2023-2024 Season

COLORADO – WYOMING

DISTRICT AUDITIONS

Saturday February 3, 2024

ROCKY MOUNTAIN

REGION AUDITIONS

Saturday February 10, 2024





e 2023 Laffont Grand Finalists

ANNE KLINE POHANKA chairman

CAROL E. DOMINA president

MELISSA WEGNER executive director

PRITI GANDHI

associate director

NATALIE BURROWS administrator LISETTE OROPESA

national advisor

National Semifinals

Monday, March 11, 2024

Eric and Dominique Laffont Grand Finals Concert Sunday, March 17, 2024 For up to date auditions results, alumni news, and other general information, follow @metoperacompetition on Facebook and Instagram.

THE METROPOLITAN OPERA ERIC AND DOMINIQUE LAFFONT COMPETITION

The Met's Laffont Competition—previously known as the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions—is designed to discover promising young opera singers and assist in the development of their careers, and is sponsored by hundreds of donors and volunteers from across the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Some of today's greatest singers got their starts in the competition, including Renée Fleming, Susan Graham, Stephanie Blythe, Eric Owens, Lawrence Brownlee, Lisette Oropesa, Nadine Sierra, Jamie Barton, Michael Fabiano, Ryan Speedo Green, and Anthony Roth Costanzo.

The Competition is grateful to its donors for prizes at the national level and to the Tobin Endowment for the Mrs. Edgar Tobin Award, given to each first-place region winner.

Support for this program is generously provided by the Charles H. Dyson Endowment Fund at the Metropolitan Opera.

SUPPORT OPERA'S FUTURE STARS

When you make a gift to support the Laffont Competition, you make a statement about your commitment to the future of opera and to helping expand our work of identifying opera's brightest rising stars. This unique initiative is possible thanks to the generous support that we receive from valued friends like you.

Please text LAFFONT to 44321 or visit **metopera.org/competitionsupport** and make a gift to support the Laffont Competition today. Your contribution will make a truly meaningful difference.

LEADERSHIP FOR THE 2023-24 SEASON

Regional Chairpersons

David O'Connor CENTRAL

Tom Cannon Jr. EASTERN

Theodore Fellenbaum Barbara Wiltsie GREAT LAKES

Melissa Gordon **GULF COAST**

Susan and Tim Young

MIDWEST

Pauline Ho Bynum

John and Barbara VanScoyoc

NEW ENGLAND

Brian Arbanas Stewart Law NORTHWEST

Karen Bruggenthies Chris Mohr ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Randall Romig SOUTHEAST

Connie Fullmer Jimmy Longoria UPPER MIDWEST

Marianne Grant Molly Siefert WESTERN

District Directors

Brian DeMaris ARIZONA

Martin and Melissa Thoma ARKANSAS

Bob Eastman BOSTON

Karen D'Angelo Leah Wietig BUFFALO-TORONTO

Karen and Chris Mohr COLORADO-WYOMING

Sondra Kelly Robin Valovich CONNECTICUT

Reginald Allen Marquita Lister Timothy Nelson DC-MARYLAND-VIRGINIA

Swantje Knye-Levin Joan Travis FLORIDA

Alexis Lundy Jason Meeks GEORGIA

Rhonda Sweeney HOUSTON

Diana Livingston Friedley IDAHO-MONTANA

Jason Pompeii ILLINOIS

Lindsay Moy David Starkey INDIANA

Donald Simonson IOWA

Melinda J. Cannady Diane Schemm KANSAS CITY

Catherine Nardolillo

KENTUCKY

Karen Gottlieb Laurel Howat Susan Malinowski LOS ANGELES

Ragnar Conde Joan Mitchell MEXICO

Theodore Fellenbaum Barbara Wiltsie MICHIGAN

Connie Fullmer Jimmy Longoria MINNESOTA

Adrienne Dickson Laura Franz NEBRASKA

Rebeccka Coe Joanne Mantis NEW ORLEANS

Tom Cannon Jr. NEW YORK

Pauline Chinnis Steven LaCosse NORTH CAROLINA

Anne Christopherson Justin Montigne NORTH DAKOTA-MANITOBA

Marianne Cornetti

Ada Sofia Esteves PUERTO RICO

Brenda Hayward Kathryn Thickstun Karen Valentino SAN DIEGO

Michele Patzakis SAN FRANCISCO

Bettie and Van Edwards SOUTH CAROLINA

Maggie Holtman Louise Salmon Liza Streett ST. LOUIS

Jocelynne McCall Jan Simpson TENNESSEE

Judith and Steven Raiford Tim and Susan Young TULSA

Julie McBeth Carol and Gunter Radinger UTAH

David Morgan WASHINGTON

Nicolas Krusek Glenda Murray WESTERN CANADA

WELCOME TO THE METROPOLITAN OPERA ERIC AND DOMINIQUE LAFFONT COMPETITION.

(Formerly Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions)

COLORADO-WYOMING DISTRICT

February 3, 2024 10:30 AM - 4:30 PM Calvary Baptist Church

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION

February 10, 2024 1:30 PM - 5:00 PM Calvary Baptist Church

Karen Bruggenthies, Rocky Mountain District Chair Chris Mohr, Colorado-Wyoming District Chairs Allan Armstrong, Accompanist Chris Mohr, Emcee

Each singer will begin with an aria of his or her choice. The judges may then request an additional aria from the three remaining pieces on the list of selections prepared by that singer.

Audience Choice Award - Complete and return the ballot you received with your program to the marked boxes in the lobby by the end of today's Competition. Please do so within 10 minutes of the completion of the final singer's performance to allow us time to tally the votes. A monetary award will be given to the singer who receives the most votes.

The announcement of this year's winner(s) and the presentation of awards will take place back in the Calvary Baptist Church Sanctuary directly following the completion of the judges' deliberations.

For our Audience: Please Remember . . .

- No photography while in the auditorium.
- Turn off all cell phones and electronic devices.
- Enter and leave the hall only between singers and please do so quickly and quietly.
- Do not applaud singers between arias. When judges have dismissed the singer, please show your appreciation with enthusiasm! Please do not attempt to approach or attempt to speak to the judges privately.

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Our newsletter will keep you up to date on past winners and upcoming events. To register visit our website at http://metoperaauditionsr ockies.org *or* email bruggenthies@comcast.net.





JENNIFER MARIEL, SOPRANO, 29 MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

SUOR ANGELICA Senza mamma Puccini Addio, addio mio dolce amor **EDGAR** Puccini Měsíčku na nebi hlubokém **RUSALKA** Dvořák **PAGLIACCI** Stridono lassù (Ballatalla) Leoncavallo



OLYMAR SANDOVAL, TENOR, 25

TEPIC, NAYARIT (MEXICO) Ella mi fu rapita... Parmi veder le lagrime **RIGOLETTO** Verdi Che gelida manina LA BOHÈME Puccini Salut! demeure chaste et pure **FAUST** Gounod Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE Mozart



JOSHUA THOMAS, BASS-BARITONE, 24

HOUSTON, TX Come dal ciel precipita **MACBETH** Verdi Schweig! Schweig! damit dich niemand warnt DER FREISCHÜTZ Weber Le veau d'or **FAUST** Gounod Hello my son **BLUE** Tesori



AARON JENKINS, TENOR, 29

NEW YORK, NY Una furtiva lagrima L'ELISIR D'AMORE Donizetti Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE Mozart Pourquoi me réveiller **WERTHER** Massenet New York Lights A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE Bolcom



ANI KUSHYAN, MEZZO-SOPRANO, 27

TBILISI, GEORGIA LA FAVORITA O mio Fernando! Donizetti Ah Tanya, Tanya **EUGENE ONEGIN** Tchaikovsky L'amour est un oiseau rebelle (Habanera) **CARMEN Bizet** Werther! Qui m'aurait dit...Ces lettres WERTHER Massenet



RAUL MORALES, BASS, 29

COATZACOALCOS, MEXICO Ecco li mondo **MEFISTOFELE** Boito Vous qui faites l'endormie **FAUST** Gounod O tu, Palermo I VESPRI SICILIANI Verdi Gremin's Aria **EUGENE ONEGIN** Tchaikovsky



RYAN JOHNSON, TENOR, 29

MULESHOE, TX MANON Massenet En fermant les yeux (Le Rêve) È la solita storia del pastore L'ARLESIANA Cilea Che gelida manina LA BOHÈME Puccini THE RAPE OF LUCRETIA Tarquinius does not wait Britten



TERESA TUCCI, SOPRANO, 26

WOODBRIDGE, ON Ah! douce enfant CENDRILLON Massenet Durch Zärtlichkeit und Schmeicheln DIE ENTFÜHRUNG AUS DEM SERAIL Mozart Die Wiener Herrn verstehn sich **ARABELLA** Strauss **SCIPIONE** Scoglio d'immota fronte Handel



SEDONA LIBERO, MEZZO-SOPRANO, 30

Sta nell'Ircana pietrosa tana Una voce poco fa I Don't Know You Se Romeo t'uccise un figlio ALCINA IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE I CAPULETI E I MONTECCHI PHOENIX, AZ

Handel
Rossini
Puts
Bellini



KEITH KLEIN, BASS-BARITONE, 28

I'm a lonely man Vous qui faites l'endormie Aleko's Cavatina (Vyes' tabor spit) O du mein holder Abendstern SUSANNAH FAUST ALEKO TANNHÄUSER Floyd Gounod Rachmaninoff Wagner

OVERLAND PARK, KS

ZAPOPAN, MEXICO



RAPHAEL ROJAS REA, TENOR, 27

Ah, lève-toi, soleil! Kuda Kuda Una furtiva lagrima Pourquoi me réveiller ROMÉO ET JULIETTE EUGENE ONEGIN L'ELISIR D'AMORE WERTHER

Gounod Tchaikovsky Donizetti Massenet

Floyd

Mozart

Puccini



TESSA McQUEEN, SOPRANO, 26

Ah! Je ris de me voir (The Jewel Song) Ain't it a pretty night? Mi tradì quell'alma ingrata Chi il bel sogno di Doretta FAUST SUSANNAH DON GIOVANNI A RONDINE LOVELAND, CO Gounod



SARAH SCOFIELD, MEZZO-SOPRANO, 26

We had one room in Lambeth Marsh O Petite Étoile Nobles seigneurs, salut! Svegliatevi nel core ELIZABETH CREE L'ÉTOILE LES HUGUENOTS GIULIO CESARE WEST LAFAYETTE, IN
Puts

Chabrier Meyerbeer Handel



WINONA MARTIN, MEZZO-SOPRANO, 27

Que fais-tu, blanche tourterelle Enfin, je suis ici Parto, parto, ma tu, ben mio Sein wir wieder gut ROMÉO ET JULIETTE CENDRILLON LA CLEMENZA DI TITO ARIADNE AUF NAXOS DALLAS, TX
Gounod
Massenet
Mozart

Strauss



RANDY HO, TENOR, 27

Una furtiva lagrima Ah! mes amis, quel jour de fête!...Pour mon âme Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön Che gelida manina L'ELISIR D'AMORE LA FILLE DU RÉGIMENT DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE LA BOHÈME **DENVER, CO**

Donizetti Donizetti Mozart Puccini



TIFFANY CHOE, SOPRANO. 27

Ah! Je ris de me voir (The Jewel Song) Ach, ich fühl's Signore, ascolta! Iolanta's Aria ROMÉO ET JULIETTE DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE TURANDOT IOLANTA ORANGE COUNTY, CA
Gounod

Mozart Puccini Tchaikovsky

COLORADO/WYOMING DISTRICT AWARDS

To be awarded at the judges' discretion: \$5000 (\$2000 - Spencer Foundation/\$1000 - Merle Chambers/\$1000 - Joy Dinsdale/\$250.00 - Anonymous (encouragement award)/\$750 - Colorado Patrons)

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGIONAL AWARDS

First Place Awards - \$4000	\$3500 if two 1st place awards, no 2	^{2nd} place
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	The Spencer Foundation Award	\$2000
	Joy Dinsdale Award	\$1200
	Mrs. Edgar Tobin Award from the Tobin Endowment	\$800
	Second Place Awards - \$3000	
	Stephen Dilts Memorial Award sponsored by Mary Ann Ross	\$3000
Third Place Awards - \$2100		
	Erna D. Butler Award	\$600
	Linda Geidl Award	\$500
	The Arthur & Miriam Bender Memorial Award	\$200
	Special Awards	
	Erna D. Butler Young Singer's Encouragement Award	\$600
	Father Diamond Wendelboe Memorial Scholarship	\$500
	Encouragement Award - Anonymous	\$500
	Regional Finalists Patron Awards to non-placing regional finalists \$500 each	

Regional Winners will be brought to New York for the National Semi-Finals on Sunday, April 24. There they will receive musical preparation under the guidance of the Met staff. From the National Semi-Finalists, all of whom will compete on the Met stage with piano accompaniment, eight to ten will be selected by a jury as National Finalists and will compete in the Grand National Finals Concert on Sunday, May 1, 2022 on the Met stage accompanied by the Met Orchestra. A jury will award \$15,000 each to 4 - 6 National Grand Winners. Each National Finalist not selected as a National Grand Winner will receive \$7500. National Semi-Finalists who do not advance will be awarded \$2500 each.

COLORADO-WYOMING DISTRICT AND ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION ACCOMPANIST



Pianist and vocal coach Allan Armstrong is assistant professor of music in voice at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, where he specializes in art song literature and opera coaching. From 2017-2020, Armstrong was a visiting assistant professor/post-doctoral scholar in the collaborative piano and chamber music department at the Jacobs School of Music. Before joining Jacobs, he was a member of the applied piano faculty at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, where he codirected Bravo Opera Company. Armstrong has been a principal production pianist and coach at Eugene Opera, Opera Colorado, St. Petersburg Opera, Opera on the Avalon, Sugar Creek Opera, Tel Aviv Summer Opera Program and Opera Tampa. He has taught on the faculty of the

Sherrill Milnes Savannah Voice Festival and the International Vocal Arts Institute in Blacksburg, Virginia.

COLORADO-WYOMING DISTRICT JUDGES



CARROLL FREEMAN is an American operatic <u>tenor</u>, opera director, and music educator. He began his career as a prominent <u>boy soprano</u> in the 1960s. From the late 1970s through the mid 1990s he performed widely as a <u>tenor</u> with opera companies and orchestras in the United States. After that he worked as a director of opera productions with opera companies throughout North America. He is the former director of the opera program at the University of Tennessee and currently directs the opera program at Georgia State University. He is also the former Artistic Director of Mississippi Opera, Opera in the Ozarks at Inspiration Point, and opera studios at Knoxville Opera and Des Moines Metro Opera.



GRANT LOENIG collaborates with many of today's most renowned musical artists as a pianist, vocal coach, and administrator. He currently serves as Head of Music Staff at Opera Philadelphia. He works regularly as music staff at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Opera Philadelphia, and the Aspen Opera Theater and VocalARTS program. He served as Head of Music Staff for Wolf Trap Opera for over 10 years, where he was also the music director of the Studio Artist program. Mr. Loehnig holds degrees from Macalester College and Manhattan School of Music, and is a graduate of the Houston Grand Opera Studio, Music Academy of the West, and San Francisco Opera's Merola Program. Before joining the Curtis faculty in 2015, Mr. Loehnig served on the faculty of the opera studies program at Rice University in Houston.



ALLEN PERRIELLO is Director of Artistic Administration for Des Moines Metro Oper. He returns to DMMO having previously worked on the Company's music staff from 2011 to 2016. Most recently, Allen was the Head of Music at **Minnesota Opera**, overseeing the musical preparation of productions, execution of musical activities, and the Resident Artist Program. Simultaneously, he was the Director of the Young Artists Program at **The Glimmerglass Festival**, overseeing the auditioning, hiring, casting, and mentoring of young artists each season. Allen Perriello is a highly regarded pianist, vocal coach, administrator, and educator and has appeared in recital with a wide variety of singers and Allen serves as a mentor through the Utopia Arts Mentorship Program.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION JUDGES



LAWRENCE EDELSON is highly respected not only as a critically acclaimed stage director, but also as a visionary company leader who has created programs in the areas of artist mentorship and new works development that have served as models of innovation for opera companies around the country. In the opera field, Lawrence is best known as the founder of American Lyric Theater (ALT). He has been responsible for assembling ALT's world-renowned artistic staff, and creating the first full-time program for emerging opera composers and librettists in the United States. From 2014 to 2022, Lawrence also served as the Artistic and General Director of Opera Saratoga. In July of 2023, Lawrence joins Chicago Opera Theater as General Director, a position he will hold concurrent with his role at ALT.



CHRISTINA SCHEPPELMANN recently stepped down as the general director of the Seattle Opera and accepted a position as General Director of La Monnaie/De Munt in Brussels, Belgium. She was one of the major female opera administrations in the United States. Scheppelmann earned her degree in banking in Germany. In 1988, she began working in artist management in Milan, Italy. In 1994, she worked for the San Francisco Opera, overseeing the season design and staffing. Scheppelmann was director of artistic operations at the Washington National Opera for 11 years, a position in which she collaborated with then general director Plácido Domingo. She was the first general director at the Royal Opera House Muscat. In August 2019, Scheppelmann left the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona, Spain to serve as general director of the Seattle Opera.



BRIAN SPECK was recently appointed as Artistic Administrator for the Metropolutan Opera. Prior to his appointment at the Met, Mr. Speck served as Director of the Sarah and Ernest Butler Houston Grand Opera (HGO) Studio, Brian Speck was responsible for selection, training, and career development of the Butler Studio's singers and pianist-coaches. He currently serves as co-chair of OPERA America's Performer Development Network and spearheaded an effort to create a virtual audition process for training programs across the opera industry. Prior to his current position, Mr. Speck served as HGO's Company Manager, leading Rehearsal Planning and Artist Services. Mr. Speck holds degrees in voice performance from Pepperdine University and Rice University.

LEARN ABOUT THE METROPOLITAN OPERA ERIC AND DOMINIQUE LAFFONT COMPETITION.

(Formerly Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions)

Young singers from around the United States, Puerto Rico, Canada, and Mexico will compete for \$15,000 cash prizes and the chance to perform in the Grand Finals Concert on the nation's most prestigious opera stage, as the Metropolitan Opera Eric and Dominique Laffont Competition (formerly the MONC Auditions) launches its 67th annual auditions program. Typically, over 1200 singers between the ages of 20 and 30 participate in the Met Competition, the longest-running singing competition in the country.

Each season over one hundred MONC audition alumni appear on the Met stage, many in starring roles. These singers include Renee Fleming, Angela Meade, Michelle DeYoung, Susan Graham, Susan Phillips, Sondra Radvanosky, Lawrence Brownlee, Eric Owens, and recently our 2011 winner Ryan Speedo Green.

Today the Met sponsors Competitions throughout the U.S., Puerto Rico, Canada, and Mexico in 12 Regions which are subdivided into 40 Districts, making access easy and inexpensive for participants. Qualified applicants may choose to enter any District audition across the country regardless of whether they are a resident of the area. District winners must compete in the Region Finals of the Region in which they were District winners. The Rocky Mountain Region includes the Colorado/Wyoming, Utah, and Arizona Districts. A singer may audition for the Competition only once per season. There is no limit as to how many seasons they may audition, depending on their previous advancement in the competition. Winners in each Region receive cash prizes and travel to New York to compete for more prize money at the National Semi Finals. If successful in the Semi Finals, they will have an opportunity to perform on stage at the Met in the Grand Finals Concert with the Met Orchestra. Typically, 4-6 Grand Finals winners are selected at that concert.

Even though prize money is given, the real value to these auditions is what a singer learns from them.

Our District and Region auditions require four operatic arias in two or more languages of varying styles that best represent the singer at their current stage of vocal development. An in-depth knowledge of language, style, and musicianship is essential for a successful operatic audition.

Other unique benefits of the Competition are:

- 1. **To hear from professionals in the business.** There are three judges at every level (with the exception of the Qualifying Round) of the Competition, chosen from a selected list of professionals in the business. We make them available to the singers following the competition for feedback, so that they might ask questions and hear first-hand their thoughts about the singer's presentation that day.
- 2. **To assess the singer's vocal development.** The best way to improve at auditioning is to do more auditions. This is a chance to sing a professional audition and get a better idea of how a singer's audition skills compare to the other singers of the day. We encourage singers to sit in and observe the auditions to get a full picture of the vocal talent that day.
- 3. **To advance professionally.** The judges for the Met Competition are part of a larger network of industry professionals. Many of them are in a position to recommend singers for work, advanced study or an apprenticeship. The Competition can go beyond one day of singing and open doors for the future.

The Met in New York financially sponsors regional finalists for the New York Competition, but the Districts and Regions depend totally on local donations for all our expenses. The Rocky Mountain Region generously gives special awards to our Colorado-Wyoming District winners. Your patron membership dollars also help us meet our audition expenses: judges' travel expenses, audition hall rental, official accompanist, piano tuners, piano movers, printing and postage. If you are not currently a Patron, we encourage you to seriously consider joining. Our membership year runs from March 1 to February 28. Any donation which you care to give to the Rocky Mountain Region Laffont Competition is gratefully appreciated.

We would like to express a heart-felt thank you to our judges. They voluntarily give of their time and expertise to help develop the careers of our singers. We wish to express our appreciation to the media and our sincere thanks to the schools of music, voice teachers, coaches and accompanists for their cooperation and support.

Donors of Special Awards

The Galen & Ada Belle Spencer Foundation
Myra Louise Bender: *The Arthur & Miriam Bender Memorial Award*Erna D. Butler Award Fund

The following Rocky Mountain Patrons generously make these auditions possible:

Benefactor (\$1000 & up)

Linda Bjelland
Karen Bruggenthies
Ellie Caulkins
Merle Chambers
Linda deLeon
Joy Dinsdale
Mary Ann Ross
Cheryl Solich

Spencer Foundation

Sponsor (\$500 to \$999)

Linda Giedl
Lauren Gunderson
Lynn Harrington
James McElhinney
William Rense
Karen Ritz
Jackie Writz

Subscriber (\$175 to \$499)

Anonymous Myra Louise Bender Jay Breen John Dilts Jan Friedlander Becky Gantner Marty Hill

Sarah Hite

Subscriber (\$175 to \$499)

Jennifer & Anne Kotch Wendy Miles Chris & Karen Mohr Ron Rich

Donors (\$75 up to \$174)

Rex Brewster
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Amy Feaster
Beverly Fernald
Deanna Leino
John Lockwood
Jedeane MacDonald
Helen Santilli
James & Barbara Todd
Phyllis Wicklund

Other Donations (Up to \$74)

Jeff Brown



STEPHEN DILTS

1940 - 2023

Stephen Dilts, MD PhD, served as Director of the Rocky Mountain Region's Laffont Competition for 10 years. Thank you, Steve for your 15 years of supporting the Laffont Competition and your many years of supporting the Colorado music community. Thank you too for your generosity, your friendship and for inspiring us all!



Rocky Mountain Region Chair Karen Bruggenthies

Colorado Wyoming District Director & Development

Chris Mohr

Judges Coordinator & Volunteer Coordinator Rodney Paz

Rocky Mountain Region Advisor Mary Ann Ross

Secretary/Treasurer
Barbara Bell

Singer Arrangements
Lynn Harrington

Transportation Chair Marty Hill

Arizona District DirectorBrian Dearis

Arizona District PresidentJudith Wolf

Utah District Co-Directors

Julie McBeth Carol Radinger Gunter Radinger

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