



## INAUGURAL RECITAL

featuring the  
2021 and 2022 First-Prize Winners  
of the  
WILKINSON YOUNG SINGERS AWARD

KAILEIGH RIESS, SOPRANO  
&  
RYAN LUSTGARTEN, TENOR

with

MATTHEW LARSON, PIANO

Saturday, April 1, 2023  
7:30 PM

Emmanuel Church  
15 Newbury Street  
Boston, MA 02116

**THE WILKINSON YOUNG SINGERS FUND (WYSF)** is a scholarship fund established in 2020 to honor the memory and legacy of the prolific baritone, teacher, and musician Donald R. Wilkinson (1961–2018). Founded under the auspices of The Boston Camerata, WYSF has now formed its own Massachusetts-based organization, with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status.

The goal of the Fund is to provide financial support for classically trained singers between the ages of 20 and 30 who live in the Boston area and are pursuing a professional career in music. Two Wilkinson Young Singers Awards are given annually: a first prize of \$2,000 and a second prize of \$1,000. Applicants must submit a written application along with a video audition. Candidates need to demonstrate strong musicianship, versatility of repertoire, a commitment to engage the community with their music, and the determination to make a career in music.

### DONALD R. WILKINSON (1961–2018)

Praised by *The New York Times* for his "outstanding solo work" and by *The Boston Globe* for his "superb" and "sonorous" singing, Donald Wilkinson was an acclaimed bass-baritone, conductor, and teacher who had a distinguished career in concert, opera, oratorio, recital, and contemporary music.

His career as a professional musician began at Emmanuel Music in Boston in 1984. Other opportunities soon followed, including a role in the chorus for a performance of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* by Banchetto Musicale (now Boston Baroque). These beginnings led Don to a 28-year career at Emmanuel Music, where he worked closely with Artistic Directors Craig Smith and Ryan Turner. He became a sought-after performer of the music of Bach and Schütz, which he loved deeply. Don also sang with the Boston Camerata beginning in 1991 until the time of his death in 2018, under Artistic Directors Joel Cohen and Anne Azéma. He appeared with the symphony orchestras of Boston, Pittsburgh, Jacksonville, Springfield, and Portland, Maine, and with Boston Baroque, Boston Cecilia, and the Washington Bach Consort. On the opera stage, he sang the roles of Marcello in *La Bohème*, Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, Germont in *La Traviata*, Allazim in *Zaide*, Sam in *Trouble in Tahiti*, and Konečný in the American premiere of Janáček's *Fate*.

Along with his prolific stage career, Don served for many years on the music faculty at Phillips Academy Andover, as well as in teaching positions at Harvard University, MIT, and Tufts University. In 2014, he founded the Nahant Music Festival, and as its Artistic Director influenced the lives of dozens of young singers, who attended Master Classes given by renowned Boston-area musicians and performed classical and contemporary programs for two weeks every summer. It was Don's proudest achievement – and a source of inspiration for the founders of the Wilkinson Young Singers Fund.



## PROGRAM

"Quanto è bella, quanto è cara" from <i>L'Elisir d'Amore</i>	Gaetano Donizetti (1797 – 1848)
Much More from <i>The Fantasticks</i>	Harvey Schmidt (1929 – 2018)
"Una parola, O Adina" from <i>L'Elisir d'Amore</i>	Gaetano Donizetti (1797 – 1848)
People Will Say We're in Love from <i>Oklahoma!</i>	Richard Rodgers (1902 – 1979)
"Caro elisir...Esulti pur la barbara" from <i>L'Elisir d'Amore</i>	Gaetano Donizetti (1797 – 1848)
Vanilla Ice Cream from <i>She Loves Me</i>	Jerry Bock (1928 – 2010)
She Loves Me from <i>She Loves Me</i>	Jerry Bock (1928 – 2010)
<i>(a brief pause)</i>	
Love to Me from <i>The Light in the Piazza</i>	Adam Guettel b. 1964
No One Else from <i>Natasha, Pierre &amp; The Great Comet of 1812</i>	Dave Malloy b. 1976
"Una furtiva lagrima" from <i>L'Elisir d'Amore</i>	Gaetano Donizetti (1797 – 1848)
Dispensable from <i>Edges</i>	Benj Pasek, b. 1985 Justin Paul, b.1985
"Eccola....Prendi...Il mio rigor dimentica" from <i>L'Elisir d'Amore</i>	Gaetano Donizetti (1797 – 1848)



## NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

from Kaileigh Riess & Ryan Lustgarten

Gaetano Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore*, or *The Elixir of Love*, is one of opera's most enduring and heartwarming comedies. Nemorino, our earnest and lovestruck hero, pines for Adina, an independent and vivacious woman who is interested in Nemorino's friendship, but nothing more. To gain her affection, Nemorino turns to a magic elixir, which unbeknownst to him is actually just cheap red wine. Armed with newfound liquid courage, Nemorino feigns indifference right back to Adina, revealing the possibility that she may feel something more than friendship for him after all. While Nemorino's hope is restored, Adina struggles to express the true nature of her feelings for him. She buys back his military contract (a venture Nemorino undertook to acquire cash for more magic elixir), but it is not enough for Nemorino. Adina must look within herself and find the courage to bare her heart and soul to the one who has always done the same for her. After all the laughs, *L'Elisir d'Amore* leaves us with one core truth that makes the piece as poignant today as it was at its premiere in 1832: Sincerity triumphs over all.

Tonight's performance centers around Nemorino and Adina, with selections from *Golden Age* and contemporary musical theater woven into their arc in an exploration of love. What stops us from saying what we really mean and feeling what we really feel? What games do we play with one another to get what we think we want? What armor do we wear to shield ourselves from the vulnerability intrinsic to matters of the heart? And what magic is revealed when we let it all go?

## TRANSLATIONS

### Quanto è bella, quanto è cara

NEMORINO

*Observing Adina, who is reading.*

While I gaze, I adore more deeply  
But in that heart I am not capable  
Of inspiring mild affection.  
She reads, studies, learns ...  
There is nothing unknown to her ...  
I am always an idiot.  
I know only how to sigh.  
So dear and beautiful.  
While I gaze, I adore more deeply  
But in that heart I am not capable  
Of inspiring mild affection.  
Who enlightens my mind?  
Who teaches me how to be loved?



### Una parola, O Adina

NEMORINO

A word, Adina.

ADINA

What a nuisance!

The usual sigh! You'd do better to go to your uncle's town, as he is reported to be seriously ill, than waste your time in the indulgence of a fruitless passion.

NEMORINO

His illness is nothing — near mine.

I tried to leave this place, but it's impossible.

ADINA

But if he dies, and you lose the inheritance?

NEMORINO

What do I care? ...

ADINA

You will die of hunger, and without any support ...

NEMORINO

To die of hunger or love ... for me it's all the same.

ADINA

Listen to me.

You are good, you are modest, not like the sergeant.

You certainly believe in inspiring yourself; so I speak to you candidly,

And I tell you that you love in vain.

I am capricious, and have no desire.

Because I cannot love.

NEMORINO

And why not, Adina?

ADINA

A wise question.

Go ask the fluttering breeze because it flies unceasingly  
Now on the lily, now on the rose, now on the meadow,  
now on the stream.

She'll reply, it is my nature to change.

NEMORINO

What remains then?

*continued*

ADINA

To my love, renounce and fly from me.

NEMORINO

I cannot, dear Adina.

ADINA

You cannot? But why?

NEMORINO

Why?

Go ask the river why it leaves its source and goes to the far distant sea.

He will tell you that it is a power he cannot explain.

ADINA

Therefore?

NEMORINO

Like that river, I will be lost following thee.

ADINA

Seek another and with her, forget me.

NEMORINO

No, I want to die with you.

ADINA

Die for me?

To cure this madness

That constant love is madness.

Of following the custom of mine

Changing lover each hour.

NEMORINO

Other love might waver

No other love change me.

And my true love cannot be driven

Out of the heart.

ADINA

Yes, yes, yes.

NEMORINO

No, no, no.

ADINA

Yes, yes, yes.

NEMORINO/ADINA

No, no, no cannot be driven from my heart

Si, si, si I laugh and enjoy

In such a way that melts the heart.



## Caro elisir...Esulti pur la barbara

NEMORINO

Dear Elixir! You are mine!

And all mine. How mighty it must be

Your virtue, if not drunk again,

You already fill my chest with so much joy!

But why can't I see the effect

Before an entire day has passed?

*He drinks.*

Oh! good! - Oh! expensive! - another sip.

*He still drinks.*

Oh! As from vein to vein

Sweet warmth flows in me! ... Ah! maybe it is too much...

Perhaps the flame exists.

She starts to feel ... Sure she feels it ...

Joy and appetite announce it to me

Which in me suddenly awoke ...

*He sits on the tavern bench; he gets out of his pocket bread and fruit, and eats singing with a full throat.*

La rà, la rà, la rà.

ADINA

(Who is that madman?

Is it Traveggo? Or is it Nemorino?

So cheerful! And why?)

NEMORINO

(There she is! ...

*He gets up to run to her, but stops and sits down again.*

But no ... Let us not approach ... Of my sigh

Be not weary for now. So much so ...

Tomorrow her proud heart must adore me.)

ADINA

(He does not look at me! What a change.)

NEMORINO

La rà, la rà, la rà.

ADINA

(I do not know if his playfulness is fake or true.)

NEMORINO

(She does not appear to love me yet.)

ADINA

(He wants to be indifferent.)

NEMORINO

(Exults even the barbarian

For a little to my pains!

Tomorrow will have an end,

Tomorrow she will love me.)

ADINA

(Throw off his chains;

But serious more than usual

He will feel them.)

NEMORINO

La rà, la rà.

ADINA

*Approaching him.*

Very good!

The lesson benefits you.

NEMORINO

It is true; I put it in practice

This is the proof.

ADINA

Then all of your former vows ...

NEMORINO

Were made to be broken.

ADINA

So the ancient fire?

NEMORINO

Will soon die out.

One more day,

And the heart will heal.

ADINA

I take comfort in that ...

But ... we'll see.

NEMORINO

Just one day.

ADINA

We shall see.

NEMORINO

Tomorrow she will love me!

## Una furtiva lagrima

NEMORINO

A single secret tear  
from her eye did spring:  
as if she envied all the youths  
that laughingly passed her by.  
What more searching need I do?  
What more searching need I do?  
She loves me! Yes, she loves me, I see it. I see it.  
For just an instant the beating  
of her beautiful heart I could feel!  
As if my sighs were hers,  
and her sighs were mine!  
The beating, the beating of her heart I could feel,  
to merge my sighs with hers...  
Heavens! Yes, I could die!  
I could ask for nothing more, nothing more.  
Oh, heavens! Yes, I could, I could die!  
I could ask for nothing more, nothing more.  
Yes, I could die! Yes, I could die of love.





## **Eccola...Prendi...Il mio rigor dimentica**

NEMORINO

Here it is.

Oh! what enhances her beauty

The potential love.

I'll be indifferent.

Until she comes to explain herself.

ADINA

Well, Nemorino

Tell me, why do you want to leave?

Why are you resolved to be a soldier?

NEMORINO

Why? Because I wanted to try my destiny

And could improve my station.

ADINA

You, your life is dear to me.

I have rebought your contract from Belcore.

NEMORINO

You? (A work of love)

ADINA

Take it, because of me you are free.

Stay on your native soil.

There is no destiny for you so bitter

That will not change one day. Stay!

Here where everyone loves you

Wise, loving, honest

Always unhappy and miserable

No, you will not always be that way.

NEMORINO

Now it is explained.

ADINA

Goodbye!

NEMORINO

What? You are leaving me?

ADINA

Yes.

NEMORINO

You have nothing else to tell me?

ADINA

Nothing else.

NEMORINO

Take the contract back.

Because I am not loved,

I'd rather die a soldier.

There is no more peace for me.

If the doctor deceived me, I want to die a soldier.

ADINA

Oh, the doctor was truthful.

If you trust your heart

Know it finally.

You are dear to me and I love you.

NEMORINO

Me?

ADINA

Yes, dear to me and I love you.

NEMORINO

You love me?

Yes! Yes! Indescribable joy!

ADINA

As much as I made you miserable?

NEMORINO

You? Love me?

ADINA

I long to make you happy.

NEMORINO

The doctor didn't deceive me?

ADINA

No.

NEMORINO

Oh joy!

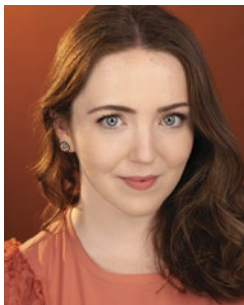
ADINA

Forget my unkindness.

I swear to love you forever.



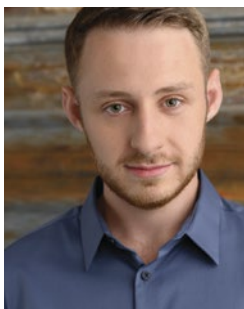
## THE PERFORMERS



**KAILEIGH RIESS** was honored to be the first-place recipient of the inaugural Wilkinson Young Singers Award in 2021 and is thrilled to be sharing the stage tonight with two of the musicians and people dearest to her heart. Hailed as “appealing and fresh-voiced” (*Chicago Tribune*) and “the stand-out ... an engaging singer and actor” (*The Daily Camera*), Kaileigh was seen most recently on the operatic stage in the role of Violetta Valéry in *La Traviata* at Virginia Opera, where she recently completed her tenure as an Emerging Artist. There, she also performed the roles of Annina (*La Traviata*), Lucy (*Fellow Travelers*), and Isabel/Mabel cover (*The Pirates of Penzance*).

Kaileigh is a proud alumna of the Boston University Opera Institute, where she was seen as Anne Trulove (*The Rake’s Progress*) and Maria Bertram (*Mansfield Park*). On the competition circuit, Kaileigh was named a Boston District winner and an LA District Encouragement Award winner in the Metropolitan Opera’s Laffont Competition; a 3rd-place winner of the Jensen Foundation Vocal Competition; and an award-winning finalist in the Lotte Lenya Competition.

Kaileigh completed her earlier education at Northwestern University (BM Voice, BA English) and the University of Southern California (MM Opera), spending her summers as a fellow with Central City Opera, IVAI Tel Aviv, Music Academy of the West, and Des Moines Metro Opera. Kaileigh can next be seen locally in concert with Seaglass Theater Company next month in *Stars and Stripes: A Musical Salute*. She is represented by Encompass Arts.



**RYAN LUSTGARTEN** was born in Seattle and spent this season with Virginia Opera as a Herndon Foundation Emerging Artist. He received his Bachelor of Music in Voice and Opera Performance from Washington State University in 2016, and his Master’s Degree in Voice & Opera from Northwestern University in 2020, during which he performed numerous operatic roles and was a soloist in several concert works ranging from classics like Mozart’s *Requiem* to more contemporary projects like David T. Little’s *Am I Born*. During his operatic training, Ryan developed an enduring passion for contemporary opera, performing the role of Pat in the Midwestern premiere

of David T. Little’s *Dog Days* at Northwestern University and portraying Miles in Missy Mazzoli’s *Proving Up* at the Boston University Opera Institute.

Last season, Ryan performed with the Boston University Opera Institute, Symphony New Hampshire, Shreveport Opera, City Lyric Opera, and Des Moines Metro Opera. Ryan, also a lover of early music, performs multiple concerts each year with Upper Valley Baroque, a New Hampshire-based professional

choir. This season with UVB, he will be a featured soloist in a performance of Monteverdi's *Vespers*. In the next month, Ryan will perform Chevalier de la Force in *Dialogues des Carmélites* with Bronx Opera, and then will be gearing up for another summer as an Apprentice Artist with Des Moines Metro Opera.

Away from the stage, Ryan enjoys a rousing game of pickup soccer on the weekends, a juicy book, Tampa Bay Buccaneers football, and any and all things *Star Wars*.



**MATTHEW LARSON** received his Doctorate in Collaborative Piano from Arizona State University in 2001 under the tutelage of Eckart Sellheim. An accomplished accompanist, Dr. Larson has played more than 1,000 performances in the United States and Europe. He has worked with such varied artists as Metropolitan Opera stars Carol Vaness, Lawrence Brownlee, Jennifer Larmore, and Sherrill Milnes; Academy of Ancient Music director Christopher Hogwood; vocal pedagogy pioneer Richard Miller; and the eminent collaborative artist Dalton Baldwin, with whom Matthew was invited to study in New York. His current and former vocal coaching students can be found on Broadway and in opera houses and theaters worldwide.

He has held the positions of Assistant Conductor and Pianist for Boston Lyric Opera; Music Director for the University of Connecticut Opera Program; Assistant Music Director for the University of Connecticut Voice and Opera Program; Pianist / Coach for the Yale University Opera Program; Staff Accompanist for Arizona State University School of Music; Vocal Coach and Music Director for A.S.U. Lyric Opera Theater; Staff Pianist for The American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria; Music Director of Opera Providence; Vocal Coach at the Walnut Hill School for the Performing Arts; Vocal Coach for Boston University's Opera Institute; Staff Pianist for Opera New England; Pianist for the Boston Symphony Orchestra Tanglewood Festival Chorus; and Music Director for Cape Cod Opera.

In January 2020, Dr. Larson received a Grammy Award (Best Opera Recording) for his work on Tobias Picker's *Fantastic Mr. Fox*.

Currently, Dr. Larson serves on the faculty of Boston University's Opera Institute; as Music Director for Seaglass Theater Company; and as Minister of Music at First Congregational Church of Milton, Massachusetts.



## DONORS TO THE WILKINSON YOUNG SINGERS FUND

We are deeply grateful to the following donors for making the Wilkinson Young Singers Fund a reality. Their generous gifts since the Fund's inception in 2020 have allowed us to bestow four awards to date and have made today's recital possible, while providing critical support to sustain our ongoing mission.

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Please consider making a donation to The Wilkinson Young Singers Fund. Your contributions will enable us to continue supporting talented Boston-area singers like Kaileigh and Ryan; holding recitals that are free and open to the public; and preserving the legacy of Don Wilkinson.

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