

2022-23 SEASON

UTAH

DISTRICT COMPETITION

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2022



LAFFONT
COMPETITION

The Metropolitan Opera



The 2022 Laffont Grand Finalists

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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.

National Semifinals

Monday, April 17, 2023

**Eric and Dominique Laffont
Grand Finals Concert**

Sunday, April 23, 2023

For up-to-date auditions results, alumni news, and other general information, follow [@metoperacompetition](#) on Facebook and Instagram.

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 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.

November 12, 2022

11:00AM-3:40PM

**Libby Gardner Concert Hall
University of Utah**

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Each singer will begin with an aria of his or her choice; the judges may then request additional arias from the list of selections prepared by that singer. **Applause is encouraged.**

Please turn off or silence devices with audible alarms or ringers (including cell phones) while in the auditorium and only enter or exit the auditorium between singers.

Audience Choice Award - Complete and return the ballot you received with your program to the marked boxes by the end of today's competition (please do so within 10 minutes of the completion of the final singer). A monetary award will be given to the singer who receives the most votes.

Audience members are invited to join the competitors for light refreshments in Thompson Chamber Music Hall while the judges deliberate. The announcement winner(s) and the presentation of awards will take place in the reception space directly following the completion of the judges' deliberations.

REPERTOIRE | NOVEMBER 12, 2022
IN PERFORMANCE ORDER

CRISTINA VILLALOBOS, SOPRANO, 22

SPRINGVILLE, UT

Oh! quante volte	I CAPULETI E I MONTECCHI	Bellini
Porgi, amor	LE NOZZE DI FIGARO	Mozart
Je dis que rien ne m'épouvante	CARMEN	Bizet
Piangerò la sorte mia	GIULIO CESARE	Handel

TSHILIDZI NDOU, BARITONE, 29

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

Mein Sehnen, mein Wähnen (Pierrot's Tanzlied)	DIE TOTE STADT	Korngold
Hai già vinta la causa!	LE NOZZE DI FIGARO	Mozart
Avant de quitter ces lieux	FAUST	Gounod
Starbuck's Aria	MOBY-DICK	Jake Heggie

JOOHYUN KIM, MEZZO-SOPRANO, 26

GWANG-JU, SOUTH KOREA

Olga's Aria	EUGENE ONEGIN	Tchaikovsky
Voi, che sapete	LE NOZZE DI FIGARO	Mozart
Svegliatevi nel core	GIULIO CESARE	Handel
All'afflitto è dolce il pianto	ROBERTO DEVEREUX	Donizetti

CLAIRE ROBINSON, SOPRANO, 25

PLEASANT GROVE, UT

Frère voyez!... Du gai soleil	WERTHER	Massenet
Prendi, per me sei libero	L'ELISIR D'AMORE	Donizetti
Ach, ich fühl's	DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE	Mozart
The Silver Aria	THE BALLAD OF BABY DOE	Moore

ANDRES LOSADA, BASS-BARITONE, 26

BOGOTA, COLOMBIA

Quand la flamme de l'amour	LA JOLIE FILLE DE PERTH	Bizet
Come dal ciel precipita	MACBETH	Verdi
O du mein holder Abendstern	TANNHÄUSER	Wagner
La vendetta	LE NOZZE DI FIGARO	Mozart

JACOB KENISON, TENOR, 25

TOOELE, UT

Donna non vidi mai	MANON LESCAUT	Puccini
Ecco ridente in cielo	IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA	Rossini
Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön	DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE	Mozart
Una furtiva lagrima	L'ELISIR D'AMORE	Donizetti

JADE ESPINA, MEZZO-SOPRANO, 26	FORT SMITH, AR	
Que fais-tu, blanche tourterelle	ROMÉO ET JULIETTE	Gounod
Sein wir wieder gut	ARIADNE AUF NAXOS	Strauss
Una voce poco fa	IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA	Rossini
I don't have to do a thing	IF I WERE YOU	Heggie
SAVANNAH PORTER, SOPRANO, 24	FORT WORTH, TX	
Les oiseaux dans la charmille (Doll Song)	LES CONTES D'HOFFMANN	Offenbach
Caro nome	RIGOLETTO	Verdi
The Silver Aria	THE BALLAD OF BABY DOE	Moore
Spiel' ich die Unschuld vom Lande	DIE FLEDERMAUS	Strauss II
FRANK RUIZ, TENOR, 24	PROVO, UT	
Avete torto!...Firenze è come un albero fiorito	GIANNI SCHICCHI	Puccini
Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön	DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE	Mozart
Una furtiva lagrima	L'ELISIR D'AMORE	Donizetti
Vainemant, ma bien-aimée	LE ROI D'YS	Lalo
LOREN GRAZIANO, SOPRANO, 26	TORONTO, CANADA	
Ah! non credea... Ah! non giunge	LA SONNAMBULA	Bellini
O zittre nicht, mein liebe Sohn	DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE	Mozart
Il faut partir	LA FILLE DU RÉGIMENT	Donizetti
Ah, mio cor!	ALCINA	Handel
NATHAN JENSEN, BASS, 28	HASTINGS, NE	
Il lacerato spirito	SIMON BOCCANEGRA	Verdi
Si la rigueur	LA JUIVE	Halévy
O, wie will ich triumphiren	DIE ENTFÜHRUNG AUS DEM SERAIL	Mozart
O Isis und Osiris	DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE	Mozart
ANN-MARIE IACOVIELLO, SOPRANO, 27	NORTH ANDOVER, MA	
Fiakermilli's Aria	ARABELLA	Strauss
Neghittosi or voi che fate	ARIODANTE	Handel
Controller's Aria	FLIGHT	Dove
Ah! Douce enfant...	CENDRILLON	Massenet
MARY RICE, MEZZO-SOPRANO, 26	MOAB, UT	
Parto, parto, ma tu, ben mio	LA CLEMENZA DI TITO	Mozart
Wie du warst	DER ROSENKAVALIER	Strauss
Se Romeo t'uccise un figlio	I CAPULETI E I MONTECCHI	Bellini
Give Him This Orchid	THE RAPE OF LUCRETIA	Britten

CHRISTIAN HOLDEN, TENOR, 29		SPRINGVILLE, UT
No, Pagliaccio non son	I PAGLIACCI	Leoncavallo
E lucevan le stelle	TOSCA	Puccini
Total Eclipse	SAMSON	Handel
Mit Gewitter und Sturm	DER FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER	Wagner
JIAYU LI, SOPRANO, 25		KUNMING, CHINA
Par le rang et par l'opulence	LA FILLE DU RÉGIMENT	Donizetti
Ah! non credea... Ah! non giunge	LA SONNAMBULA	Bellini
Vera's Aria – You've never seen the winter here	A MONTH IN THE COUNTRY	Hoiby
Da tempeste il legno infranto	GIULIO CESARE	Handel
WILLIAM NEDERLANDER, BARITONE, 25		NEW YORK, NY
Ombra mai fu	SERSE	Handel
Non siate ritrosi	COSÌ FAN TUTTE	Mozart
Un bacio di mano	LE GELOSIE FORTUNATE	Mozart
When the air sings of summer	THE OLD MAID AND THE THIEF	Menotti
SARAH KNIGHT, MEZZO-SOPRANO, 24		ROCKLIN, CA
Amour! viens aider ma faiblesse!	SAMSON ET DALILA	Saint-Saëns
Lullaby	THE CONSUL	Menotti
Čury murý fuk	RUSALKA	Dvořák
I see Forio	MARNIE	Muhly
ELLIE NIVER, SOPRANO, 22		SALEM, OR
Ah, fuggi il traditor!	DON GIOVANNI	Mozart
Donde lieta uscì	LA BOHÈME	Puccini
Il est doux, il est bon	HÉRODIADE	Massenet
Je dis que rien ne m'épouvante	CARMEN	Bizet
SAMUEL STEVENSON, TENOR, 23		GOOSE CREEK, SC
Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön	DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE	Mozart
Recondita armonia	TOSCA	Puccini
Ah, lève-toi, soleil!	ROMÉO ET JULIETTE	Gounod
If With All Your Hearts	ELIJAH	Mendelssohn
CHRISTIAN SIMMONS, BASS-BARITONE, 28		WASHINGTON, DC
Aleko's Cavatina (Vyes' tabor spit)	ALEKO	Rachmaninoff
Non più andrai	LE NOZZE DI FIGARO	Mozart
Votre toast (The Toréador Song)	CARMEN	Bizet
Di due figli vivea, padre beato	IL TROVATORE	Verdi

ALINA TAMBORINI, SOPRANO, 28

OKEMOS, MI

Ah! non credea... Ah! non giunge	LA SONNAMBULA	Bellini
Je dis que rien ne m'épouvante	CARMEN	Bizet
Embroidery Aria	PETER GRIMES	Britten
Klänge der Heimat (Csárdás)	DIE FLEDERMAUS	Strauss II

NICOLE KARRS, MEZZO-SOPRANO, 29

LINCOLN PARK, NJ

Čury mury fuk	RUSALKA	Dvorak
O schöne Jugenttage	DER EVANGELIMANN	Kienzl
Re dell'abisso, affrettati	UN BALLO IN MASCHERA	Verdi
Lullaby	THE CONSUL	Menotti

OFFICIAL PIANIST



Carol Anderson is in her twentieth season as principal coach for Utah Symphony | Utah Opera, while spending her summers on the music staff of The Santa Fe Opera. She is regularly engaged as official accompanist for the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, for the Utah District (since 2006), the Southeast Region in Atlanta, the Florida District, and the Arizona District. Dr. Anderson offers the immensely popular “Prelude Talks” before every Utah Opera performance, and is a cohost of USUO’s Ghostlight podcast, with Grand Teton Music Festival’s Jeff Counts.

Dr. Anderson’s professional opera coaching career was launched by her two seasons as apprentice coach in the prestigious Houston Grand Opera Studio. Previous to her appointment in Utah, she served as chorus master and musical administrator for the Orlando Opera, where she made her conducting debut leading performances of *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. Mentorship and development of operatic artists has long been a focus. She is often asked to present master classes and offer individual consultations to opera and voice students at music schools across the country. Dr. Anderson has also presented on opera coaching topics at CollabFest at University of Southern California and was a panelist on OPERA America’s webinar “Behind the Table: Demystifying the Opera Audition.”

OTHER PIANISTS

Lawrence Gee will play for Jacob Kenison
Peter Blackham will play for Sarah Knight

JUDGES



Daniel Biaggi is an award winning, internationally connected opera executive and producer. After 15+ years in opera leadership, Daniel founded Biaggi Arts Consulting in 2019 to partner with performing arts organizations and individual artists to help them reach their respective goals. In that capacity, he has served as Interim Artistic Director of Portland Opera, was Artistic Advisor to the Atkins Young Artists Program at the Mariinsky Theater in St. Petersburg, Russia, and helped create a fundraising and engagement expansion strategy for Teatro Grattacielo. He concurrently is General Manager for Drax Productions, a boutique film and TV production company in New York. With Drax Productions, he has executive produced arts projects including 'After/Glow', a cinematic adaptation of Schumann's *Dichterliebe*, filmed by Ryan McKinny and *Helio Arts*, and starring John Holiday as singer/pianist/actor with poetry by Marc Bahmuti Joseph. He also produced staged readings of a new play *CONTROL*, and is currently developing a TV documentary series with Kevin Newbury about the 'behind the scenes' of the opera world among other film/TV projects.

Previously, Daniel was General Director and Director of Artistic Operations at Palm Beach Opera for 15 years, where he instituted an artistic, organizational, and financial turnaround. Highlights included the company's first world premiere of an American Opera, *Enemies, A Love Story*; over 70 large scale productions featuring internationally acclaimed soloists and creative teams; a three-tiered approach to Young Artist Training; as well as the expansion of a wide range of community engagement and education programs throughout Palm Beach County. Prior to PBO, he worked as Associate Director at Guy Barzilay International Artists Management; was a faculty member at Manhattan School of Music, Mannes College of Music, and Sarah Lawrence College. He has given master classes and performance seminars at the Juilliard School of Music as well as the Chautauqua Voice Institute; and worked as teaching artist, lecturer, and performer for the Metropolitan Opera Guild.

Daniel is a frequent vocal competition judge, including for the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, the Richard Tucker Music Foundation, and the Jensen Foundation, among others. He has served on the Board of OPERA America; was Chair of the Cultural Executive Committee of the Cultural Council of the Palm Beaches; and received the Lifetime Achievement Award for Leadership and Artistic Excellence of the NSAL. Credentials include the Harvard Business School's Executive Education Program "Strategic Perspectives in Nonprofit Management"; certification as Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy (CAP, The American College of Financial Services); a MM in Vocal Performance (Manhattan School of Music), a BM (San Francisco Conservatory of Music), and a Certificate of Musicology (University of Berne, Switzerland).



Ben Heppner is renowned worldwide for his portrayals in the dramatic tenor repertoire. His illustrious career has taken him to opera stages and concert halls around the world. He is acclaimed for the beauty of his voice, incisive musicianship, and his generosity with his audience. His performances on the opera stage, in concert with the world's leading orchestras, in the most prestigious recital venues, and in recordings have set new standards in his demanding repertoire.

Heppner studied music at the University of British Columbia. He first gained national attention in 1979 as the winner of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Talent Festival. In December 1998, CBC Television's *Something Special* featured Ben Heppner in an hour-long portrait of the artist. He is a 1988 winner of the Metropolitan Opera auditions and received Grammy® Awards in 1998 for his recording of *Die Meistersinger* on London/Decca records and in 2001 for his recording of *Les Troyens* with the London Symphony Orchestra on LSOLive. Ben Heppner is a Companion of the Order of Canada.

Ben Heppner and his wife, Karen, live in Toronto. He has three grown children and five of the most adorable, witty and intelligent grandchildren the world has ever seen. Heppner loves drinking coffee on the deck and touring the countryside on his motorcycle.



Georgian pianist **Nino Sanikidze** has held the position of a Head Coach for the Domingo-Colburn-Stein Young Artist Program at Los Angeles Opera since the program's inception in 2006. In addition to her duties with the Young Artist Program, she often serves on LAO Music staff as a pianist and a prompter, working closely with the LAO Music Director James Conlon.

Outside of LA Opera, she has been engaged with such companies as Teatro Real in Madrid, Royal Opera House Muscat, Teatro Municipal di Santiago, Washington National Opera, and Cleveland Opera. A frequent collaborator with the Broad Stage in Santa Monica, her notable concert appearances include a recital with tenor Marcelo Alvarez and a recital with mezzo-soprano Elina Garanca. In addition, she has performed in a recital with world-renowned guitarist Angel Romero at Palm Springs Life Festival.

Dr. Sanikidze often serves on judging panels for numerous vocal competitions. A sought-after clinician, she has been a principal guest coach for the USC Thornton School of Music and has conducted masterclasses at multiple universities and festivals. Since 2014 she is a Faculty Artist of Lehrer Vocal Institute at the Music Academy of the West and in 2022 joined the Opera Coaching Faculty at UCLA.

Dr. Sanikidze is the recipient of numerous honors, including the Marilyn Horne Foundation Award for Excellence in Vocal Accompanying. She received her Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Maryland, College Park, and is an alumna of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program at Washington National Opera, as well as the Music Academy of the West, Aspen Opera Center, Cleveland Art Song Festival, and SongFest.

Donations to the Utah District, Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition provide the prize monies for award winners and support the costs incurred in hosting this round of the competition. It is important to note that although the Utah District is officially sanctioned by The Metropolitan Opera and feeds the national competition finals, it does not receive funding from the national office. Thus, we must raise all needed funds for our annual Utah District Competition, which we accomplish through the generosity of local businesses and individuals.

Thank you to the following generous donors whose contributions made our November 12, 2022 competition possible.

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