

The Metropolitan Opera

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Password: MetOpera2020

Nine singers advance to the final round of the 2020 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions

- **The final phase of competition is the public Grand Finals concert on the Met stage, accompanied by the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Bertrand de Billy, on Sunday, March 1**
- **Winners will receive individual cash prizes of \$20,000 and invaluable exposure in the opera world**
- **Finals concert to be broadcast live on the Met's website and SiriusXM**

New York, NY (February 25, 2020)—Following yesterday's semi-final competition, nine young singers have advanced to the final round of the Metropolitan Opera's 2020 National Council Auditions. In the public concert, finalists perform on the Met stage Sunday, March 1 at 3 p.m., for an audience of judges, agents, industry leaders, and the general public (in the auditorium and live on the radio). The finalists, chosen by a panel of opera administrators from the Met and other companies, each perform two arias with the Met Orchestra conducted by **Bertrand de Billy**. Prize money will increase for the first time in 20 years, with the winners receiving individual cash prizes of \$20,000 (previously \$15,000), and the prestigious and potentially career-launching title of National Council Auditions Winner. The remaining finalists receive \$10,000 (previously \$7,500).

The concert will be hosted by soprano **Lisette Oropesa**, a 2005 National Council Auditions winner, and will also feature a performance by tenor **Javier Camarena**, while the judges deliberate.

The concert will be broadcast live on [Metropolitan Opera Radio](#) on SiriusXM Channel 75, and streamed live on the Met's web site, metopera.org.

PRESS DEPARTMENT

The Metropolitan Opera
Lincoln Center
New York, NY 10023

Press: 212.870.7457
General: 212.799.3100
Fax: 212.870.7606

press@mail.metopera.org
www.metopera.org

The 2020 finalists, the regions they represent in the competition, and their hometowns are:

- **Gabrielle Beteag**, 25, mezzo-soprano (Southeast Region: Lilburn, GA)
- **Lindsay Kate Brown**, 28, mezzo-soprano (Upper Midwest Region: Waterloo, NY)
- **Blake Denson**, 24, baritone (Midwest Region: Paducah, KY)
- **Jonah Hoskins**, 23, tenor (Rocky Mountain Region: Saratoga Springs, UT)
- **Chasiti Lashay**, 27, soprano (Western Region: Houston, TX)
- **Jana McIntyre**, 28, soprano (Midwest Region: Santa Barbara, CA)
- **Alexandria Shiner**, 29, soprano (Middle Atlantic Region: Waterford, MI)
- **Denis Vélez**, 27, soprano (Gulf Coast Region: Mexico City, Mexico)
- **Xiaomeng Zhang**, 29, baritone (New England Region: Wenzhou, China)

Full biographies of each singer are below.

Tickets for the Grand Finals Concert may be purchased at the Met Box Office, by phone at (212) 362-6000, or online at metopera.org.

This year's semifinalists were chosen from more than 1,000 singers who participated in auditions held in 40 districts throughout the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico, and Mexico, and who then competed in the 12 regional finals. These auditions are sponsored by the Metropolitan Opera National Council and administered by National Council members and hundreds of volunteers from across the country.

The Met National Council Auditions have been crucial in introducing many of today's best-known stars, such as **Renée Fleming**, **Susan Graham**, **Frederica von Stade**, **Deborah Voigt**, **Thomas Hampson**, **Stephanie Blythe**, **Sondra Radvanovsky**, **Lawrence Brownlee**, **Eric Owens**, **Angela Meade**, **Susanna Phillips**, **Michael Fabiano**, **Latonia Moore**, **Anthony Roth Costanzo**, **Nadine Sierra**, **Jamie Barton**, and **Ryan Speedo Green**. The competition gained international attention with the release of the 2008 feature-length documentary *The Audition*, directed by award-winning filmmaker Susan Froemke, which chronicled the 2007 National Council Auditions season and Grand Finals Concert.

Biographies of the 2020 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions Finalists

In 2020, **Gabrielle Beteag** will be featured as the alto soloist in Haydn's *Lord Nelson Mass* with the Michael O'Neal Singers and as Ursule in Atlanta Concert Opera's production of *Béatrice et Bénédicte*. In 2019, she was a young artist at Chautauqua Opera, where she was performed with the touring outreach program as Aunt Bartolo in *The Barber of Seville* in California and on the mainstage as Woman in a Hat / Duchess in *The Ghosts of Versailles*. She earned her master's degree from Georgia State University (GSU) in 2018. While at GSU, she appeared as Katisha in *The Mikado*, Lady Billows in *Albert Herring*, and Charlotte Malcolm in *A Little Night Music*. Her repertoire also includes the Secretary in *The Consul*, Madame de Croissy in *Dialogues des Carmélites*, and Augusta Tabor in *The Ballad of Baby Doe*.

A current artist with the Houston Grand Opera Studio (HGO), **Lindsay Kate Brown** appears this season as Giovanna in *Rigoletto* and the Third Lady *Die Zauberflöte*. She has also covered Léonor in *La Favorite* and Paula in *Florencia en el Amazonas* during her two seasons at HGO. This spring, she will cover Herodias in *Salome*. Past engagements include appearances as the Composer in *Ariadne auf Naxos* at Wolf Trap Opera and Ma Moss in *The Tender Land* at Des Moines Metro Opera, where she also covered Ježibaba in *Rusalka*. This summer, she will be an apprentice artist at the Santa Fe Opera, covering the role of Ježibaba. She made her New York City debut in 2019 at OPERA America, performing in a curated art-song recital with fellow HGO Studio artists. She is a graduate of Rice University (2018), SUNY Binghamton (2016), and Mansfield University of Pennsylvania (2013).

Blake Denson is a second-year master's student at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. While at Rice, he has appeared as Elder McLean in *Susannah* and Mercurio in *La Calisto*. He has also worked with Wolf Trap Opera, where he covered Kaiser Overall in *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* and Pierrot in *L'Île de Merlin*. He joins the Houston Grand Opera Studio during the 2020–21 season, and he will also return to Wolf Trap Opera for a second season, singing the Captain in *Eugene Onegin* and covering the

opera's title character. He will also cover the role of Marcello in *La Bohème*. He earned a bachelor's from the University of Kentucky School Of Music.

Jonah Hoskins's past roles include Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, Septimius in *Theodora*, and Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi* at Brigham Young University (BYU) and Benvolio in *Roméo et Juliette* at Utah Opera. Last summer, he was a young artist at Des Moines Metro Opera, where he study-covered the title role of *Candide*. He will return again this year to cover the title role of *Platée* and sing the master of ceremonies in *The Queen of Spades*. Previously, he was a young artist at Ohio Light Opera and attended Houston Grand Opera's YAVA program. He received the Extraordinary Artistic Promise Award at the 2019 Lotte Lenya Competition. He is currently studying vocal performance at BYU and will graduate this spring with his bachelor's degree.

Chasiti Lashay Walker is a postgraduate student at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music (SFCM). She earned her master's degree in 2019 and completed her bachelor's degree at Tuskegee University in 2014. This year, she will be a young artist at Chautauqua Opera, where she will appear as Marla in the educational-outreach opera *Bear Hug* and cover the roles of Angel More and Henrietta M. in *The Mother of Us All* and Annu in *Thumbprint*. She also recently sang the Prima Donna in the prologue of *Ariadne auf Naxos* at SFCM. She has sung the title role of *Suor Angelica*, covered the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and performed the following partial roles: Mimì in *La Bohème*, Desdemona in *Otello*, Cleopatra in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Mother Marie in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Blanche in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and the title role of *Arabella*.

This season, **Jana McIntyre** sings Ännchen in Heartbeat Opera's new production of *Der Freischütz* and the Partygoer in the Santa Fe Opera's workshop of *M. Butterfly*. She also joins the Sacramento Philharmonic and Opera for their Mozart Favorites concert. In recent seasons, she made company debuts at the Santa Fe Opera (*Jenůfa*) and Arizona Opera (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), reprised her portrayal of the Queen of the Night in *Die Zauberflöte* at Opera Grand Rapids and Toledo Opera, and appeared at Tulsa Opera in productions of *The Little Prince* and *Don Giovanni*. She also covered the Fairy Godmother in *Cendrillon* at Lyric Opera of Chicago, appeared in *Orfeo ed Euridice* at National Sawdust, and sang Wolf's *Italienisches Liederbuch* as

part of San Francisco Opera's Recital Series. She holds degrees from UCLA and Manhattan School of Music and has apprenticed with San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program, the Santa Fe Opera, and Tulsa Opera.

During the 2019–20 season, **Alexandria Shiner** returns to Washington National Opera's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program, where she sings the First Lady in *Die Zauberflöte* and Magda Sorel in *The Consul*. Additional season highlights include a return to the Glimmerglass Festival as Ada in *Die Feen*, Verdi's Requiem with the Quad Cities Symphony Orchestra, and Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with the National Symphony Orchestra, Canada's Victoria Symphony, and Oregon Symphony. She has appeared as Kayla in the world premiere of Kamala Sankaram's *Taking Up Serpents*, Mirra in the North American premiere of Liszt's lost opera *Sardanapalo*, the title role of *Ariadne auf Naxos* at Wolf Trap Opera, the title role of *Alcina* in the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist performance at Washington National Opera, the Celestial Voice in *Don Carlo* and Berta in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at WNO, and Berta at the Glimmerglass Festival.

Denis Vélez is currently a young artist with Lyric Opera of Chicago's Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center. Since 2018, she has been a member of Mexico's National Opera Chorus at the Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City. She has participated in master classes with Mexican tenors Francisco Araiza and Ramón Vargas, American tenors Joseph McClain and Michael Silvester, and Polish soprano Ewa Izykowska-Klosiewicz. Her repertoire includes the Countess and Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Bastienne in *Bastien und Bastienne*, Fiordiligi in *Così fan Tutte*, Adina in *L'Elisir d'Amore*, and Mimì in *La Bohème*. She holds a bachelor's degree from Mexico's Superior School of Music.

Xiaomeng Zhang completed his artist diploma at the Juilliard School and was a participant in San Francisco Opera's 2018 Merola Opera Program. During the 2019–20 season, he sings Figaro in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at Opera Columbus, the title role of *Don Giovanni* at Opera Naples, and Silvio in *Pagliacci* at Pittsburgh Festival Opera. In the fall of 2020, he will join the International Opera Studio at Opernhaus Zürich. Previous credits include the Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* at the Aspen Music Festival; Don Giovanni, Kuligin in *Káťa Kabanová*, and Minskman in *Flight* at the Juilliard School;

Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore* at A.R.E. Opera; Tancredi in *Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* with Ensemble Connect at Carnegie Hall; Don Giovanni in the Narnia Festival; Schaunard in *La Bohème* at Chautauqua Opera; and Don Fernando in *Fidelio* and Licinio in *Aureliano in Palmira* at Caramoor. He received his bachelor's degree at Shanghai Conservatory of Music and his master's degree from Manhattan School of Music. New England Region.

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Contact

Lee Abrahamian/Renata Kapilevich

(212) 870-7457

labrahamian@metopera.org / rkapilevich@metopera.org