



University of North Texas
College of Music

Ensemble Concert | Friday, April 17, 2026 | 7:30 p.m.
Lyric Theater - Murchison Performing Arts Center

University of North Texas Opera Theatre presents
The world premiere of:

That Hellbound Train

Stephanie Rhodes Russell, conductor
Stefan Novinski, guest director

That Hellbound Train (2026) Lisa DeSpain
An opera in two acts with intermission (b. 1964)

Libretto by David Simpatico

Based on the short story *That Hellbound Train* by Robert Bloch

Sung in English with English supertitles

World Premiere

Program five hundred fifty-six of the 2025–2026 season
Photography and videography are prohibited

Synopsis

Written by Lisa DeSpain & David Simpatico

Deep in the heart of Iowa, at the CB&Q Regional Train Maintenance Yard, a downtrodden yard worker, Pa, shovels ballast, drinks muscatel, and sings a folk ballad to his beloved son, Martin, about the legendary Hellbound Train. Before the young boy's eyes, Pa is killed by a passing train and young Martin is dumped at the local orphanage by his low-life "good-time" mother.

Time passes. Martin, a young teen, escapes the orphanage, intent on living the life Pa always dreamed of, out riding the rails, free from responsibility. Falling in with the company of disreputable hobos, Martin eventually lands himself on a chain gang for stealing hubcaps.

Time passes. Adult Martin, newly freed from prison, contemplates changing his ways and joining the Salvation Army. At that moment, That Hellbound Train roars into view, and Martin comes face-to-face with The Conductor, that mythological being of his father's song.

The Conductor, eager to obtain Martin's immortal soul, offers a deal, one wish in exchange for "a ride on That Hellbound Train." Thinking to outsmart The Conductor, Martin asks for the power to stop time and live forever in the happiest moment of his life - thereby avoiding ever having to board That Hellbound Train. The deal is struck, and The Conductor gives Martin his stopwatch imbued with the power to stop time - just once.

As Martin journeys through life, he is faced with the recurring question, "Is this that moment of perfect happiness?" Is happiness found in a bottle of muscatel and a dry cot in a flophouse? Is it in a series of flings and one-night stands? Is it the moment Martin meets his wife or the birth of his son? Will he find it in wealth, status, or the arms of a mistress?

Time passes. As an old man, Martin contemplates his life, both the beauty and the futility of his search. Unable to find this perfect moment, Martin dies and finds himself boarding that Hellbound Train, where he meets the "drunks and the drifters, gamblers and grifters" singing his father's song; the song Martin loved as a child. When The Conductor demands the return of his watch, Martin has an epiphany...happiness is found in the journey, not the destination. To The Conductor's horror, Martin stops time, ensuring That Hellbound Train and its merry band of sinners will forever journey, never reaching The Depot Down Yonder.

Soloists

<u>Role</u>	<u>Voice type</u>	<u>Performer</u>
Young Martin	tenor	Francisco Bedoy Solorzano Tyler Warwas (cover)
Adult Martin	tenor	Rudy Polk Tyler Warwas (cover)
Old Martin	tenor	Cecil Garrison Genghong Cai (cover)
The Conductor <i>(also, Professor, Chain Gang Guard, Swanky Bartender, Judge & Cruise Ship Bandleader)</i>	bass-baritone	Rui Guan Christopher Gray (cover)
Lillian	mezzo-soprano	Abigail Bahng Sophia Sweny (cover)
Sherry	soprano	Chandler Head Maryn West (cover)
Pa	tenor	Sidney Washington Andrew Riedel (cover)
Ma	mezzo-soprano	Chelsea Day
Tiny	mezzo-soprano	Genevieve Cardos Ris Kemp (cover)
Chain Gang Leader	baritone	Ethan Matous Nicholas Thompson (cover)
Wailing Tenor	tenor	Genghong Cai Kun Zhang (cover)
Salvation Army Captain	soprano	Sara Foshée Chelsea Day (cover)
Boss	baritone	Ben Bassett James Wright III (cover)
Land Lady	mezzo-soprano	Margietza Skinner
Used Car Salesman	tenor	Nicholas Thompson Ethan Matous (cover)

continued on following page

Betty Jo	soprano	Jae Park Autumn Forgey (cover)
Mary Ellen	soprano	Shuyi Li Lily Hogge (cover)
Debbie Sue	mezzo-soprano	Hayeong Park Margietza Skinner (cover)
Martin's Son	tenor	Alek Gonzalez Rustin Verret (cover)
Tour Guide	countertenor	Arthur Keast Haolun Zhang (cover)
Breck	soprano	Anabelle Parra

Small Solo Roles

<u>Impatient Guy</u> Ramero Vargas	<u>Random Hobo</u> James Wright III	<u>Violet</u> Trinity Houser	<u>Bakery Woman</u> Raelyn Cudd
<u>Guy Taking a Leak in the Corner</u> Andrew Riedel	<u>Banker</u> Joshua LaPrade	<u>Well-Heeled Lady</u> Alyssa Schelski	

Small Ensemble

<u>Soprano</u> Lily Hogge Maryn West	<u>Alto</u> Sophia Sweny Margietza Skinner	<u>Tenor</u> Tyler Warwas Ramero Vargas	<u>Bass</u> Christopher Gray Sean Roossien
---	---	--	---

Grand Chorus

<u>Soprano</u> Anabelle Parra Raelyn Cudd Chelsea Day Sara Foshée Pulip Han Trinity Houser Chiyue Huang Alyssa Schelski Tong Zeng	<u>Alto</u> Qingya Ding Ris Kemp	<u>Tenor</u> Andrew Riedel Rustin Verret Kun Zhang Genghong Cai Sidney Washington Nicholas Thompson Alek Gonzalez	<u>Bass</u> Ben Bassett Landon Beaty Ethan Matous Sean Roossien James Wright III Joshua LaPrade Colman Scheibmeir
---	---	---	---

Orchestra Personnel

Violin

Oscar Morales
Joseph Reding

Viola

Jose Fiorentino

Cello

Paul Trainor

Bass

Jason Lo

Flute

JoJo Sic

Oboe

Anna Sinosic

Clarinet

Carrie Boss

Bassoon

Tyler Breindel

Horn

Andrew Bennett

Trumpet

Tyler Love
Lexy Bradshaw

Trombone

Paul Henry

Keyboard

Molly Smith

Percussion

Brayden Harlan
Ben Hinkle
Caleb Yurasek

Music Staff

Conductor/Music Director.....Stephanie Rhodes Russell
Chorus Master/Principal Coach.....Sharon Bjorndal Lavery
Assistant ConductorKathryn Davidson
Collaborative Pianists/Coaches.....Joohee Jeong, Lauren Koszyk,
and Molly Smith

Production Personnel

DirectorStefan Novinski
Assistant Director.....Emma Gulovsen
Production Manager..... Julie Hohman
Resident/Production Stage Manager Sorrel McCarthy
Set Designer..... Donna Marquet
Set Builder Jordan Batson
Lighting DesignerElijah Reed
Audio Technical Director Dan Schulz
Choreographer.....Whitney Geldon
Fight Choreographer..... Nathan Autrey
Costume Designer Michael Robinson
Assistant Stage Managers.....Emma Davis, Ryn Jenkins, and Kyra Sirwaitis
Supertitles Operator.....Joohee Jeong

Biographies (Artistic Team)

Lisa DeSpain is a jazz pianist turned composer working in the multiverse of opera, musicals, film, dance, and concert works. That Hellbound Train is her passionate tribute to America's unique musical heritage; roots, hillbilly, gospel, jazz, and the blues.

Lisa's operatic works include *Staggerwing* (winner of the 2020 Zepick Modern Opera Prize,) *Men I'm Not Married To* (Cleveland Opera Theatre,) and *No Ladies in the Lady's Book* (Utah Opera) with librettist Rachel J. Peters. *Song of the Nightingale* (On Site Opera/Arts Brookfield) premieres in September 2023 at the Winter Garden Atrium, NYC.

Her musical theatre works include *Storyville* (lyrics by Oscar-Award winner, Kristen Anderson-Lopez) and *Like, I Care!* (*Tale of a Middle School Scrooge*.) She is the "go-to" arranger for Broadway hits for the choral market (Alfred Music) including *Hamilton*, *In the Heights*, *Next to Normal*, *Funny Girl*, and more. Concert works highlights include: *American Nativity* (New Haven Symphony Orchestra,) *Rise & Fall, String Quartet No. 1* (Cassatt String Quartet/Barlow Endowment,) *The Bicycle Shoppe*, (US Air Force Band of Flight - honoring the Wright Brothers Centennial,) and *Dreaming in the Land of Blue Oz* (ASCAP Commission Honoring the Duke Ellington Centennial.)

Lisa is a Copland House Fellow, a Dramatists Guild Fellow, and an alumna of the BMI Musical Theatre Workshop. Lisa studied jazz piano under Ellis Marsalis in New Orleans and holds a BM in Composition from University of North Texas and an MM in Jazz from Manhattan School of Music. She is a Professor of Music at CUNY (City University of New York.)

She can also deadlift 210 lbs and ran away with the circus - twice.

David Simpatico has been presented at major theatres around the globe, including London's Hammersmith Apollo, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Lincoln Center/Avery Fisher Hall, Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Franklin Furnace and New York Public Theatre.

His grand opera, *The Life and Death(s) of Alan Turing*, with music by Justine F. Chen, received its world premiere at Chicago Opera Theater in March 2023, directed by Peter Rothstein. His musical adaptation of *Twelve Angry Men*, music and lyrics by Michael Holland, received its world premiere production in June 2022 at Theatre Latte Da in Minneapolis.

Career highlights include: *The Screams of Kitty Genovese*, (winner Jonathan Larson Award; music by Will Todd); book/stage adaptation of *Disney's High School Musical*; libretto for choral symphony, *Garden of Light* (composer Aaron Jay Kernis). Plays include *Ex-Gay Bar*, *Wilde about Whitman*, *Waiting for the Ball to Drop*, *Secret of Life*, *Macs*, and *Mary*.

continued on following page

David is an alumnus of the Composer Librettist Development Program at American Lyric Theater. He holds an MFA in Creative Writing from Southern New Hampshire University. He has received support from Edward Albee Foundation, Millay Colony, NY Theatre Workshop, Eugene O'Neill Foundation and Rhinebeck Writers Retreat. David is a proud member of the Dramatists Guild, and, with playwright Darrah Cloud, is co-founder of A Howl of Playwrights.

Stefan Novinski is a nationally recognized theatre director and a Associate Professor of Drama at the University of Dallas where he teaches directing and theatre literature. He continues to direct professionally across the country, primarily in southern California where he spent a decade working at multiple Tony-award winning theaters including the La Jolla Playhouse, the Kirk Douglas Theatre, and South Coast Rep.

At SCR, he directed eight shows including the world premiere musical *An Italian Straw Hat*, and a critically acclaimed production of *A Little Night Music* starring Stephanie Zimbalist. Other national credits: *J.O.B. the Hip-Opera* for the New York Musical Theatre Festival (LA Drama Critics Circle nominations for Best Direction and Best Musical), *Wreckage* by Caridad Svitch for New Dramatists and the premiere of *Toy Story the Musical*, working closely with John Lasseter.

His Dallas credits include *Macbeth* and *Richard III* for Shakespeare Dallas and *The Golden Apple* at Lyric Stage. He is the artistic director of the site-specific theatre company PlaySite. He holds an MFA in Directing from the University of California, San Diego.

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.

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.

Sorrel Bohannan 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*.

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.

Whitney Geldon is a movement artist, improviser, and dance educator. Experiencing movement as an expressive language and nuanced form of communication, she creates to cultivate connection and community. Grounded in improvisation, both as a creative impulse and performance form, she develops intimate, collaborative work with dancers, layering the physical, conceptual, emotional, and unexpected. As a performing artist, she has performed and presented with international artists such as Amii Legendre, Rebecca Bryant, The Equus Project, Kathy Dunn Hamrick, D. Chase Angier, and Jordan Fuchs Company, while her work has been presented nationally by the New Genre Festival, {254} Dance Festival, Dance Carousel, and Flatlands Dance Theatre.

Geldon holds an MFA from Texas Women's University and has taught with the Texas Dance Educators Association, Texas Dance Improvisation Festival, and Eastside CI Lab Jam, and is certified in Movement Fundamentals®, a paradigm designed to train dancers as artists. As a Co-Founder/Director of Big Rig Dance Collective, a project-based dance company, she fosters community connections through performances, workshops, and collaborative projects. Geldon currently leads an all-abilities dance class for Life Works Community and serves as Lecturer and Faculty Advisor in the Department of Dance and Theatre at the University of North Texas.

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.

Joohee Jeong, collaborative pianist, 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.

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.

Lauren Koszyk, collaborative pianist, is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts in Collaborative Piano and Master of Business Administration at the University of North Texas, where she serves as Rehearsal Coordinator and Music Staff Teaching Assistant for UNT Opera. She also holds degrees in Piano Performance, Collaborative Piano, and German.

Ms. Koszyk has performed throughout Austria, Canada, Italy, and the United States. She has contributed to over thirty opera productions as a rehearsal pianist, coach, or music director. Her work includes engagements with Illinois Festival Opera, Midwest Institute of Opera, Music Onsite Inc., Musiktheater Bavaria, Opera Seme, and UNT Opera. Among her career highlights is performing as a collaborative pianist for masterclasses led by renowned Metropolitan Opera soprani Angela Brown and Yvonne Redman.

Molly Smith, collaborative pianist, 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 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.

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*).

Kyra Sirwaitis, is a freshman studying vocal performance with Molly Fillmore at UNT. Kyra has competed in both the South Texas Chapter and TEXOMA National Association of Teachers of Singing competitions, where she won first place in both the lower and upper high school classical treble categories. She has also participated in Round Rock, Texas High School's Young Artist competition, where she received first place in 2025 and 2024. Last spring, Kyra received the Round Rock High School Choir Booster's scholarship. Her upcoming roles with the UNT Opera include Gherardino in *Gianni Schicchi* and assistant stage manager for the world premiere of *That Hellbound Train*.

Biographies (Soloists, in alphabetical order)

Abigail Bahng is a Korean-American mezzo-soprano in the last year of her undergraduate studies for Vocal Performance, currently studying 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.

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*.

Alyssa Schelski, soprano, is a second-year vocal performance major at the University of North Texas, where she studies in the studio of Molly Fillmore. She has performed in departmental recitals and was recently invited to perform at Robson Ranch alongside fellow opera students last semester. At UNT, she is also active in studio performances and sings with the UNT Concert Choir. Upcoming roles with UNT Opera include Well-Heeled Lady (*That Hellbound Train*) and Chorus.

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*).

Andrew Riedel, tenor, is a second-year undergraduate majoring in Vocal Performance at the University of North Texas, where he studies with renowned operatic tenor William Joyner. Andrew discovered his passion for classical music and storytelling through song at the age of 12. He is thrilled to make his opera debut in this production. Andrew is a proud member of UNT's internationally acclaimed A Cappella Choir and has been recognized with several awards, including the COM String and Voice Scholarship and the Cecilia Cunningham Music Scholarship. His commitment to vocal artistry and expressive performance continues to shape his growth as a young artist.

Arthur Keast, countertenor/baritone, is a first-year Master's student in Vocal Performance. He has performed 13 principal opera roles, including the title role of *Giulio Cesare* performed twice with Chicago Summer Opera and Pacific Lutheran University, Ottone (*Agrippina*) with CSO, Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*) with PLU, and Belcore (*L'elisir d'amore*) with PLU. Beyond opera, he has been hired for over 350 solo concerts featuring classical repertoire, Great American Songbook selections, and violin works in the Puget Sound and DFW areas. A PLU graduate, he was a soloist in the university's Christmas Concert series for two consecutive years. Currently, he studies under Daniel Bubeck at UNT and sings with Vox and Avenue C jazz vocal ensemble. He began singing as a countertenor at AIMS in Graz, Austria (2022) and will perform as Tour Guide in DeSpain's *That Hellbound Train* with UNT Opera in spring 2026.

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.

Ben Bassett is a baritone entering the senior year of his undergrad and is currently studying with William Joyner. In spring of 2023, Ben received 2nd place in the DWF NATS classical music competition and received 5th place in the Musical Theater category. This is Ben's 3rd season with the University of North Texas Opera and has performed roles with them such as Frank (*Die Fledermaus*), Le Surintendant (*Cendrillon*), Crébillon (*La Rondine*), and has also been in the chorus for these shows along with (*Così fan tutte*). Ben has also performed in the chorus in (*La bohème*) with the Fort Worth Opera and performed a full staged cover run as Don Giovanni with Music On Site Inc. in Kansas. Ben is also in his 2nd year in the University of North Texas A Cappella choir. For the 2025-2026 season, Ben will be performing Simone (*Gianni Schicchi*) and chorus and Boss (*That Hell-bound Train*).

Cecil Garrison, tenor, came to Texas to pursue a Master of Music at SMU in 2020, and is currently in his fourth year of Doctoral studies at UNT. At those schools he's played Don José in *Carmen*, Giles Corey in *The Crucible*, the Witch in *Hänsel und Gretel*, and Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus*. Besides opera, he has a musical passion for teaching voice, art song and Barbershop quartet singing.

Chandler Head is a compelling lyric soprano praised for her emotional depth and luminous tone. She is currently pursuing her Doctorate of Music at the University of North Texas, following a Master of Music from Texas Tech University and a Bachelor of Music from Eastern New Mexico University. Her notable operatic roles include the title role in *Suor Angelica*, Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus*, Adina in *L'elisir d'amore*, and Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*. Chandler has captivated audiences as a soloist at renowned venues such as Carnegie Hall, St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican and La Madeline in Paris. A winner of the TTU Symphony Concerto Competition, she has also performed in masterclasses with Patricia Racette. Additionally, she debuted the role of Lauretta in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* in the inaugural season for Atchley Opera in Ft. Worth, TX. Her artistry is shaped by collaborations with distinguished conductors and directors, and she has contributed to community engagement through past performances with Amarillo Opera Theatre. In addition to performing, she also enjoys teaching a private studio of Students.

Chelsea Day, soprano, has a Bachelor of Arts in Music from Texas Woman's University and a Master of Music in vocal performance at the University of North Texas, where she is currently a first year Doctor of Musical Arts in vocal performance student, studying with Jeffrey Snider. This spring, Chelsea will play Ma in UNT's world premiere of *That Hellbound Train* by Lisa DeSpain. She has performed the roles of Marie (*If I Loved You...*), Chocholka (*The Cunning Little Vixen*), and Edith (*The Pirates of Penzance*). Chelsea performs with Opera on Tap of North Texas. Previously at St. Andrew Methodist Church in Plano, she is currently a staff singer at First Presbyterian Church of Plano. Chelsea attended the Opera in Concert study abroad program in Urbino, Italy. She received the "Outstanding Freshman Vocal Performance Major" award at Collin College. Chelsea was a twice featured soloist in both TWU's "A Night at Jenny's" and "Swingin' Into Spring." Chelsea is a full-time single mom, who regularly does community service work, and participates in community drum circles.

Chiyue Huang, soprano, graduated from Northeast Normal University in 2020 with a degree in Vocal Performance under the tutelage of Prof. Shunai Kim. In 2021, she went to Manhattan School of Music to pursue her master's degree under the tutelage of Metropolitan soprano Prof. Ashley Putnam. She is currently a Doctor of Musical Arts student in Vocal Performance at the University of North Texas studying with Mary Mills. Recent opera credits include Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*), Adina (*L'elisir d'amore*), A Lak (*Seven Sisters*), Danica (*Svadba*) Lisette (*La Rondine*) and Adele (*Die Fledermaus*)

Christopher Gray, bass-baritone, is a senior at the University of North Texas, where he pursues a Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance studying with American bass-baritone Stephen Morscheck. Christopher was previously a Tier II Finalist and Encouragement Award winner at the 2025 James Toland Vocal Arts Competition, as well as a winner of the Schmidt Vocal Arts Undergraduate Awards Upper Division. He earned third place at the MIOpera International Vocal Competition and was a finalist in the San Antonio Tuesday Musical Club Voice Competition. Recent roles include Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*) and the Sodbuster (*Proving Up*) with UNT Opera, Masetto in *Don Giovanni* with Music On Site, Inc., and Colline (*La bohème*) with the Sherman Symphony Orchestra. This past summer, he joined the Aspen Music Festival and School as a Studio Artist, in which time he covered the role of Schaunard (*La bohème*) and performed Samana I in the world premiere of *Christophers Theofanidis* and Melissa Studdard's oratorio *Siddhartha, She*. This fall, he will perform the title role in Rachmaninoff's, *Aleko*, and Spinelloccio (*Gianni Schicchi*).

Colman Scheibmeir, baritone, is a third-year undergraduate baritone studying with Jeffrey Snider. His recent performances include Frank (*Die Fledermaus*) with UNT Opera, Chorus in (*Così fan Tutte*) with UNT Opera, and Joseph (*Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*) with Sherman Community Players. He is a recipient of the Westheimer Scholarship this academic year. Upcoming performances include Chorus (*That Hell-bound Train*).

Ethan Matous, baritone, is a 4th-year Vocal Performance major in his second year with UNT Opera, studying under Daniel Bubeck. His prior roles with UNT Opera include Ensemble (*Cendrillon*), Perichaud (*La Rondine*), and Used Car Salesman (*That Hellbound Train*).

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*.

Genevieve Cardos, mezzo-soprano, earned a BA in Music at Spelman College and MM at University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where she was a Graduate Teaching Assistant. She is currently a Teaching Fellow at UNT Denton, in her second year as a DMA resident student in vocal performance, studying with Jennifer Lane. Genevieve has understudied the “mother” roles at UNT in both *Cendrillon* by Jules Massenet and *Hänsel und Gretel* by Engelbert Humperdinck. She has also performed the mother role in *Amahl and the Night Visitors* by Gian Carlo Menotti, Aunt Cecilia in *Little Women* by Mark Adamo and chambermaid in *Don Pasquale*, at University of Nebraska at Lincoln. She's also been featured in Gilbert and Sullivan's *Trial By Jury* where she played the role of Angelina. She has been featured in Arts After Dark in Eugene Oregon, solo performances at 2015 Spelman/Morehouse College Glee Club Christmas Carol Concert, A Night of Soloists with Atlanta University Centre Orchestra, and recital performances at Peachtree Road Lutheran Church in Atlanta Georgia. Genevieve's most recent performance included the role of Taller Zegner Daughter in the opera *Proving Up* by Missy Mazzoli. This season with UNT Opera she will be featured in Rachmaninov's opera, *Aleko*, as the Old Woman, and will also perform in *That Hellbound Train* by Lisa DeSpain.

Genghong Cai, tenor, is a first-year Doctor of Musical Arts student in Vocal Performance at the University of North Texas, where he studies with Mark Tempesta. He earned his Master of Music from California State University, Northridge (2025) and has performed roles including Chevalier in *Dialogues des Carmélites* (CSUN, 2024), Goro in *Madama Butterfly* (Mission Opera, 2024), the First Armed Man in *Die Zauberflöte* (CSUN, 2023), and Comte Barigoule in *Cendrillon* (Arkansas State University, 2023). In 2024 summer, he participated in the American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria, where he worked in masterclasses with Mariusz Kwiecień, received coaching from Wagner soprano KS Linda Watson, and appeared in performance with baritone Thomas Hampson. His distinctions include the Toulouse Graduate School R.B. Toulouse Scholarship (2025), Helen Houle Scholarship (2024), First Place at the NATS State Auditions (2024), Julia Lansford Scholarship (2022), and recognition as both a Certificate of Academic Achievement recipient and Honors Recital Performer (2021–2022).

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*), Dorothee 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 perform 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.

Jae Park, soprano, is a Master of Music student under the tutelage of Dr. 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.

James Wright III, baritone, is a first-year master's Vocal Performance major studying under Stephen Morscheck. Formally a student at the University of Louisiana at Monroe, James has portrayed many roles in Operas and Musicals, most recently portraying Shrek (*Shrek: The Musical*), Aeneas (*Dido and Aeneas*), and Mr. Mushnik in (*Little Shop of Horrors*). He has successfully competed in NATS (National Association of Teachers of Singing) in regionals, state, and Nationally in the categories of Classical music, Musical Theatre, and placed second in the nation for Negro Spirituals in 2024. He is the recipient of the 2024-2025 Harry M. Lemart award winner for Outstanding Music Student at ULM. In performance with UNT Opera, he will be performing the roles of Marco (*Gianni Schicchi*), Melisso (*Alcina*), and Random Hobo/Ensemble/Boss (cover) (*Hellbound Train*).

Joshua LaPrade, bass-baritone, is a junior pursuing his Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance and studies under Jeffrey Snider. Upcoming roles with UNT Opera include An Old Man (*Aleko*), The Banker/Chorus (*That Hellbound Train*), and will understudy Simone (*Gianni Schicchi*).

Kun Zhang, tenor, is a second-year Doctor of Musical Arts student studying voice with William Joyner. He has performed leading roles including Nemorino (*L'elisir d'amore*) and Rodolfo (*La Bohème*) with UNT Opera. Most recently, he appeared as Miles Zegner (*Proving Up*), and he will perform the Young Man (*Aleko*) in the upcoming season. Zhang has also participated in a variety of performances across opera scenes and ensembles during his studies. Prior to his doctoral work, he completed advanced vocal training and developed a growing reputation for his lyrical tenor voice and expressive stage presence. His academic and performance pursuits are supported by his dedication to both artistry and scholarship, and he continues to expand his repertoire with works from the bel canto, verismo, and contemporary traditions.

Lily Hogge, soprano, is a junior-year transfer student at the University of North Texas. Her most recent credits include Laurey Williams in *Oklahoma*, Cinderella in *Into the Woods*, and Fiona McLaren in *Brigadoon*.

Margietza Skinner, mezzo-soprano, is currently a sophomore at the University of North Texas pursuing a degree in Vocal Performance under the tutelage of Molly Fillmore. She has performed with the Des Moines Metro Opera in their productions of *Turandot* and *La Bohème*. She has also performed the title role in *Carmen* with the Drake University Voice Intensive. In performance with UNT Opera, she will perform in Chorus (*Aleko*), Land Lady & Featured Ensemble (*That Hellbound Train*). At UNT, Margi is involved in A Cappella Choir, Sigma Alpha Iota Music Fraternity, and Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society.

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 (*Hänsel und Gretel*) with UNT Opera, and Desirée and Voice Student (*Notes on Viardot*) with Music On Site, Inc. Upcoming roles include Loretta (*Gianni Schicchi*) with UNT Opera and Frasquita (*Carmen*) with Opera Arlington.

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*.

Pulip Han, soprano, is a Doctoral candidate studying under the guidance of Carol Wilson at the University of North Texas. Pulip made her professional role debut as the 2nd Wood Sprite (*Rusalka*) with the Wichita Grand Opera and has performed roles such as Susanna (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*), and Suor Genovieffa (*Suor Angelica*). She has been recognized in competitions as well, including First Place in the NAFTZGER Young Artists Voice Division and an Encouragement Award from the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition. Ms. Han was also the 2025 WSU Concerto Competition winner at Wichita State University where she received her Graduate Certificate with a Teaching Assistant Fellowship. She holds her master's degree from Indiana University and a bachelor's degree from Hanyang University. She will be making her debut at the UNT Opera Theater as Morgana (*Alcina*) in Spring.

Qingya Ding, mezzo-soprano, is a second-year doctoral candidate at University of North Texas, studying voice performance with Stephen Morscheck. Past roles include Madame de la Haltière (*Cendrillon*) with Berlin Opera Academy. Principessa (*Suor Angelica*) with Saluzzo Opera Academy, Maman (*L'enfant et les sortilèges*) and Dorothée (*Cendrillon*) with Manhattan School of Music.

Raelyn Cudd, soprano, is a First-Year Transfer student studying Choral Music Education and Vocal Performance with Jennifer Lane. Raelyn has performed in the University Singers and Corner Pocket vocal jazz ensemble at California State University Long Beach. Upcoming roles include Bakery Woman and Grand Chorus (*That Hellbound Train*).

Ramero Vargas, tenor, is a junior studying Vocal Performance and Music education with Mark Tempesta. He is currently a member of the UNT A Cappella choir. Previous performances with UNT opera include Dr. Blind (*Die Fledermaus*) and chorus in (*Così fan tutte*). Upcoming roles with UNT Opera include Gherardo (*Gianni Schicchi*) and Oronte (*Alcina*).

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*).

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 Professor 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*).

Rui Guan, baritone, is a first-year doctoral candidate at the University of North Texas. He performed the role of Germont in *La traviata* with The Central Academy of Drama in 2023 and received the Presidential Award from Manhattan School of Music, where he received his Master of Music degree. This summer, Rui performed the title role in *Le nozze di Figaro* with Miami Beach Classical Music Festival. In this upcoming season with UNT Opera, he will perform the title role in *Gianni Schicchi* and the role of The Conductor in *That Hellbound Train*. Rui is a student of Molly Fillmore and recipient of both the Winspear Opera Scholarship, the Edward Allen Baird Vocal Scholarship and the Gordon & Patsy Roe Voice Scholarship.

Rustin Verret, tenor, is a junior studying voice performance with Jeffrey Snider and music education. This summer he performed in the chorus of *Don Giovanni* with Opera Arlington. Upcoming roles with UNT Opera include chorus (*Aleko*) and chorus (*That Hellbound Train*).

Sara Foshée, soprano, is a Graduate Artist Certificate student at the University of North Texas studying Voice with Mary Mills. This season she will perform the roles of Ciesca (*Gianni Schicchi*) and Salvation Army Captain (*That Hellbound Train*). Previous credits include Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*) Suzy and Lolette (*La Rondine*), Lillian in the UNT World Premiere Workshop of Lisa Despain and David Simpatico's *That Hellbound Train* (2023), First Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*) in the UNT Opera scenes program. Ms. Foshée additionally received her Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance from the University of North Texas.

Sean Roossien, bass, is a third-year vocal performance major studying with Stephen Morscheck. His roles with UNT Opera this season include Guccio (*Gianni Schicchi*), chorus in *Aleko* and *Alcina*, and small ensemble in the world premiere of Lisa DeSpain's *That Hellbound Train*. In 2025 he performed as Betto (*Gianni Schicchi*) with Atchley Opera in Fort Worth and chorus (*Don Giovanni*) with Opera Arlington. Upcoming roles include Sarastro in UNT summer opera's production of *The Magic Flute* in May 2026, and Don Alfonso (cover) in Atchley Opera's production of *Così fan tutte* in July 2026.

Shuyi Li, soprano, is a third-year DMA student and Teaching Fellow at the University of North Texas under Dr. Carol Wilson. She holds a master's degree from Indiana University and a bachelor's degree from the Eastman School of Music and the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. Her recent roles include Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*) and Gretel (*Hänsel und Gretel*) with UNT Opera; Lauretta (*Gianni Schicchi*) and Suor Genovieffa (*Suor Angelica*) with Bay View Music Festival; Kate (*The Pirates of Penzance*) with Cedar Rapids Opera; and Cupid (*Orpheus in the Underworld*) with Hawaii Performing Arts Festival. Additional credits include *A Voice (La Rondine)*, *Lizzie (Goblin Market)*, and *Papagena (Die Zauberflöte)*. In 2025, Ms. Li appeared as a soprano soloist in Honegger's *King David* with the UNT Grand Chorus and Symphony Orchestra. In January 2026, she has been invited to the Cascade Song Festival in Seattle as a performer-scholar, presenting her research on visual art as an analytical and expressive tool in art song interpretation. Upcoming engagements include *Fox/Rose/Water (The Little Prince)* with The Dallas Opera, *Gretel and Pamina* with Opera Arlington, and *Mary Ellen (That Hellbound Train)* with UNT Opera.

Sidney Washington, tenor, based in the Dallas–Fort Worth area, is currently completing his Masters in Voice Performance at the University of North Texas under Stephen Morscheck. He began his musical journey as a child and made his operatic debut in *Trial By Jury* while studying at Richland College. As an undergrad at UNT, Sidney performed in productions including Massenet's *Cendrillon*, Puccini's *La Rondine*, and the world premiere workshop of Lisa DeSpain's *That Hellbound Train*. This year with UNT Opera, Sidney will be in the chorus of *Aleko* and play the role of "Pa" in *That Hellbound Train*.

Sophia Sweny, mezzo-soprano, is a freshman studying music education with Dr. 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*.

Tong Zeng, soprano, is a first-year doctoral student at the University of North Texas, where she studies with Jennifer Lane. Holds a Master's degree from Zhejiang Conservatory of Music. In 2024, she performed as Naren Gaowa in the opera *Cangyuan* at the China Opera Special Concert, which was broadcast on CCTV Music Channel. She also appeared in the World Classic Operetta concert, performing Cunégonde in *Candide*, with the concert broadcast on CCTV Music Channel.

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*.

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.

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.

“That Hellbound Train” has been developed with support from the National Endowment for the Arts Challenge America Grant, the Rhinebeck Writers Retreat, and Opera America Grants for Women Composers: Discovery Grants