

ON
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Where Musical Theatre Sings!

TALES OF HOFFMANN

*Barber
of
Seville*

SINGERS &
SWINGERS

Resident Artist Biographies

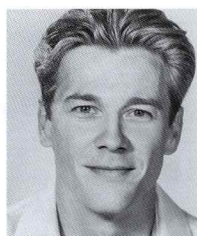
Opera North is proud to bring a select group of talented young professionals to the Upper Valley each summer. This company of Resident Artists performs and covers appropriate roles in the mainstage productions of the season, in addition to showcasing their talents at concerts around the region.



Michael Bagby, *Assistant Conductor (Singers & Swingers), Pianist & Vocal Coach (Tales of Hoffmann and Barber of Seville)*, is a native of Iowa. Michael earned a DMA in vocal coaching and accompanying from the University of Illinois, under the direction of Julie Gunn, and completed his masters at the University of Michigan, where he studied with Martin Katz. He also holds bachelor degrees in piano performance and K-12 vocal education from Iowa State University. Recently, he worked as the music director and pianist in the world premiere of *Nathan Gunn: Flying Solo* directed by Hershey Felder. Additionally he worked as the music director for Coastal Carolina's *The Color Purple*. He premiered his composition for solo piano, *Bells*, in the Issac Stern Auditorium at Carnegie Hall. He is a two-time recipient of the Nancy Wustman Memorial Award in Vocal Accompanying.



Cara Collins, *Voice of Antonia's Mother, Nicklausse cover (Tales of Hoffmann), Berta (Barber of Seville)*, recently she received an Encouragement/Audience Favorite Award at the New York International Vocal Competition 2018 Finals. Other roles include Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*, Elizabeth Proctor in Robert Ward's *The Crucible*, Ottavia in *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, Marcellina in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Mutter in *Hänsel und Gretel*, and Hippolyta in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Cara studies voice with Dr. Sherry Overholt and holds an undergraduate degree from SUNY Purchase College Conservatory of Music.



Attila Dobak, *Crespel (Tales of Hoffmann), Bartolo cover (Barber of Seville)*, graduated from the Longy School of Music of Bard College in 2013, after which he joined Opera North as a Resident Artist. There, he covered the roles of Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Emil de Becque in *South Pacific* and sang Gideon March in *Little Women*. At the Miami Summer Music Festival in 2014, he was featured in the role of Figaro in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*. In the 2016/17 season, he appeared at the Boston Lyric Opera in performances of Puccini's *La bohème*, Ferenc Lehár's *The Merry Widow* and Bizet's *Carmen*. Following those, he took the stage at Müpa Budapest in the title role of Kodály's *Háry János*. He made his debut at the Hungarian State Opera this season in the role of Ali in Rossini's *L'italiana in Algeri*.



Amal El-Shrafi, *Antonia, Giulietta cover (Tales of Hoffmann)*, has been hailed by the Boston Music Intelligencer as "shining through with a strength and power that matched her character's presence onstage." The Palestinian-American soprano is quickly gaining traction as a versatile performer in both concert work and opera. Recent engagements include performances with Sarasota Opera, Mobile Opera, Opera Company of Middlebury, Beth Morrison Projects and her Lincoln Center debut with the New York Philharmonic. She has been a two-time regional finalist for the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and holds a Master's degree from the New England Conservatory of Music. Ms. El-Shrafi currently resides in NYC with her musical cat, Mimi.

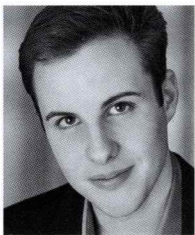
Resident Artist Biographies



Madelyn Gunn, *Assistant Director/Assistant Stage Manager (Singers & Swingers/Tales of Hoffmann/ Barber of Seville)*, is a director and producer of theater and opera. Madelyn graduated from the University of Illinois with a Bachelor of Music in 2017, studying classical voice, theater and business administration. Madelyn made her start creating staged scenes from art song in 2015. From there, she moved on to larger scale works with *King Arthur*, a Purcell/Dryden semi-opera, and was recently credited as Assistant to the Director in the Krannert Center production of *Hansel and Gretel*. She also interned at the Vienna State Opera House and PROTOTYPE Festival. Madelyn specializes in projects in development, most recently as Lavinia in *Polly Peachum*, a musical by Gene Scheer and Bill Van Horn, and working with Jonah Bokaer Choreography for their adaptation of *Dido and Aeneas / Neither*.



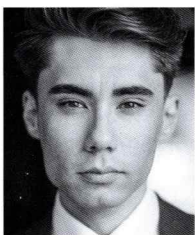
Derek Jackenheimer, *Nathanaël, Franz (Tales of Hoffmann), Almaviva cover (Barber of Seville)*, is excited to be joining Opera North this summer as a Resident Artist. He recently debuted with North Carolina Opera as Don Curzio in *Le nozze di Figaro* and covered Le Remendado in Bizet's *Carmen* with Greensboro Opera. He received a Masters of Performance at UNC-Greensboro, where he studied with Clara O'Brien. Derek's roles with UNCG Opera Theatre include Chevalier de la Force in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Old Galileo in Philip Glass' *Galileo Galilei*, and Kaspar in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. Derek's solo orchestral appearances include Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and *St. Paul*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Handel's *Messiah*, Bruckner's *Te Deum*, Charpentier's *Te Deum*, and multiple Bach cantatas.



Blake Jennings, *Luther, Crespel cover (Tales of Hoffmann), Don Basilio cover (Barber of Seville)*, is a native of Longview, Texas and recently received his Masters in Opera Performance from Boston Conservatory. During his time at Boston Conservatory, Blake portrayed many roles including the Prophet in Nico Muhly's *Dark Sisters*, Falstaff in Nicolai's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and Don Alfonso in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. This past summer, he was a studio artist for the Chautauqua Opera Company, where he made his company debut as the Fourth Spirit and cover for Charon in Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* as well as cover for the Bass in Philip Glass' *Hydrogen Jukebox*. Starting in the fall, he will join Boston University's Opera Institute as a young artist. Mr. Jennings is a student of Dr. Rebecca Folsom.



Jeehoon Kim, *Fiorello, Figaro cover (Barber of Seville), baritone*, is an active performer in the Twin Cities. He recently made his operatic debut as Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*. This was followed by his acclaimed performance of the title role in *Rigoletto* with Really Spicy Opera Company where he was lauded for his "bright and bombastic" voice and "great dynamic range in his voice and acting" (*Twin Cities Arts Reader*). Additionally, Mr. Kim has performed Tarquinious in Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* and the title role in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* with the University Opera Theatre at the University of Minnesota. In 2017, Mr. Kim won the Kenwood Symphony Orchestra Competition. In 2016, he won the Classical Music Voice Competition in Minnesota and was invited to Boston to compete in the National Finals.

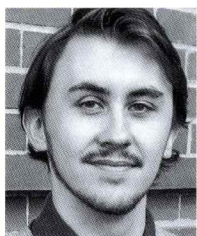


Stephen McCluskey, *Hermann, Dr. Miracle cover (Tales of Hoffmann), Ambrogio (Barber of Seville), baritone*, has captured audiences' attention with his warm resonant voice. He has performed roles in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Werther* and *The Crucible*, as well as sung Professor Bhaer in *Little Women*, Don Bartolo in *Barbiere di Siviglia*, Colline in *La bohème* and the title role in *Don Giovanni*. Recent concert performances have included Brahms' *German Requiem*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Fauré's *Requiem*, Handel's *Messiah*, Haydn's *Creation*, Duruflé's *Requiem*, and Bach's *St. John Passion*. Recently, he won the Encouragement Award at the South Carolina Met Council auditions and performed as a studio artist at Opera Saratoga. Stephen graduated *Summa Cum Laude* with a Bachelor of Music degree from Georgia State University and is currently pursuing his Masters at Florida State University.

Resident Artist Biographies



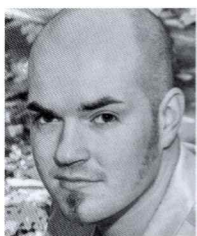
Emily Misch, *Olympia (Tales of Hoffmann)*, *coloratura soprano*, has been praised for her "scintillating precision" (*Opera News*). Her 2017-2018 season includes the Grand Finals of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Valeria in the workshop of Tom Cipullo's *Mayo* (National Opera Center) and soprano solos in Mozart's *Requiem*, Haydn's *Paukenmesse* (Huntington Choral Society), and *Carmina Burana* (Altoona Symphony Orchestra). Recent engagements include Ravinia Festival's Steans Music Institute (Vocal Fellow), *Mater Gloriosa* in Mahler's Symphony No. 8 (Berkshire Choral International), and *Exsultate, jubilate, K. 165* (Greenville Symphony Orchestra). She has received prizes from the Schuyler Foundation for Career Bridges, the Gerda Lissner Foundation, Mannes College of Music and Yale University.



Brady Muth, *Schlémil, Lindorf cover, Dapertutto cover (Tales of Hoffmann)*, is working to receive his Masters degree in the Yale Opera program while studying under vocal professor Dr. Richard Cross. Brady has recently performed the role of Sarastro in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* with Yale Opera, as well as Lodovico in Verdi's *Otello* with Opera Fort Collins in Colorado. He has also worked with Opera Classica Europa, a company based in Germany, touring throughout Hesse and Versailles while performing roles such as Angelotti in Puccini's *Tosca* and the Sprecher in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*.



Ashley Puenner, *Nicklausse (Tales of Hoffmann)*, *Berta cover (Barber of Seville)*, holds a Master of Music in Voice from the University of Kansas and a Bachelor of Music in Voice at Illinois Wesleyan University. She was a Studio Artist with the Florentine Opera in 2016-2018, where her roles included Second Lady in *The Magic Flute*, First Witch in *Dido and Aeneas*, and Mrs. Hurstwood in the world premiere of *Sister Carrie*, which was recorded and released on the Naxos label. Other recent credits include Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Carmen in *The Tragedy of Carmen* and Beggar Woman in *Sweeney Todd*. Pursuing an avid interest in newly composed music, Ashley has premiered works by several composers including Robert Aldridge, Emile Naoumoff and Forrest Pierce, along with commissioning a song cycle by American composer Nathan Jones (*Six Qabbani Love Songs*).



Seamus Ricci, *Assistant Director (Singers & Swingers/Tales of Hoffmann/Barber of Seville)*, is a director based in Pittsburgh, PA with directing credits in operas, musicals and plays. Recent opera directing credits include *Les contes d'Hoffmann* (Bel Cantanti), *La Rondine* (Undercroft Opera) and *Don Giovanni* (Neighborhood Opera Company). Opera assistant directing credits include *La Rondine* (Opera San Jose), *Die Zauberflöte* (Carnegie Mellon University), *Die Fledermaus* (Carnegie Mellon University) and *Carmen* (Pittsburgh Festival Opera), working with directors such as Crystal Manich, Candace Evans, Daniel Rigazzi, Wayne Bryan and Jonathan Eaton. Seamus has also worked with Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh Opera, Pittsburgh Festival Opera and City Theatre of Pittsburgh.

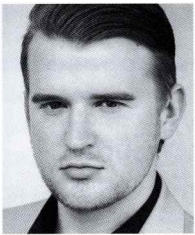


Jacob Rivera, *Andrès, Franz cover (Tales of Hoffmann)*, graduated from Purchase College the Conservatory of Music with an Undergraduate degree in Vocal Performance. While there, Jacob performed as Don Ottavio from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Lucano in *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, Kaspar in *Amahl and the Night Visitors* and Ezekiel Cheever in *The Crucible*. Jacob has also participated in the chorus of the Martina Arroyo Foundation program from 2015-2017 in *La fille du régiment*, *La bohème* and Bizet's *Carmen*.

Resident Artist Biographies



Carson Rose Schneider, *Pianist & Vocal Coach (Singers & Swingers/Tales of Hoffmann/Barber of Seville)*, is a New Jersey native who currently lives in Minneapolis, MN, where she finished her DMA in collaborative piano and coaching from University of Minnesota. A versatile collaborator, she works regularly as a duo partner, chamber musician, rehearsal pianist and coach. Most recently, she was principal coach for the Fargo-Moorhead Opera Gate City Bank Young Artists. After Opera North, she will be a 2018 Herndon Foundation Emerging Artist with Virginia Opera. Recent productions include *Speed Dating*, *Tonight!*, *Alcina*, *Carmen*, *Suor Angelica* and *Madama Butterfly*.



James Smidt, *Spalanzani, Hoffmann cover (Tales of Hoffmann)*, appeared in the 2017-2018 season with the AJ Fletcher Opera Institute as Ramiro in *La Cenerentola* and Pelléas in *Impressions de Pelléas*. In the summer of 2017, he appeared with GLOW Lyric Theatre as Rev. Parris in *The Crucible* and Marco Palmieriv in *The Gondoliers*. In the summers of 2015 and 2016, he studied at The Chautauqua Institute under the direction of Marlena Malas and performed in recital with Mikael Eliassen and Craig Rutenberg. Other roles performed include Orphée & Pluton in *Orphée aux enfers*, Male Chorus in *The Rape of Lucretia* and First Armored Man in *Die Zauberflöte*. In the 2018-2019 season, he will make his debut as Peter Quint in *The Turn of the Screw*, the title role in Massenet's *Werther*, and Grimoaldo in *Rodelina*, while continuing his pursuit of an Artist Certificate in Opera at UNCSA.



Jessica Toupin, *Antonia cover (Tales of Hoffmann)*, is a young lyric soprano studying Vocal Performance and Mathematics at University of Massachusetts Amherst. Most recently, she made her debut with the UMass Orchestra as the 2018 Concerto Competition winner. Additionally, she made her debut in the role of Gretel in UMass Amherst's production of *Hansel and Gretel* and premiered the role of Hester Prynne in the world premiere of Eric Sawyer's *The Scarlet Professor* with 5 College Opera. This past summer, she sang with the AIMS Orchestra under the baton of Lukas Beikircher in Graz, Austria. In 2016, she was a finalist of the national Classical Singer competition and the recipient of the Barbara E. Maze Award from the Handel and Haydn Society in Boston, MA.



Rachel Weishoff, *Giulietta (Tales of Hoffmann), Rosina cover (Barber of Seville), mezzo-soprano*, is pursuing her MMA at the Yale School of Music, studying with Doris Yarick-Cross. Roles include Hänsel in *Hänsel und Gretel*, Second Lady in *Die Zauberflöte*, and partial role, Orsino in *Lucrezia Borgia*. In her hometown of NYC, she has performed with Mannes Opera as Erika in *Vanessa* and with Chelsea Opera as La Seconda Cercatrice (La Suora Infermiera, cover) in *Suor Angelica*. She performed in Central City Opera's season as a selected recitalist, as well as partial roles, Dorabella and Mercedes. She recorded the role of Elizabeth Proctor in *The Crucible* with Albany Records of which *Opera News* reviews her "brave, weighty rendering" as "marvelous." A Presser Scholar of Music, she holds her BM and MM from SUNY Purchase. Roles include Cherubino, Hermia and Orlofsky.



Jordan Wells, *Cochenille, Pitichinaccio, Hoffmann cover (Tales of Hoffmann)*, recipient of the 2018 Brown/Loranger Fellowship at SongFest, will start the fall as a second year masters student at the University of Memphis. His recent credits include Rodolfo in *La bohème* at Red River Lyric Opera and Martin in *The Tender Land* at the University of Memphis. His upcoming credits include Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* at the University of Memphis. Jordan made his professional debut in Nashville Opera's world premiere of *Elmer Gantry*.

TALES OF HOFFMANN

By Jacques Offenbach • Libretto by Jules Barbier • Based on book by E.T.A. Hoffmann

Sung in French with English Supertitles

August 3, August 9, August 10 at 7:30 pm, August 12 at 5:00 pm

Lebanon Opera House, Lebanon, New Hampshire

Producer: Marilyn Crichlow

Conductor Louis Burkot	Director Russell Treyz	Choreographer Kurt Domoney	Assistant Conductor Noriko Yasuda
Assistant Director Madelyn Gunn *	Scenic Designer Audrey Vuong	Lighting Designer John Bartenstein	Costume Designer Jack Maisenbach
Sound Design James R. McCartney	Production Stage Manager Ginger M. James	Props Master Lily Ten Eyck	Wardrobe Manager Eloise Petro
Wig & Makeup Designer Stephen Lieboff	Scenic Charge Painter Sage Neighbors	Lighting Assistant John Salutz	Wig & Makeup Assistant Aria Durso

CAST

Hoffmann Todd Wilander	Hermann . . . Stephen McCluskey *
Lindorf / Coppélius / Miracle / Dapertutto . Aleksey Bogdanov	Luther Blake Jennings *
Nicklausse / The Muse Ashley Puenner *	Nathanaël . . Derek Jackenheimer *
Olympia Emily Misch *	Chochenille Jordan Wells *
Antonia Amal El-Shrafi *	Pitichinaccio Jordan Wells *
Giulietta Rachel Weishoff *	Voice of Antonia's Mother Cara Collins *
Crespel Attila Dobak *	Schlémil Brady Muth *
Franz Derek Jackenheimer *	
Spalanzani James Smidt *	
Andrès Jacob Rivera *	

DANCERS

Alec Cohen
Daniella Tamasi

CHORUS OF STUDENTS, GUESTS

Paul Belaski
Nicholas Briccetti
Susan Cancio-Bello
Cara Collins *
Atilla Dobak *
Amal El-Shrafi *
James Flood
Donald Helms
Derek Jackenheimer *
Blake Jennings *
Jeehoon Kim *
Alexandra Kraft
Stephen McCluskey *
Caitlin McGrail
Emily Misch *
Brady Muth *
Jacob Rivera *
James Smidt *
Jessica Toupin *
Rachel Weishoff *
Jordan Wells *
Sophie Wohltjen

** Opera North Resident Artists*

Casts are subject to change at any time.

Please switch off all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices.

Photography and recording are strictly prohibited.

Set constructed by Opera North, Windsor, VT

Orchestra arrangement by Tony Burke, © Pocket Publications

Director's Notes

TALES OF HOFFMANN

Tales of Hoffmann is indeed a collection of stories, tales, or fantasies.

They are close in style to Grimm's *Fairy Tales*, J. K. Rowling's extraordinary *Harry Potter* fabrications, or today's Marvel Comic epics, where the impossible can happen and does: a maiden can grow hair long enough to use to climb up a tower, magic potions are common, and humans morph into personae with incredible powers.

The temptation is to see the tales as actual experiences from Hoffmann's past. But, in reality, they can only be imagined fables inspired by memories or possible exploits. Each has its own aura or theme: the mechanical or surface beauty; the domestic versus the

world of the arts; and the lure of the sensual with its dangers of death and betrayal. They do not fall into neat little boxes.

The three tales are framed with a conflict between Hoffmann's friend/artistic muse, Nicklausse, and his latest love, Stella. And, since we begin with "Glug, glug, glug, glug," the stories are all seen through the screen of Hoffmann's alcoholic stupor.

In creating this production, our aim has been to clarify the stories and keep them open for interpretation rather than limit them to one point of view. We ask you to be open to their ambiguities and leaps of logic. They connect more with our emotional

intuitive thinking than with our logical minds. We are asked to release our brains from everyday reality and to dwell in a world where dolls can perform, singing can be fatal, and a man's soul can be stolen in a mirror.

The power of Offenbach's music takes us there. It draws us into the tales and we witness his conflict whether to continue the creative rocky road of his imagination or court the physical incarnation of his loves in Stella. His choice is not without pain and loss, Offenbach asks us to contemplate which balance sheet is better, both for Hoffmann and ourselves.

— Russell Treyz

SYNOPSIS

PROLOGUE

The poet Hoffmann is in love with Stella, a singer. Lindorf also loves her and is confident he will win her for himself. Entering with a group of students, Hoffmann sings about a disfigured dwarf named Kleinzach. During the song, his mind wanders to recollections of a beautiful woman. Hoffmann recognizes Lindorf as his rival, and the two trade insults. Hoffmann's Muse, who has assumed the guise of his friend Nicklausse, interrupts, but the encounter leaves the poet with a sense of impending disaster. He begins to tell the stories of his three past loves.

ACT I

The inventor Spalanzani has created a mechanical doll named Olympia. Hoffmann, thinking she is Spalanzani's daughter, has fallen in love with her. Spalanzani's former partner Coppélius sells Hoffmann a pair of magic glasses through which he alone perceives Olympia as human. When Coppélius demands his share of the profits the two inventors expect to make from the doll, Spalanzani gives him a worthless check.

Olympia captivates the assembled crowd. Watching her through his glasses, Hoffmann is enchanted. He declares his love and the two dance. Olympia whirls faster and faster as her mechanism spins out of control. During the melee Hoffmann's glasses are broken. Coppélius, having discovered that the check was worthless, returns in a fury. He grabs Olympia and tears her apart. Guests mock Hoffmann for falling in love with a machine.

ACT II

Antonia sings a song filled with memories of her dead mother. Her father, Crespel, has taken Antonia away in the hopes of ending

her affair with Hoffmann. He begs her not to sing: the effort will kill her. Hoffmann arrives and Antonia joins him in singing until she nearly faints. The charlatan Dr. Miracle claims he can cure Antonia but Crespel accuses him of killing his wife and forces him out. Hoffmann asks Antonia to give up singing. Miracle reappears, urging Antonia to sing. He conjures up the voice of her mother and claims she wants her daughter to sing. Antonia's singing becomes more and more feverish until she collapses.

ACT III

The courtesan Giulietta joins Nicklausse in a barcarole. Hoffmann mockingly praises the pleasures of the flesh. When Giulietta introduces Hoffmann to her lover, Schlémil, Nicklausse warns the poet against the courtesan's charms. The sinister Dapertutto produces a large diamond with which he will bribe Giulietta to steal Hoffmann's reflection – just as she already has stolen Schlémil's shadow. Giulietta seduces Hoffmann into confessing his love for her. Schlémil returns and accuses Giulietta of having left him for Hoffmann, who realizes with horror that he has lost his reflection. Schlémil challenges Hoffmann to a duel and is killed. Hoffmann takes the key to Giulietta's boudoir from his dead rival but finds the room empty. Returning, he sees her leaving the palace in the arms of Pitichinaccio.

EPILOGUE

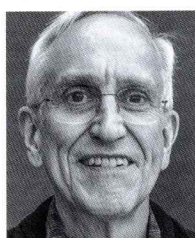
Having finished his tales, all Hoffmann wants is to forget. Nicklausse declares that each story describes a different aspect of one woman: Stella. Arriving in the tavern after her performance, the singer finds Hoffmann drunk and leaves with Lindorf. Nicklausse resumes her appearance as the Muse and tells the poet to find consolation in his creative genius.

Artist Biographies

TALES OF HOFFMANN



Louis Burkot, *Conductor*, was appointed Artistic Director of Opera North in 1987, and has conducted more than 35 productions for the company. He studied at the Yale School of Music and served as Music Director of Opera New England, the education/outreach arm of the Boston Lyric Opera. Director of the Dartmouth College Glee Club from 1982-2018 and Senior Lecturer in the Department of Music since 1982, he was the recipient of the Distinguished Lecturer Award in 2000. An acclaimed teacher, he gives classes in vocal repertoire and audition technique to students at universities and conservatories throughout the United States. He also served as acting director of the opera program at the Longy School of Music this past spring, directing their production of *Les contes d'Hoffmann*.



Russell Treyz, *Director*, returns for his fourth season with Opera North, having directed *Abduction from the Seraglio* (2015), *Tosca* (2016) and *Madama Butterfly* (2017). Russell began his opera career as a member of the chorus for the Chautauqua Opera Company. In NYC, directing credits include: *American Place*, *La Mama ETC*, *The Pearl*, and *Playwright's Horizons*. Regional credits include: Actors Theater of Louisville, Arts Center of Coastal Carolina, The Alliance, Cape Playhouse, Dallas Theater Center, Florida Studio, Goodspeed Opera Company, McCarter, Merrimack Repertory, North Shore Music Theater, PCPA, Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera, Riverside, Syracuse Stage, and the Hudson Valley, Orlando, Pennsylvania, St. Louis, Utah and San Francisco Shakespeare Festivals. As both director and playwright, he collaborated with the late Harry Chapin on the musical *Cottonpatch Gospel*. A graduate of Princeton and Yale, he has received a Drama Desk and regional theater awards.



Kurt Domoney, *Choreographer*, is thrilled to return to Opera North after choreographing *Evita* (2016), *Daughter Of The Regiment* (2016) and *La belle Hélène* (2017). He previously collaborated with Evans Haile as Associate Choreographer of *A Chorus Line* at the North Shore Music Theatre. Direction and choreography credits include *Princess Diana*, *The Musical* at the Piccolo Spoleto Festival in Charleston, SC and three seasons with the Transcendence Theatre Company in Sonoma, CA. Upcoming projects include directing and choreographing *A Chorus Line* at Northwestern University in Fall 2018 and *Hunchback of Notre Dame* at the Carnegie in Cincinnati, OH in Winter 2018. Kurt is Founder and Director of Broadway Kids Auditions, teaching musical theatre and audition techniques to kids ages 8-14.



Audrey Vuong, *Scenic Designer*, is a French set designer whose work has been featured on national theaters and opera houses in Europe. During her career she has worked in over sixty productions for stage, musical theater, opera and film. She designed sets for Mozart's *Il Seraglio* at the Opéra Garnier, Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* at the Opéra Bastille, and *Cinderella* at the Théâtre de Mogador in Paris. Ms. Vuong's work with contemporary directors Zabou Breitman and Pierre Guillois was shown at the 2017 Avignon Festival and at the Théâtre du Rond-Point in Paris this year. Audrey has a master in Scenography from the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs, in Paris. She recently moved to New York City.



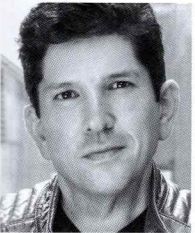
Noriko Yasuda, *Assistant Conductor*, a native of Osaka Japan, is an active vocal coach and accompanist in the Boston area. She has worked with Boston Lyric Opera, Handel and Haydn Society, Boston Baroque and Emmanuel Music. Currently, she is on the faculties at the Opera and Collaborative Piano Department at Longy School of Music of Bard College. She is also on the coaching/accompanying staff at BU Opera Institute. She travels to Japan regularly to give master classes at Osaka University of Fine Arts where she is a residence artist.

Artist Biographies

TALES OF HOFFMANN



Jack Maisenbach, *Costume Designer*, is incredibly excited to be back for his 3rd season at Opera North. He just finished Norwegian Cruise Line's new show in Germany and is glad to be back on dry land. Other Credits include: *Tosca* (Opera North), *Dial "M" for Murder* (Arts Center of Coastal Carolina), *Cooking with Calamari Sisters* (National Tour) and *Bells Are Ringing* (Theater Row – Off Broadway).



Todd Wilander, *Hoffmann*, has been praised for his "clear and sweet lyrical tone" (*Opera News*) and "brave, vocally assured portrayals" (*New York Times*). Todd has appeared with the Metropolitan Opera as Arturo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and Beppe in *I Pagliacci*, as well as roles in *La fanciulla del West*, *Wozzeck*, *Two Boys*, *The Nose*, *Hamlet*, *The Gambler*, *Macbeth*, and *From the House of the Dead*. Roles with New York City Opera include Charles Clayton in Stephen Schwartz's *Séance on a Wet Afternoon*, Uberto in *La Donna del Lago* and Harry in *La fanciulla del West*. Other engagements include Rodolpho in *A View from the Bridge* for Portland Opera, Molqi in *Death of Klinghoffer* with the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* for Opera Fairbanks and St. Petersburg Opera, Calaf in *Turandot* for Mississippi Opera, Radamès in *Aida* with Boheme Opera New Jersey and Don José in *Carmen* for Central Florida Lyric Opera.



Aleksey Bogdanov, *Lindorf / Coppélius / Miracle / Dapertutto*, has been praised as "a baritone to watch" by the *Washington Post*. During the 2017-2018 season, Aleksey made debuts with Arizona Opera as Scarpia in *Tosca* and Sarasota Opera as Sebastiano in d'Albert's rarely-heard *Tiefland*. Additionally, he was seen as Lionel in *The Maid of Orleans* with Odyssey Opera in Boston and covered the title role in Anton Rubinstein's *The Demon* with Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona. Next season, he will debut at Maryland Lyric Opera as Jack Rance in *La fanciulla del West* and return to Washington National Opera for Lieutenant Horstmayer in *Silent Night* and to cover the title role in *Eugene Onegin* and Scarpia in *Tosca*.



Ashley Puenner, *Nicklausse*, holds a Master of Music in Voice from the University of Kansas and a Bachelor of Music in Voice from Illinois Wesleyan University. She was a Studio Artist with the Florentine Opera in 2016-2018, where her roles included Second Lady in *The Magic Flute*, First Witch in *Dido and Aeneas*, and Mrs. Hurstwood in the world premiere of *Sister Carrie*. Other recent credits include Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Carmen in *The Tragedy of Carmen* and Beggar Woman in *Sweeney Todd*. Pursuing an avid interest in newly composed music, Ashley has premiered works by several composers including Robert Aldridge, Emile Naoumoff and Forrest Pierce, along with commissioning a song cycle by American composer Nathan Jones (*Six Qabbani Love Songs*).



Emily Misch, *Olympia*, has been praised for her "scintillating precision" (*Opera News*). Her 2017-2018 season includes the Grand Finals of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Valeria in the workshop of Tom Cipullo's *Mayo* (National Opera Center) and soprano solos in Mozart's *Requiem*, Haydn's *Paukenmesse* (Huntington Choral Society), and *Carmina Burana* (Altoona Symphony Orchestra). Recent engagements include Ravinia Festival's Steans Music Institute (Vocal Fellow), *Mater Gloriosa* in Mahler's *Symphony No. 8* (Berkshire Choral International), and *Exsultate, jubilate, K. 165* (Greenville Symphony Orchestra). She has received prizes from the Schuyler Foundation for Career Bridges, the Gerda Lissner Foundation, Mannes College of Music and Yale University.

Artist Biographies

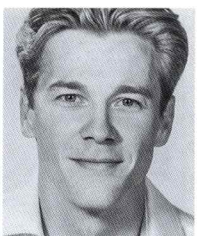
TALES OF HOFFMANN



Amal El-Shrafi, *Antonia*, has been hailed by the Boston Music Intelligencer as "shining through with a strength and power that matched her character's presence onstage." The Palestinian-American soprano is quickly gaining traction as a versatile performer in both concert work and opera. Recent engagements include performances with Sarasota Opera, Mobile Opera, Opera Company of Middlebury, Beth Morrison Projects and her Lincoln Center debut with the New York Philharmonic. She has been a two-time regional finalist for the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and holds a Master's degree from the New England Conservatory of Music. Ms. El-Shrafi currently resides in NYC with her musical cat, Mimi.



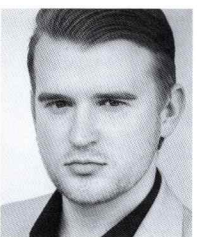
Rachel Weishoff, *Giulietta*, is pursuing her MMA at the Yale School of Music, studying with Doris Yarick-Cross. Roles include Hänsel in *Hänsel und Gretel*, Second Lady in *Die Zauberflöte*, and partial role, Orsino in *Lucrezia Borgia*. In her hometown of NYC, she has performed with Mannes Opera as Erika in *Vanessa* and with Chelsea Opera as La Seconda Cercatrice (La Suora Infermiera, cover) in *Suor Angelica*. She performed in Central City Opera's season as a selected recitalist, as well as partial roles, Dorabella and Mercedes. She recorded the role of Elizabeth Proctor in *The Crucible* with Albany Records of which *Opera News* reviews her "brave, weighty rendering" as "marvelous." A Presser Scholar of Music, she holds her BM and MM from SUNY Purchase. Roles include Cherubino, Hermia and Orlofsky.



Attila Dobak, *Crespel*, graduated from the Longy School of Music of Bard College in 2013, after which he joined Opera North as a Resident Artist. There, he covered the roles of Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Emil de Becque in *South Pacific* and sang Gideon March in *Little Women*. At the Miami Summer Music Festival in 2014, he was featured in the role of Figaro in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*. In the 2016/17 season, he appeared at the Boston Lyric Opera in performances of Puccini's *La bohème*, Ferenc Lehár's *The Merry Widow* and Bizet's *Carmen*. Following those, he took the stage at Müpa Budapest in the title role of Kodály's *Háry János*. He made his debut at the Hungarian State Opera this season in the role of Ali in Rossini's *L'italiana in Algeri*.



Derek Jackenheimer, *Nathanaël*, *Franz (Tales of Hoffmann)*, *Almaviva cover (Barber of Seville)*, is excited to be joining Opera North this summer as a Resident Artist. He recently debuted with North Carolina Opera as Don Curzio in *Le nozze di Figaro* and covered Le Remendado in Bizet's *Carmen* with Greensboro Opera. He received a Masters of Performance at UNC-Greensboro, where he studied with Clara O'Brien. Derek's roles with UNCG Opera Theatre include Chevalier de la Force in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Old Galileo in Philip Glass' *Galileo Galilei*, and Kaspar in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. Derek's solo orchestral appearances include Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and *St. Paul*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Handel's *Messiah*, Bruckner's *Te Deum*, Charpentier's *Te Deum*, and multiple Bach cantatas.



James Smidt, *Spalanzani*, appeared in the 2017-2018 season with the AJ Fletcher Opera Institute as Ramiro in *La Cenerentola* and Pelléas in *Impressions de Pelléas*. In 2017, he appeared with GLOW Lyric Theatre as Rev. Parris in *The Crucible* and Marco Palmieriv in *The Gondoliers*. In 2015 and 2016, he studied at The Chautauqua Institute under the direction of Marlena Malas and performed in recital with Mikael Eliassen and Craig Rutenberg. Other roles performed include Orphée & Pluton in *Orphée aux enfers*, Male Chorus in *The Rape of Lucretia* and First Armored Man in *Die Zauberflöte*. In the 2018-2019 season, he will make his debut as Peter Quint in *The Turn of the Screw*, the title role in Massenet's *Werther*, and Grimoaldo in *Rodelina*, while continuing his pursuit of an Artist Certificate in Opera at UNCSA.