



University of North Texas
College of Music

Ensemble Concert | Sunday, March 1, 2026 | 7:30 p.m.
Lyric Theater - Murchison Performing Arts Center

University of North Texas Opera Theatre presents
Alcina

Claire Choquette, guest stage director
Stephen Mulligan, guest conductor

Alcina, HWV 34 (1735)..... George Frideric Handel
An opera in three acts, presented in (1685–1759)
two parts with one intermission

Libretto by Riccardo Broschi

After the epic poem *Orlando Furioso* by Ludovico Ariosto

Sung in Italian with English supertitles

Program three hundred forty-five of the 2025–2026 season
Photography and videography are prohibited

Synopsis

Written by Isaac Carlin

Prologue

Many years ago, the sorceress Alcina came to a barren and desolate island. Using her magic power, she transformed the wasteland into a tropical paradise and made her home there with her sister Morgana. Alcina would also use her magic to lure brave and noble heroes to her island to be her lovers. Then, once she grew tired of them, she would transform them into trees, stones, and wild animals, to beautify and decorate her island kingdom.

Her latest victim is Ruggiero, a brave knight in service to Charlemagne. After having been stranded on her island, he has fallen under her spell, and has forgotten everything about his past life, including his true love, the warrior-maiden Bradamante. Determined to get her fiancé back, Bradamante has disguised herself as her brother, Ricciardo, and has sailed to Alcina's island, accompanied by her mentor, the sorcerer Melisso.

Part I

Bradamante and Melisso arrive on Alcina's island and are greeted by Morgana. Believing Bradamante to be a man, she falls in love with this 'handsome young knight' and takes the visitors to Alcina's court. Once there, Bradamante is incensed to see Ruggiero at Alcina's side, his eyes full of love. They also meet a young boy named Oberto who is searching for his father, a knight named Astolfo, Alcina's previous lover who has mysteriously disappeared. Bradamante and Melisso approach Ruggiero and rebuke him for desertion, but he cannot think of anything except Alcina.

They are interrupted by the arrival of Oronte, Alcina's captain, and, until very recently, Morgana's lover. He angrily challenges 'Ricciardo' to a duel, but Morgana comes and stops the fight. Frustrated, Oronte takes his anger out on Ruggiero and tells him that Alcina has fallen for the handsome newcomer and will soon transform Ruggiero into a wild beast, just as she has done with all her other past lovers. Ruggiero is horrified and accuses Alcina of unfaithfulness, and things are made worse when 'Ricciardo' enters and pretends to admire Alcina. Alcina placates her lover, but Bradamante is so upset at seeing Alcina flirting with her fiancé that she reveals her true identity to Ruggiero. Melisso hastily contradicts her, and Ruggiero believes that 'Ricciardo' has gone mad with love for Alcina.

Morgana comes and warns 'Ricciardo' that Alcina plans on turning 'him' into a wild animal to placate Ruggiero's jealousy, and she begs 'him' to escape the island. 'Ricciardo' tells Morgana that 'he' does not love Alcina but instead loves someone else. Morgana, full of hope, asks if he loves her instead. To maintain the deception, Bradamante declares 'his' love for Morgana and swears fidelity to her. Excited, Morgana tells 'Ricciardo' that she'll inform Alcina of the good news and ardently tells him that she'll be faithful to him, always.

continued on following page

Melisso finds Ruggiero alone. Using his magic, he disguises himself as Ruggiero's former mentor Atlante, and, having won Ruggiero's trust, Melisso breaks Alcina's hold over the young knight by placing a magic ring on his finger. The spell is broken, and Ruggiero sees through all of the illusions that cover the island. Filled with remorse, he declares his desire to leave the island at once and return to Bradamante, but Melisso warns him that he cannot simply leave as Alcina's powerful magic would hinder him. Instead, he counsels Ruggiero to continue the pretense, and to tell Alcina that he wishes to go hunting, and thus, he may secure an escape.

Alcina prepares a magic spell to transform 'Ricciardo' into a beast, but Morgana arrives and interrupts the ritual. Ruggiero tells Alcina that he is no longer angry with 'Ricciardo' and wishes to go hunting. Alcina grants his request but remains suspicious. Ruggiero finds 'Ricciardo' and begs for forgiveness. Realizing that Ruggiero has come to his senses, Bradamante again reveals her true identity to Ruggiero, but he believes her to be an illusion of Alcina, and he attacks her out of fear. Bradamante is in despair, and Ruggiero is again left filled with doubt and remorse. Oronte finds out about Bradamante and Melisso's motives for coming to the island. Seeking to cause further chaos, tells Alcina that Ruggiero plans to leave her. Shocked and enraged, Alcina swears that Ruggiero will be hers alone or suffer for eternity.

15 Minute Intermission

Part II

Oronte tells Morgana that her new lover is unfaithful, but she refuses to believe him and goes to look for 'Ricciardo.' Bradamante finds Oberto and comforts him, telling him that he will soon see his father again as the sorceress' magic will soon be broken. Ruggiero finds her again and begs for her forgiveness. Morgana discovers the two lovers together and realizes that 'Ricciardo' is actually a woman. In a rage, she swears vengeance and rushes to find Alcina. Furious, Alcina tries to call upon evil spirits to stop Ruggiero from leaving her, but her magic mysteriously fails her.

Morgana tries to rebuild her relationship with Oronte. He rebuffs her but later admits that he still loves her. Alcina conjures monsters to stop Ruggiero and Bradamante from leaving, but they defeat everything she sends. In a rage, she leads Oberto to a wild lion and gives him a spear, commanding him to kill the lion, but Oberto realizes that the friendly old lion must be his father, and he condemns her cruelty.

continued on following page

Bradamante and Ruggiero arrive to destroy the source of Alcina's power - a magic urn. Alcina and Morgana plead with them to stop, but Ruggiero is deaf to their pleas, and he smashes the urn. In an instant, everything is restored, the island's beauty to a barren wasteland, and all the creatures, rocks and trees to their human forms. The lion turns back into Astolfo who is joyfully reunited with Oberto, and all Alcina's former lovers marvel and rejoice at their rescue. All sing of their relief and joy, and Alcina is left alone.

Historical Context

The story of Alcina comes from the epic poem, *Orlando Furioso*, written by Ludovico Ariosto in the early sixteenth century. A chivalric romance as famous in its time as J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* or George R.R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire*. Set during the Crusades, the story weaves together elements of realism and fantasy with Crusader Knights and Saracens but also fantastic beasts, sorcerers, and magic. The epic poem tells the tale of many different characters, including the title character Orlando (or Roland), but *Alcina* focuses on the characters Ruggiero and Bradamante.

Soloists

Dramatis Personae	Voice type	Performer
Alcina <i>A sorceress</i>	soprano	Emma Davis
Ruggiero <i>A knight</i>	countertenor	Haolun Zhang
Bradamante <i>Ruggiero's betrothed</i>	mezzo-soprano	Ris Kemp
Morgana <i>Alcina's sister</i>	soprano	Jae Park
Oronte <i>Morgana's former lover</i>	tenor	Francisco Bedoy Solorzano
Melisso <i>Bradamante's guardian</i>	bass	Yonghyun Kim
Oberto <i>A boy searching for his father</i>	soprano	Ryn Jenkins
Understudies: Emma Gulovsen (Alcina)		

Opera Chorus Personnel

Soprano

Anabelle Parra
Beatrice Kim

Alto

Hayeong Park
Sophia Sweny

Tenor

Alek Gonzalez
Nicholas Thompson

Bass

Heedo Park
Sean Roossien

Dancers: Emmy Ruiz, Jacqueline Salas, and Olivia Burelsmith

Opera Orchestra Personnel

Violin

Ava Cossé
Luis Bonilla
Kevin Reid
Makayla Coleman
Yeji Joun
Jose Forero
Dylan Leung
Nicholas Lieu
Michelle Ye

Viola

Jordan Palmer
Melanie Cantu
Breanna Norton

Cello

Dylan Branam
Raymond Lux
D. Orellana-Garcia
Ellen Miner (continuo)

Bass

Aiyana Armstrong
Lalo Flores

Harpsichord

Joohee Jeong
Molly Smith (continuo)

Flute

Steven Rios

Oboe

Logan Pierce
Kaiden Doetsch

Bassoon

Artur Kuchurivskiy

Horn

Trampus Marek
Cole Self

Music Staff

Conductor Stephen Mulligan
Music Director Stephanie Rhodes Russell
Principal Coach Sharon Bjorndal Lavery
Chorus Master Kathryn Davidson
Assistant Conductor Alexandra Kovatch
Collaborative Pianists Joohee Jeong and Molly Smith

Production Personnel

Director Claire Choquette
Assistant Director Sorrel McCarthy
Production Manager Julie Hohman
Resident/Production Stage Manager Sorrel McCarthy
Production Stage Manager Rudy Polk
Set Designer Donna Marquet

continued on following page

Set Builder Jordan Batson
Lighting Designer Elijah Reed
Audio Technical Director Dan Schulz
Costume Designer Michael Robinson
Choreographer Whitney Geldon
Deputy Assistant Directors.. Emma Gulovsen, Tyler Warwas, and Maryn West
Deputy Stage Manager Abigail Bahng
Assistant Stage Managers..... Autumn Forgey, José Nava, and Trinity Houser
Supertitles Stephen Dubberly and Isaac Carlin

Biographies (Artistic Team)

Award-winning stage director **Claire Choquette** gained national recognition in 2022 with her cult-centric concept for *Salome*, winner of OPERA America's Robert L.B. Tobin Director-Designer Prize. She is also the 2025–2026 recipient of the National Opera Association's Joelyn Wakefield-Wright Stage Director Fellowship, awarded annually to an emerging director of exceptional promise.

A rising star on the American opera scene, Claire was quickly in high demand, directing eight fully staged productions in her first year as a full-time director. Her recent production of *Little Women* at Fort Worth Opera was praised by *EarRelevant* as "superior in every aspect," while *OperaGene* lauded her "masterful job" in maintaining the pacing and crafting the comedic elements of *The Impresario* at Opera Baltimore.

Other recent credits include Ruders' *Handmaid's Tale* (Temple University), *Gianni Schicchi/Strawberry Fields* (Oklahoma City University), *Scalia/Ginsburg* (Charlottesville Opera), *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Painted Sky Opera), *La Bohème* (Shreveport Opera), *Dust Bowl* and *Missy Mazzoli's Song from the Uproar* (Verdigris Ensemble), and *Siren Song* and *Alice Tierney* (Boston University Opera Institute).

Previously, Claire has held resident assistant director positions with Wolf Trap Opera, The Dallas Opera Outreach, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, and Painted Sky Opera. Early in her career, she was an Assistant Professor at the Universidad Nacional del Paraguay in Asunción, where she taught acting for singers and helped facilitate the university's opera productions.

Claire's upcoming projects include productions with Westminster Choir College, Baltimore Opera and Druid City Opera, followed by a summer residency at Merola Opera.

American conductor **Stephen Mulligan** works across symphonic, operatic, and contemporary music, and is known for his collaborative approach with musicians and audiences. He maintains a full guest conducting schedule across the US and Europe; highlights of the 2025–26 season include debuts with the Baltimore Symphony, Syracuse Orchestra, and Cincinnati Opera, and return engagements with the New York Philharmonic, Junges-Sinfonie Orchester Wetzlar, and Ensemble MusikFabrik. Following productions of Puccini's *La Rondine* and Strauss's *Die Fledermaus*, he continues his collaboration with the University of North Texas Opera in a new staging of Handel's *Alcina*. As a guest conductor, he has also recently appeared with the Dallas Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Filarmonica Transilvania, Gulbenkian Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, the Royal Danish Opera Academy, and Athelas Ensemble, among others.

Stephen's career launched at the Aspen Music Festival and School, where he studied with Robert Spano and received the Aspen Conducting Prize. Spano and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra subsequently appointed him Assistant and then Associate Conductor, where he led hundreds of concerts, including three classical subscription jump-ins over six weeks, all to critical acclaim. As a Dudamel Conducting Fellow with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Stephen also jumped in for Gustavo Dudamel to lead an all-Beethoven program and conducted other performances including Stravinsky's complete *L'Histoire du Soldat*. He served as Resident Conductor of the Cincinnati Opera for two seasons and is a three-time recipient of the Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Award.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Stephen found the time to pursue his childhood dream of composing in earnest, studying with Jörg Widmann at the Barenboim-Said Akademie in Berlin and Miroslav Srnka at the Darmstadt Summer Courses. Since then, composing has become central to his artistic life, and his works are published by Universal Edition (Vienna). His Haiku for contrabassist and vocalist Begüm Aslan inspired the creation of the Begüm Aslan Composition Competition, and in the 2025–26 season, percussionist David Moliner will premiere the sequel, *Haiku II*, at the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg. He will also be an Artist in Residence at the Willapa Bay Artist Residency in Washington State.

Stephen began his music studies with his father Gregory, former violinist with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. He studied conducting at Yale University with Toshiyuki Shimada and at the Peabody Institute with Gustav Meier, Markand Thakar, and Marin Alsop.

Stephanie Rhodes Russell recently completed a residency as Conducting Fellow with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra where she appeared regularly with the ensemble leading education, family, and community concerts while serving as cover conductor for the symphonic subscription series. She is the recipient of a 2019 Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Award, designed to aid outstanding young conductors in developing their talents and careers. She has served on the music staff of the Bolshoi Theatre of Russia, The Dallas Opera, Houston Grand Opera, LA Opera, San Francisco Opera, and Washington National Opera, amongst others, and her extensive operatic experience in the roles of assistant conductor, prompter, chorus master, rehearsal pianist, and diction coach, brings a comprehensive understanding to her work. Other recent engagements include concerts with the American Festival Chorus and Orchestra, performances of Handel's *Alcina* at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, an engagement with Washington National Opera's forum for new works, the American Opera Initiative, and *The Magic Flute* and *Dido and Aeneas* with the Miami Music Festival.

Sharon Bjorndal Lavery began her career as an Assistant Chorus Master at New York City Opera. She went on to serve as Chorus Master and Assistant Conductor for productions at the Bard Summerscape Festival, Opera Philadelphia, and Utah Opera. Dr. Lavery has served as coach, conductor, pianist, and singer for opera companies and symphonies around the country, including Wolf Trap Opera, San Diego Opera, San Diego Symphony, Kentucky Opera, Louisville Orchestra, American Symphony Orchestra, Juilliard Orchestra, Waco Symphony, Vox Seraphim Choir and Orchestra, and McLennan Opera. She has worked closely with living composers Jake Heggie, Marc Adamo, Deborah Drattell, and Daron Hagen, as well as the late Stephen Sondheim, interpreting premieres and reviving classics. A champion of underrepresented composers, Dr. Lavery performed the Florence Price Piano Concerto in One Movement and the American premiere of the Agathe Backer Grøndahl Piano Concerto this past year.

Sharon received the Doctor of Musical Arts in Collaborative Piano from The Juilliard School, Master of Music from the Manhattan School of Music, and was a double major in Piano and Vocal Performance for the Bachelor of Music degree at Oberlin College Conservatory.

Sorrel Bohannon McCarthy is a second year MM student in vocal performance at the University of North Texas, studying with Daniel Bubeck. In addition to performing as the soprano soloist in Honegger's *King David*, with the UNT Grand Chorus and Symphonic Orchestra in April 2025, Sorrel has performed as Belinda in *Dido and Aeneas*, Fairy and Nympha in *The Fairy Queen*, Spirit 2 in *Cendrillon*, and in the choruses for *The Bartered Bride* and Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*.

continued on following page

In addition to performing, Sorrel is a Teaching Assistant and the Resident Stage Manager for UNT Opera and has been the Director of Education at The Actors Conservatory Theatre in Lewisville, Texas since 2016. She is an experienced stage director, music director, producer, stage manager, and theatre arts teacher, with production credits for over 30 plays, musicals, and operas. She is also working on her MA in Interdisciplinary Studies with fields in education, performance studies, and creative writing, and aspires to a multi-faceted career in performing, directing, and teaching.

Kathryn Davidson is a conductor, educator, and singer dedicated to creating community through the choral arts. She is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts in Choral Conducting at UNT where, as a Teaching Fellow, Davidson conducts Camerata and serves as the Associate Conductor of the University Singers. In addition to her UNT commitments, Kathryn is the Assistant Conductor of the Dallas Symphony Chorus, Director of Music at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, and Chorus Master for Opera Arlington.

Kathryn earned the Master of Music degree in Choral Conducting from Indiana University, where she served as Assistant Chorus Master for multiple mainstage operas, directed the All-Campus Chorus, and was Assistant Conductor of the GRAMMY-nominated Singing Hoosiers. Davidson holds a Bachelor of Music Education and Bachelor of Music in Flute Performance from UNT. Kathryn has performed nationally and internationally as a soloist and professional choral singer in Texas, North Carolina, Indiana, Washington, Italy, and Germany. Recent engagements include performing with the Junges Stuttgart Bach Ensemble, Bloomington Bach Cantata Project, Incarnatus, and Verdigris.

Alexandra Kovatch is a dedicated teacher, harpist, and orchestral conductor. She began her musical journey as a harpist, earning a Bachelor of Music degree in harp performance from Washburn University (2017). Each summer she participates as a faculty member at the Elyrica Summer Harp Program in Connecticut. Alexandra began conducting during her undergraduate studies and continued to pursue this passion at Missouri State University. After completing a Master of Music degree in Orchestral Conducting (2020) she began teaching at Drury University, directing the orchestra and teaching various music courses. She also served as the Orchestra Director for the Ozark Festival Orchestra. As a guest conductor, Alexandra has conducted the Kansas City Civic Orchestra (2023) and the Allen Philharmonic Orchestra (2024) in two performances of *The Nutcracker* alongside the Allen Civic Ballet. Currently, Alexandra is pursuing a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Orchestral Conducting at the University of North Texas. She is studying with David Itkin in the graduate orchestral conducting studio and serving as the Assistant Conductor to the Opera Program while studying under Stephanie Rhodes Russell.

Rudy Polk is a tenor vocalist with considerable achievements as a young musician. Rudy is currently a senior studying vocal performance at the University of North Texas with William Joyner. Rudy is also the tenor section leader for the UNT A Cappella Choir. As a sophomore, Rudy performed his first lead role at UNT Opera as Adult Martin in the world premiere of (*That Hellbound Train*). In his junior year, he performed the role of Alfred (*Die Fledermaus*) at UNT Opera, and he was the Tenor Soloist in (*King David*) with the UNT Grand Chorus. Also, Rudy was a finalist winner in the Schmidt Vocal Arts Undergraduate Competition. This summer, Rudy performed the role of Nemorino (*L'elisir d'amore*) at the Brevard Music Center. Rudy is a recipient of the UNT Winspear Opera Scholarship, and his upcoming roles with UNT Opera include Young Gypsy (*Aleko*), Rinuccio (*Gianni Schicchi*), and his reprise of Adult Martin (*That Hellbound Train*).

Joohee Jeong is a doctoral candidate in Piano Performance and an Opera Teaching Assistant at the University of North Texas. Her work bridges the worlds of solo piano performance and opera collaboration. Between 2016 and 2022, Joohee served as the accompanist for *The Telephone* and *The Medium* by Gian Carlo Menotti, *Proving Up* by Missy Mazzoli, *Die Zauberflöte* by W. A. Mozart, and the world premiere of *As You Like It* with University of Notre Dame Opera, where she also taught private lessons as Adjunct Piano Faculty. Currently, Joohee is an Opera Teaching Assistant at UNT. She earned a Master of Music in Collaborative Piano from Illinois State University, as well as a Master of Music and a Bachelor of Music degree in Piano Performance from Indiana University South Bend. Joohee studies under Liudmila Georgievskaya and is a recipient of the COM/DT Award and COM/DT Competitive Merit Scholarships at UNT.

Molly Smith is a first-year master's student at the University of North Texas, where she studies collaborative piano with Elvia Puccinelli, Steven Harlos, and Willem Van Schalkwyk. Her awards include winner of the Brigham Young University concerto competition, selection as a Signature Artist at the Oracle Chamber Music Festival, and first place in the Young Collaborative Pianists Competition. Molly has served as the Collaborative Piano Teacher's Assistant at the Brevard Music Center, performing in orchestras and chamber groups as well as working alongside individual young artists to present concerts across Brevard campus and beyond. Her recent work as a rehearsal pianist, coach, and orchestral keyboardist has included *The Merry Widow*, *Staggerwing*, *The Medium*, *Cendrillon*, and *Così fan tutte*.

Emma Gulovsen, soprano, is a first-year master's student studying voice with Carol Wilson. She received her BM in Vocal Performance (2024) and a Certificate in Vocal Performance (2025) from Missouri State University, where she studied with Carol Chapman. Emma's first professional role was The Fox in Rachel Portman's *The Little Prince* with Ozarks Lyric Opera last April. Other roles include Elisetta (*Il Matrimonio Segreto*), Alcina (*Alcina*), Laurie (*The Tender Land*), Zorah (*Ruddigore*), Stephanie the Waitress (*Speed Dating Tonight!*), Agrippina (*Agrippina*), and Dorothee (*Cendrillon*). She is also the recipient of the UNT Competitive Graduate Voice Performance Scholarship.

Tyler Warwas is a tenor based in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. In the upcoming 2025/26 season with UNT Opera, he will sing the role of Gherardo (*Gianni Schicchi*) and cover the roles of both Young and Adult Martin in UNT Opera's World Premiere of Lisa DeSpain's opera *That Hellbound Train*. Tyler is the recipient of the UNT Excellence Academic Scholarship. Tyler is in his 4th year of his undergraduate degree at UNT studying under the direction of Carol Wilson.

Maryn West, soprano, is a senior studying voice performance with Carol Wilson. Maryn was recently awarded second place in the San Antonio Tuesday Musical Club Competition in Voice. She is a past finalist in the Schmidt Undergraduate Vocal Competition as well as a semi-finalist in the James Toland Vocal Arts Competition, MiOpera International Vocal Competition University Division, and the UNT Concerto Competition. Maryn has performed as the soprano soloist in Faure's Requiem in D minor and Vivaldi's Magnificat. Recent roles include the Monica (*The Medium*) with Chicago Summer Opera, Littler Zegner Daughter (*Proving Up*) with UNT Opera, Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*) at Varna International Music Academy, the Sandman (*Hansel und Gretel*) with UNT Opera, and Desirée and Voice Student (*Notes on Viardot*) with Music On Site, Inc. Upcoming roles include Lauretta (*Gianni Schicchi*) with UNT Opera and Frasquita (*Carmen*) with Opera Arlington.

Abigail Bahng is a Korean-American mezzo-soprano in the last year of her undergraduate studies for Vocal Performance and currently studies with Mary Mills. Abigail's recent roles include Silla (*Silla*) at Chicago Summer Opera, Hänsel (*Hänsel und Gretel*) at Varna International Muzik Academy, and is super excited to debut Lillian (*That Hellbound Train*) with UNT Opera. She has also had the privilege to serve as a Stage Manager for UNT Opera, working on both Massenet's *Cendrillon* in 2023 and Mazzoli's *Proving Up* in 2025. Along with UNT Opera, Abigail is also involved in the UNT A Cappella Choir.

Autumn Forgey is a junior studying music education with Mary Mills. Most recently, Autumn has been in the chorus (*Die Fledermaus*) with UNT Opera. Upcoming opportunities with UNT Opera include covering Betty Joe (*That Hellbound Train*) and Assistant Stage Manager (*Alcina*). Autumn is a recipient of the Texas Music Educators Association undergraduate scholarship, the UNT Foundation Presidential Scholarship, the UNT Academic Excellence in Texas Scholarship, and the UNT College of Music Competitive Merit Scholarship.

José Nava is a junior studying vocal performance and music education with Mary Mills. He is a 3-year member of the UNT University Singers. Upcoming roles with the UNT Opera include chorus (*Aleko*).

Trinity Houser is a sophomore in the Honors College at the University of North Texas where she pursues a Vocal Performance Degree with Carol Wilson. She has been a part of the UNT Concert Choir and currently performs with the University Singers. Upcoming roles at UNT Opera include chorus (*Aleko*), Assistant Stage Manager (*Alcina*), and Violet in the world premiere of *That Hellbound Train*.

Biographies (Soloists, in Alphabetical Order)

Alek Gonzalez, tenor, is a freshman studying voice performance under the tutelage of Daniele De Oliveira. His recent roles include Chorus in *Die Zauberflöte*, *Sweeney Todd*, and *Pirates of Penzance* with TCU Opera. Upcoming roles with UNT Opera include Chorus in *Aleko* and *Alcina*, and he will also perform as Martin's Son & Chorus in the world premiere of Lisa DeSpain's *That Hellbound Train*.

Anabelle Parra, soprano, is a junior studying voice performance with Carol Wilson. This summer she attended Tokyo Opera Studio in Tokyo, Japan. Recent roles include 2nd Spirit (*Die Zauberflöte*) with Tokyo Opera Studio and Chorus (*The Pirates of Penzance*) with TCU Opera. Upcoming roles with UNT Opera include Chorus (*Alcina*).

Beatrice Kim is a Korean-American soprano and Eastman alumna based in the Dallas–Fort Worth area. Beatrice's stage credits include Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*), Littler Daughter (*Proving Up*), Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Gretel (*Hänsel und Gretel*), and Noémie (*Cendrillon*), and as a Young Artist for Cedar Rapids Opera, she covered the role of Despina (*Così fan tutte*). Her concert highlights span Snider's Mass for the Endangered, Mozart's Coronation Mass, Haydn's Heiligmesse, Einhorn's Voices of Light, and several performances in Germany. A passionate advocate for opera outreach, Beatrice has worked for the non-profit organizations "What is Opera, Anyway?" and "Reimagining Opera for Kids." Beatrice holds degrees from Indiana University, Eastman School of Music, and the University of Oklahoma, and is currently a doctoral student and Teaching Fellow at the University of North Texas.

Emma Davis, soprano, is a master's student studying vocal performance with Stephen Morscheck. She graduated in 2023 from the University of Northwestern in St. Paul, Minnesota with degrees in Vocal Performance, Music Composition, and Film. She studied voice with Carol Eikum and composition with Josh Bauder. Emma has been awarded prizes at various competitions and festivals including first place in both Thursday Musical's 2021 and 2022 Vocal and Advanced Vocal College Divisions, first place in Schubert Club's 2022 Level I Vocal Division, and first place in the Graduate Division for Minnesota NATS 2023. This summer Emma self-produced and performed in a production featuring staged scenes from Mendelssohn's *Elijah* oratorio followed by *The Telephone* by Menotti. Emma has performed in various productions including scenes from *Le nozze di Figaro* and *The Magic Flute* as the Countess and Pamina. In the spring of 2025, she was the soprano soloist for Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem* with the Two Rivers Chorale in collaboration with the Edina Chorale and Wayzata Symphony directed by Hannah Schendel.

Francisco Bedoy Solorzano, tenor, is a first-year doctoral student and teaching fellow at the University of North Texas. Francisco has appeared in several notable productions, including Prince Charming in Viardot's *Cendrillon* with Opera Arlington, Don Gaston in Verdi's *La Traviata* with Opera Grand Rapids, and Goro in Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* at the Teatro Degollado in Jalisco, Mexico. He holds a Bachelor of Music from the University of Kentucky and a Master of Music from the University of Michigan–Ann Arbor, and currently studies under Mark Tempesta. Francisco is the recipient of the Jackson/Snider Scholarship and the Voertman-Ardoin Opera Scholarship. Upcoming engagements include The Three Mexican Tenors, October 10th in Grand Prairie, New Year's Recital Voice and Piano, in Sala Ruvalcaba in Teatro Degollado, Guadalajara, Mexico, and performances with UNT Opera, where he will sing Oronte in Handel's *Alcina* and Young Martin in the world premiere of Lisa DeSpain's *That Hellbound Train*.

Haolun Zhang, countertenor, is a Doctor of Music Arts student in Classical Voice at the University of North Texas, studying with Daniel Bubeck. He earned his Master of Music degree at the Manhattan School of Music under Joan Patenaude Yarnell and his Bachelor of Music degree at the Xinghai Conservatory of Music, where he received multiple top honors. Recent and upcoming roles include Ottone (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*) at the Berlin Opera Academy, Hänsel (*Hänsel und Gretel*) with Opera Arlington, Prince Orlofsky (*Die Fledermaus* and Ruggiero (*Alcina*), both with UNT Opera. Other stage credits include Oberon (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Dorothée (*Cendrillon*), Oreste (*La liberazione di Ruggiero*), Goffredo (*Rinaldo*), Patre (*L'enfant et les sortilèges*), and soloist appearances in *Carmina Burana* and Honegger's *King David*. Haolun is a 2025 Encouragement Award winner at the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, as well as a prizewinner in the Hong Kong International Music Festival, Voice of the Yellow River International Vocal Competition, and Bologna International Vocal Competition.

Hayeong Jessica Park, mezzo-soprano, is a first year DMA in Voice Performance student studying with Jeffrey Snider. Hayeong is currently a graduate representative for Division of Vocal Studies, and a graduate representative for UNT Opera. Most recently Hayeong has performed the role of Witch (*Hänsel und Gretel*) with Diversità Opera Arts company, Sorceress (*Dido and Aeneas*) with Chicago Summer Opera, La Zelatrice (*Suor Angelica*) and Gherardino (*Gianni Schicchi*) at the Grand Stand Music Festival, Suzy and Lolette (*La Rondine*), Dorothée cover (*Cendrillon*), Flower Girl (*Le nozze di Figaro*), and she has performed in opera scenes as Meg (*Falstaff*) and Paquette (*Candide*), all with UNT Opera. This season with UNT Opera, Hayeong performs as an Old Woman (*Aleko*) and Debbie Sue in the world premiere of Lisa DeSpain's *That Hell-bound Train*. Hayeong performs as a scholar singer in Dallas, and she recently graduated with her Master of Music in Voice Performance at UNT. In 2024, she was a selected recipient of Sigma Alpha Iota Philanthropies Music scholarship. Hayeong was a soloist for Fanny Mendelssohn's *Hiob Cantata* choir concert while she was studying voice and fashion merchandising at the University of North Texas.

Heedo Park, baritone, is a first-year master's student in Vocal Performance at the University of North Texas. Studying under the tutelage of Mary Mills, he brings a warm timbre and clear diction to a growing range of lyric and character roles. Recent performances include Ruggiero in Handel's *Alcina* and Tapioca in Chabrier's *L'Étoile*, heard at Playhouse Square. Upcoming engagements include his debut with UNT Opera as Betto di Signa in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*.

Jae Park, soprano, is a Master of Music student at the University of North Texas, studying under the tutelage of Carol Wilson. This season with UNT Opera, Park will debut as Morgana (*Alcina*) and Betty Jo (*That Hellbound Train*). Park has recently appeared as Maguelonne (*Cendrillon*) with Opera Arlington and Queen of the Night (*The Magic Flute*) with Vienna Summer Music Festival. Her other notable roles include the Dew Fairy and Sandman (*Hänsel and Gretel*) and Papagena (*The Magic Flute*) with Luke Housner's Summer Opera Workshop.

Nicholas Thompson, tenor, is a first-year master's student in Vocal Performance at the University of North Texas. He is currently studying under the guidance of William Joyner. Nicholas earned his Bachelor of Music degree from Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama. In this upcoming season at the UNT Opera, he will be in the chorus of (*Aleko*) and make his role debut as the Used Car Salesman in the world premiere of Lisa DeSpain's *That Hellbound Train*.

Ris Kemp, mezzo-soprano, is a senior vocal performance student studying voice with Mary Mills at the University of North Texas. Currently, they sing with the University of North Texas A Cappella Choir, and in the past, they have also sung with other UNT ensembles, including University Singers, Vox Aquilae, and Conductors' Chorus. In 2023, they were a finalist in the second-year treble division of Texoma NATS, and they are a recipient of the UNT President's Honors Academic Excellence Scholarship. This past year with UNT Opera, they sang roles including chorus (*Così fan tutte*), chorus (*Die Fledermaus*), and Sylvia (*Die Fledermaus*); they were also an understudy for the role of Prince Orlofsky (*Die Fledermaus*). They also worked as a member of the Orchestra Support Team for the entire season, assisting conductors with the orchestra collaboration & management processes. This year, their roles with UNT Opera will include chorus (*Aleko*), Bradamante (*Alcina*), chorus (*That Hell-Bound Train*), and an understudy for the role of Tiny (*That Hell-Bound Train*).

Ryn Jenkins, soprano, is a second-year master's student studying with Jeffrey Snider. This is their first year in the vocal performance program. They graduated with degrees in vocal and trumpet performance from Murray State University. Recent roles include Barbarina (*Le nozze di Figaro*), and Amahl (*Amahl and the Night Visitors*).

Sean Roossien, bass, is a second-year vocal performance and composition double major studying with Stephen Morscheck. He spent the summer in Vienna, where he studied German at the University of Vienna and voice with faculty from the Vienna Conservatory. Recent roles include Betto (*Gianni Schicchi*) with Atchley Opera in Fort Worth and chorus (*Don Giovanni*) with Opera Arlington. Upcoming roles with UNT Opera include Guccio (*Gianni Schicchi*) and chorus in *Aleko*, *Alcina*, and the world premiere of Lisa DeSpain's *That Hellbound Train*.

Sophia Sweny, mezzo-soprano, is a freshman studying music education with Carol Wilson. She is a member of the UNT Concert Choir and is also a recipient of the Martha and Preston Peak Choral Scholarship. Upcoming roles with UNT Opera include Chorus (*Alcina*) and she will perform in the Small Ensemble for the world premiere of Lisa DeSpain's *That Hell-bound Train*.

Yonghyun Kim, is a South Korean baritone and fourth-year DMA student at the University of North Texas, studying with Stephen Morscheck. His operatic credits include Don Giovanni (*Don Giovanni*), Marcello (*La bohème*), Escamillo (*Carmen*), Don Alfonso and Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*), Il Conte di Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Dr. Falke (*Die Fledermaus*), Peter (*Hänsel und Gretel*), and Pa Zegner (*Proving Up*). He has worked with organizations such as the Kumho Cultural Foundation, BesetoOpera, Teatro Coccia (Italy), Sherman Symphony Orchestra, and the Abilene Philharmonic Orchestra. In 2021, he made his operatic debut in Korea at the Sejong Grand Theater. Kim holds degrees from Seoul National University (BM) and the Manhattan School of Music (MM), where he studied with James Morris. He was a full-scholarship fellow at the Aspen Music Festival and the AIMS program in Graz, Austria, where he performed Scarpia (*Tosca*) and Valentin (*Faust*). His awards include the UNT Concerto Competition, Barry Alexander International Vocal Competition, and AIMS Vocal Competition.

UNT Opera extends heartfelt thanks
to **Dean John W. Richmond** and the
College of Music faculty and staff
for their support and dedication.

UNT Opera appreciates all they do
to make this production possible.