon Barker (Susanna)

Hai già vinta la causa

Act III

Valdis Jansons (Count)

Gente, gente all'armi

Act IV Finale

Valdis Jansons (Count), Colin Ramsey (Figaro)

Lorenzo Johnson Jr. (Basilio), Olivia Lyon Barker (Susanna)

Christina Pezzarossi (Cherubino), Ariana Horner Sutherland (Countess)

Chorus

Intermission

PART IV: João Oliveira (1959)

The 70th Week

Daniel's Prayer

Scene 1 Introduction

April Amante (Daniel)

Dancers

Milana Beck, Amelia Fischer

Corelle Gabay, Maddison Griffith

Alysia Michelle James, Ana Konovaloff

Janie Landgraff, Tess Lethen

Emily Levin, Linn Molin

Jillian Silva, Ava Taylor

Jenna Turner, Amanda White

PART V

Chantons, célébrons notre dame
from **L'amant Anonyme**

Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint George
(1745-1799)

Scenda Amor, scenda Imeneo
from **Idomeneo**, K366 (Act III)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

Part VI: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Così fan tutte (K. 588)

Ah, che tutta in un momento

Act I - Finale

Ariana Horner Sutherland (Fiordiligi), Christina Pezzarossi (Dorabella)
Lorenzo Johnson Jr. (Ferrando), Colin Ramsey (Guglielmo)
Olivia Lyon Barker (Despina), Valdis Jansons (Don Alfonso)



THE CAST & CREATIVE TEAM



DIRECTOR

Soprano **Isabel Bayrakdarian** is an eagerly anticipated visitor to opera houses and concert halls the world over. She is a winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions in 1997—the same year she graduated from the University of Toronto *cum laude* with a Biomedical Engineering Degree. She won first prize in the prestigious Operalia competition in 2000 and has won plaudits at the Metropolitan Opera, Salzburg Festival, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Canadian Opera Company, Paris Opera, Los Angeles Opera, London’s Royal Opera House, San Francisco Opera, Barcelona’s Liceu, Milan’s La Scala, Florence’s Maggio Musicale, and the Saito Kinen Festival in Matsumoto, Japan. She has appeared with the premier orchestras of North America and Europe. Her versatility is also reflected in being the featured vocalist on the Grammy-award winning soundtrack of the blockbuster film *The Lord of The Rings: The Two Towers*; she sings on the BBC-produced documentary *HOLOCAUST - A Music Memorial Film from Auschwitz*, and stars in her Gemini-nominated film *Long Journey Home* documenting her first visit to her ancestral homeland, Armenia. Ms. Bayrakdarian was nominated for a 2023 Juno Award in Best Classical Album – Solo Artist for her recording “La Zingarella”, and is the winner of four consecutive Juno Awards. She holds an Honorary Doctorate from Wilfrid Laurier University, and an Honorary Fellowship from the Royal Conservatory of Music. She is Professor of Voice, Director of Opera and Opera Outreach, and Head of Voice Area at **UC Santa Barbara**.



CONDUCTOR

Brent Wilson is a Los Angeles-based tenor, conductor and stage director, and is the Department Chair of Performing Arts and Director of Voice, Choirs, Opera and Musical Theatre at **Ventura College**, resident guest director at Viterbo University, and director of choral studies at **University of California, Santa Barbara**. Locally as a conductor, Wilson served as Assistant Conductor and Chorus Master of Opera Santa Barbara for over twenty productions and conducted productions of *The Consul* and *Don Pasquale*. He has appeared as conductor for the UCSB Orchestra and Opera, receiving

top prizes for collegiate opera production from the National Opera Association for the production of *Twelfth Night*. Wilson has worked with choral groups such as the Grammy-nominated ensemble Boston Baroque, Handel and Haydn Society, Handel Oratorio Society (Chicago), Long Beach Camerata, and Santa Barbara Master Chorale, and opera ensembles including Boston Lyric Opera, Maine Grand Opera, Opera Santa Barbara, Granite State Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, Lyric Opera of Chicago, and Opera Theatre Saint Louis. Additionally, he has been on faculty at the Tanglewood Institute through Boston University, Augustana College, and Viterbo University where the National Opera Association awarded his production of *Trouble in Tahiti* a 3rd prize in Division I collegiate productions. He is a member of the National Opera Association, American Choral Directors Association, National Association of Teachers of Singing, and champions the training of young singers and has students in the Broadway tours of *School of Rock*, *Rock of Ages*, and *Hamilton*. He has recently embarked on a project to rediscover and remount works by Gian Carlo Menotti that have been lost since their debuts on NBC and CBS in the '60s and '70s. Wilson received Voice Performance degrees from Augustana College (B.A.) and Boston University School of Music (M.M.) and also holds degrees in Computer Science/ Mathematics from Augustana.



CHOREOGRAPHER

Christina McCarthy is Director of Dance Performance in the Department of Theater and Dance at **UC Santa Barbara**. She teaches choreography, dance on film, movement for actors, aerial dance and contemporary dance technique. She choreographs concert dance works for dance students in the dance area in the department, and also creates movement for theater productions at UCSB. Ms. McCarthy has choreographed for local high school and professional theater companies over the last twenty years. After performing with Nina Wiener Dance Company in New York she was both a dancer and Assistant Artistic Director of Santa Barbara Dance Theater. Ms. McCarthy is a multi-disciplinary artist whose sculptural works includes puppet creation and ceramics. Her large-scale puppets have been seen in productions for State Street Ballet, Out of the Box Theater Company and Ensemble Theater and in productions for UCSB and Westmont College. Current projects include choreography for *Indecent* in the Department of Theater and Dance, *Legally Blonde* with SBCC Theater Group. In fall 2024 she will be traveling to Florida to stage movement for *Macbeth* with director Irwin Appel for Orlando Shakes Theater Company.



PIANIST

Dr. John Ballerino grew up in Guadalajara, Mexico and is fluent in Spanish. He holds a DMA in Collaborative Arts from the University of Southern California, where he also studied Spanish and Latin American literature as part of his doctoral program.

He is a five-time winner of the Koldofsky Graduate Fellowship in Accompanying, and twice was the winner of the Hans Schiff Memorial Scholarship for excellence in chamber music (USC). He has also twice received scholarships to the Music Academy of the West (Santa Barbara). Master classes and private coaching have enabled him to work with Martin Katz, Giorgio Tozzi, Evelyn Lear, William Parker, Martial Singher, Dalton Baldwin, Roger Vignoles, Elly Ameling, Marilyn Horne, and Martin Isepp.

An accomplished speaker and performer of Spanish and Latin American music, Dr. Ballerino lectures and performs throughout the United States and the Caribbean. Since 1999, John has been the principal coach and Assistant Music Director for ten different Zarzuela productions at the Jarvis Conservatory in Napa, California. He has also served as a Spanish diction coach for productions by the Los Angeles Opera and the Los Angeles Master Chorale. In 2007, John was on staff at Los Angeles Opera as diction coach and pianist for the Zarzuela *Luisa Fernanda*, featuring Plácido Domingo in the lead role. In 2010 John was the assistant conductor and Spanish coach for *Rio de Sangre*, a world premier opera by Don Davis that was produced by the Florentine Opera (Milwaukee).

John is a Continuing Lecturer of Collaborative Arts at the **University of California, Santa Barbara**. There he teaches Spanish Diction as well as Song and Operatic Literature. He is the former Chorus Master, Principal Pianist, and Assistant Conductor for Opera Santa Barbara and has frequently been on the music staffs of the Los Angeles, Florentine (Milwaukee) Utah Festival, Fresno, and Sarasota Opera Companies as an Assistant Conductor and Repetiteur. John is currently a Guest Lecturer of Spanish Opera at the University of California, Los Angeles.



SOPRANO

April Amante, Soprano, made her Carnegie Hall debut as Mrs. Sinclair in Eric Whitacre's *The Gift of the Magi* for the NYC premiere with DCINY in 2022. In 2020 she made her LA Opera debut as the Solo Soprano Voice and Chorus Soloist in the world premiere of Matthew Aucoin's *Eurydice*. She can be seen as one of the Handmaidens in LA Opera's upcoming 2024 production of Puccini's *Turandot*. April holds a Doctorate of Musical Arts (D.M.A.) from the **University of California Santa Barbara** in Vocal Performance where she studied with **Dr. Isabel Bayrakdarian**.



SOPRANO

Southern California native, **Olivia Lyon Barker**, is a DMA Candidate and Teaching Assistant at UC Santa Barbara. She holds a Master's in Voice from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and a Bachelor's in Vocal Arts from USC Thornton School of Music. She was seen at UCSB as the Queen of the Night/Papagena in the UCSB Production of *The Magic Flute*. She gained success in her performance career as a soprano in numerous shows including *Later the Same Evening*, *Threepenny Opera*, and *Pirates of Penzance*, where she won Best Actress in a Leading Role for her performance as Mabel. Olivia is a third-year DMA voice student in the studio of **Dr. Isabel Bayrakdarian**.



SOPRANO

Hailing from Nome, Alaska, Soprano **Ariana Horner Sutherland** is a Doctoral candidate and TA at the **University of California Santa Barbara**. She made her debut as Pamina in UCSB's 2022 production of "The Magic Flute" in collaboration with New York City Opera. She received second place in the 2023 Performing Arts Scholarship Foundation. As a 2022-23 Opera Santa Barbara Chrisman Studio Artist, Ariana sang the principal role of Clara in OSB's production of *The Light in the Piazza*. This season, she covered Micaëla in OSB's Fall production of *Carmen*. Ariana is a third-year DMA voice student in the studio of **Dr. Isabel Bayrakdarian**.



BARITONE

Valdis Jansons performed more than 50 main roles in more than one hundred theaters around the world, including Teatro alla Scala, Bolshoi Theater in Moscow, NCPA in Beijing, Lincoln Center in New York, Theatro Municipal in Rio de Janeiro, Theater an der Wien, and others. He has collaborated with conductors such as Fabio Luisi, Daniele Gatti, Daniele Callegari, Lawrence Foster, Asher Fisch, Philippe Augin, and Pierre Vallet and directors Gianfranco De Bosio, Peter Stein, Giancarlo del Monaco, Emilio Sagi, Jean Louis Grinda, Günter Krämer, Andrei Serban, and Davide Livermore. Currently he is a fifth-year DMA student in the voice studio of **Dr. Isabel Bayrakdarian**.



TENOR

Lorenzo Johnson, Jr., tenor, is a second-year DMA student in Vocal Performance, studying under **Professor Benjamin Brecher**. Most recently, Lorenzo performed as the Waiter and a member of the chorus in Opera Santa Barbara's production of *Zorro*. He was also recently recognized as an Honorable Mention in the Performing Arts Scholarship Foundation Competition at the Music Academy of the West. In 2023, Lorenzo performed as Signor Edouardo Tremolini in UCSB's opera production, *Burning to Sing!* Lorenzo currently serves on the voice faculty at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo and is a teaching assistant in the Music Department at **UC Santa Barbara**.



MEZZO SOPRANO

Christina Pezzarossi, a mesmerizing operatic mezzo-soprano from Miles City, Montana, has graced prestigious stages nationwide. Her journey began in Montana, nurtured by her community, leading to remarkable roles such as El Gato in *El Gato con Botas*, Rossweisse in *Die Walkure*, Margaret in *Light in the Piazza*, and Lucilla in *La scala di seta* with Opera Santa Barbara. Notable portrayals include Ino in *Semele* and Wellgunde in *Das Rheingold*. In challenging times, she showcased resilience in *COVID fan tutte*. Pezzarossi continues to captivate in concert and choral performances, leaving an indelible mark on the opera stage and sharing her hometown's magic nationwide. Christina is a second-year DMA student in the voice studio of **Dr. Isabel Bayrakdarian**.



BASS BARITONE

Chinese-American Bass, **Colin Ramsey**, has become known for his “majestic, rotund, ravishing bass” (*Opera Today*). This year, he returns to Opera Santa Barbara for his role debut as Escamillo in *Carmen*, joins Amarillo Opera as Angelotti in *Tosca*, and Opera NEO for the US premiere of Nicola Porpora’s 1735 masterpiece, *Polifemo*. He makes his debut with the Amarillo Symphony for Beethoven’s 9th Symphony and will sing in a gala of operatic arias at the **University of California at Santa Barbara**. Mr. Ramsey has been a soloist at many renown opera houses including the Santa Fe Opera, San Diego Opera, Festival Lyrique en Mer in Belle-île, Opera San Jose, Seattle Opera, Austin Opera, Sarasota Opera, Pensacola Opera, and Opera Idaho. His repertoire encompasses many roles including Capulet in Gounod’s *Romeo and Juliet*, Cadmus/Somnus in Handel’s *Semele*, Colline in *La bohème*, Fafner in *Das Rheingold*, Hunding in *Die Walküre*, Guglielmo in *Così Fan Tutte*, Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Alidoro in *La Cenerentola*, and Reverend Hale in Robert Ward’s *The Crucible*. Mr Ramsey’s concert performances include solo engagements with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Pacific Symphony, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and La Jolla Symphony. Performing as soloist in Verdi’s *Requiem*, Dvorák’s *Stabat Mater*, Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion*, Rossini’s *Petite Messe Solennelle*, Handel’s *Messiah*, Faurè’s *Requiem*, and Brahms *Requiem*. Mr. Ramsey has completed residencies with Santa Fe Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, and others. He is a winner of the Pasadena Opera Guild Competition, a Regional winner in the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition and an Encouragement Award winner in the George London Foundation Competition. Colin is a second-year MM/DMA student in the voice studio of **Professor Benjamin Brecher**.

VENTURA COLLEGE CHAMBER SINGERS

Directed by Brent Wilson

Soprano

Elaina Crenshaw
Leanna Crenshaw
Alyssa Rae
Mariah Gruber
Angel Torres
Jesstina Torres

Alto

Gaia Hubbard
Taryn Lakes
Isabella Perez
Shannon Ramirez
Mariah Young

Tenor

Guillermo Aguilar
Isaiah Maldonado
Erick Marroquin
Ryan Williams

Bass

Luvi Avendano
Larez Edmonson
Brian Hotchkin
Gianni Nicolini

UCSB DANCE

Directed by Christina McCarthy

Milana Beck
Corelle Gabay
Maddison Griffith
Alysia Michelle James
Ana Konovaloff
Janie Landgraff
Emily Levin
Tess Lethen
Linn Molin
Jillian Silva
Bella Sorokwasz
Ava Taylor
Jenna Turner
Amanda White

UCSB CHAMBER CHOIR

Directed by Brent Wilson

Soprano I

Sophia Carlin
Tyler Fulgham
Angelina Kharrat
Sophia Pachl
Kate Unger

Soprano II

Elisa Abondolo
Ruth Baker
Isabella Bruggermann
Kelly Flippo
Jade Ipina

Alto I

Kristin Cheung
Christianna Hadsell
Anastasia Thompson
Sriya Vollala

Alto II

Reagan Acosta
Jordan Bedell
Emily Liu
Lena Wessel

Tenor I

Zachary Davis
Chelsea Hastings
Isaiah Martinez

Tenor II

Cameron Schubert

Bass I

Andreas Brey
Alex Chao
Jake Zhang

Bass II

Matthew Oswald
Ethan Palomares
Keith Romero

ORCHESTRA

Directed by Brent Wilson

Violin I

Steve Zander

Lisa Weinstein

Alejandra Moreno González

Violin II

Maia Zander

Sharon Cooper

Holly Knoch

Viola

Karen Goulding

Jordan Warmath

Beznik Yezeiri

Cello

Madlen Sarkissian

Bass

John Hester

Flute

Suzanne Duffy

Erin McKibben

Oboe

Fred Beerstein

Paula Dublinski

Ian Dahlberg

Bassoon

Maciej Flis

Nick Akdag

Horn

Steve Gross

Jon Titmus

Trumpet

David Pittel

Dave Etterbeek

Percussion

Jon Nathan

Keyboard

John Ballerino

Thank you for joining the Ventura College Performing Arts Department this year for our many events, concerts, productions, recitals, and masterclasses.

Please check out our website to stay up to date on upcoming events.

Have a great summer!