

2025–26 SEASON

UTAH DISTRICT

NOVEMBER 1, 2025



LAFFONT
COMPETITION

The Metropolitan Opera



2025 Laffont Competition Finalists and Grand Finals Winners with Competition alumni Jamie Barton and Janai Brugger

MELISSA WEGNER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

NATALIE BURROWS
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

ELLIOTT PAIGE
ADMINISTRATOR

ANNE KLINE POHANKA
CHAIRMAN

LARA MARCON
PAMELA CRAVEN
MEMBER AT LARGE

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, Mexico, and South America. Some of today's greatest singers got their starts in the competition, including Jamie Barton, Stephanie Blythe, Lawrence Brownlee, Anthony Roth Costanzo, Emily D'Angelo, Michael Fabiano, Renée Fleming, Susan Graham, Ryan Speedo Green, Lisette Oropesa, Eric Owens, and Nadine Sierra.

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
Sunday, March 15, 2026

**Eric and Dominique Laffont
Grand Finals Concert**
Sunday, March 22, 2026

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 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 2025-26 SEASON

Regional Chairpersons

Jennifer Esposito
Viktoria Vizin
CENTRAL

Tom Cannon Jr.
EASTERN

Marianne Cornetti
GREAT LAKES

Melissa Gordon
Dwayne Littauer
Susan Garic Mitchell
GULF COAST

Elana Lippa
Aundi Marie Moore
Rafael Urrutia
MIDDLE ATLANTIC REGION

David Adams
Melinda J. Cannady
MIDWEST

Susan Gates
Jon Saxton
NEW ENGLAND

Stewart Law
NORTHWEST

Karen Bruggenthies
Chris Mohr
ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Andrés Rodríguez
SOUTH AMERICA

Alexis Lundy
Jason Meeks
SOUTHEAST

Connie Fullmer
Jimmy Longoria
UPPER MIDWEST

Marianne Grant
Molly Siefert
WESTERN

District Directors

Andrés Rodríguez
ARGENTINA

Richard and Emily Gibson
ARIZONA

Martin and Melissa Thoma
ARKANSAS

Bob Eastman
BOSTON

Karen D'Angelo
Leah Wietig
BUFFALO-TORONTO

Laurie Lane
Monique Spells
CAPITAL DISTRICT

Andrés Rodríguez
CHILE

Alejandro Roca
COLOMBIA

Karen and Chris Mohr
COLORADO-WYOMING

Sondra Kelly
CONNECTICUT

Reginald Allen
Marquita Lister
Timothy Nelson
MARYLAND

Swantje Knye-Levin
Joan Travis
FLORIDA

Jessica Kiger
Indra Thomas
GEORGIA

Richard Hainey-Jardine
Rhonda Sweeney
HOUSTON

Stacey Trenteseaux
Jeffrey Seppala
IDAHO-MONTANA

Viktoria Vizin
Jennifer Esposito
William Smith
ILLINOIS

Daniel Narducci
INDIANA

Donald Simonson
IOWA

David Adams
Melinda J. Cannady
KANSAS CITY

Catherine Nardolillo
KENTUCKY

Laurel Howat
Susan Malinowski
LOS ANGELES

Ragnar Conde
Octavio Rivas
MEXICO

Theodore Fellenbaum
Barbara Wiltsie
MICHIGAN

Connie Fullmer
Jimmy Longoria
MINNESOTA

Adrienne Dickson
Laura Franz
NEBRASKA

Rebeccka Coe
Susan Garic Mitchell
Joanne Mantis
NEW ORLEANS

Tom Cannon Jr.
NEW YORK

Pauline Chinnis
Steven LaCosse
NORTH CAROLINA

Othalie Graham
PHILADELPHIA

Marianne Cornetti
PITTSBURGH

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

Jocelynn McCall
Jan Simpson
TENNESSEE

Susan Young
TULSA

Julie McBeth
Carol and Gunter Radinger
UTAH

Brian Arbanas
David Morgan
WASHINGTON

National Advisor
Lisette Oropesa

Committee of Advisors
Jamie Barton
Anthony Roth Costanzo
Ryan Speedo Green

UTAH DISTRICT COMPETITION
NOVEMBER 1, 2025
LIBBY GARDNER CONCERT HALL
UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Julie McBeth, Director
Carol & Gunter Radinger, Honorary Directors
Dr. Carol Anderson, Official Pianist

ADVISORY BOARD

Michael Ballam
Karen Brookens Bruestle
Kirstin Chávez
Cindy Dewey
David Gee
Kathie Horman
Isaac Hurtado
Christopher McBeth
Diane Reich
Walter B. Rudolph
Celena Shafer
Brian Stucki

COMMITTEE

Drew W. Browning
Doyle Clayburn
Pete Floor
Beth Foley
Paula Fowler
Carolyn Klassen
Tom Klassen
Nancy Laursen
Henriette Mohebbi
Garrett Murphy
Kevin Nakatani
Anne Neeley

Each singer will begin with an aria of their choice; the judges may then request additional arias from the list of repertoire 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.

Complete and return the **Audience Choice Award** 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 completed audition 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 of winners** will take place in the reception space directly following the completion of the judges' deliberations.

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 must raise 100% of needed funds for our annual Utah District Competition, which we accomplish through the generosity of local businesses and individuals. Please visit www.utahmoncauditions.org to donate directly to the Utah District Competition.

REPERTOIRE LIST

IN PERFORMANCE ORDER

CURRENT CITY / HOMETOWN

Tori Hyman, Mezzo-soprano, 23

Fort Myers, FL / Fort Myers, FL

On the stroke of midnight!	THE ASPERN PAPERS	Argento
Voi lo sapete	CAVALLERIA RUSTICANA	Mascagni
Smanie implacabili	COSÌ FAN TUTTE	Mozart
Mon cœur s'ouvre à ta voix	SAMSON ET DALILA	Saint-Saëns

Ellie Niver, Soprano, 24

Kaysville, UT / Salem, OR

Porgi, amor	LE NOZZE DI FIGARO	Mozart
Donde lieta uscì	LA BOHÈME	Puccini
Ah, fuggi il traditor!	DON GIOVANNI	Mozart
Il est doux, il est bon	HÉRODIADE	Massenet

Samuel Lorenzo Gilbert, Tenor, 24

Bountiful, UT / Bountiful, UT

Ah, se fosse intorno al trono	LA CLEMENZA DI TITO	Mozart
Až užříš, komus koupil nevěstu	THE BARTERED BRIDE	Smetana
De' miei bollenti spiriti	LA TRAVIATA	Verdi
Kuda, kuda	EUGENE ONEGIN	Tchaikovsky

Julia Woodring, Soprano, 28

Miami, FL / Eagle River, AK

Dich, teure Halle	TANNHÄUSER	Wagner
Come scoglio	COSÌ FAN TUTTE	Mozart
Tacea la notte placida	IL TROVATORE	Verdi
Il est doux, il est bon	HÉRODIADE	Massenet

Cristian Zaragoza, Countertenor, 30

Nutley, NJ / Muleshoe, TX

Allez, laissez-moi seul	CENDRILLON	Massenet
Je suis gris	CHÉRUBIN	Massenet
Parto, parto, ma tu, ben mio	LA CLEMENZA DI TITO	Mozart
Penelope Alone	PLASTIC FLOWERS	MacDowell

Aoife Shanley, Soprano, 28

Murray, UT / Memphis, TN

Je marche sur les chemins... Obéissons quand leur voix	MANON	Massenet
Nun eilt herbei ... Verführer!	DIE LUSTIGEN WEIBER VON WINDSOR	Nicolai
Da tempeste il legno infranto	GIULIO CESARE	Handel
Come, now a roundel	A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM	Britten

Kayleigh Tolley, Mezzo-soprano, 24 Boston, MA / Waldoboro, ME

Smanie implacabili	COSÌ FAN TUTTE	Mozart
Must the winter come so soon	VANESSA	Barber
O pallida, che un giorno	L'AMICO FRITZ	Mascagni
Que fais-tu, blanche tourterelle	ROMÉO ET JULIETTE	Gounod

Ashley Stewart, Soprano, 20 Provo, UT / Queen Creek, AZ

Ah! Je veux vivre	ROMÉO ET JULIETTE	Gounod
Oh! quante volte	I CAPULETI E I MONTECCHI	Bellini
Deh vieni, non tardar	LE NOZZE DI FIGARO	Mozart
Mio caro bene!	RODELINDA	Handel

Jacob Kenison, Tenor, 28 Salt Lake City, UT / Tooele, UT

Ich baue ganz	DIE ENTFÜHRUNG AUS DEM SERAIL	Mozart
La fleur que tu m'avais jetée	CARMEN	Bizet
Donna non vidi mai	MANON LESCAUT	Puccini
En fermant les yeux	MANON	Massenet

Sydney Crandall, Soprano, 21 Provo, UT / Mesa, AZ

Ah! Où va la jeune indoue	LAKMÉ	Delibes
Ach, ich fühl's	DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE	Mozart
Tornami a vagheggiar	ALCINA	Handel
Glitter and be gay	CANDIDE	Bernstein

Olivia Newcomb, Mezzo-soprano, 27 Portland, OR / Hood River, OR

Sein wir wieder gut	ARIADNE AUF NAXOS	R. Strauss
Una voce poco fa	IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA	Rossini
Que fais-tu, blanche tourterelle	ROMÉO ET JULIETTE	Gounod
Open Your Eyes	THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF KAVALIER & CLAY	Bates

Isabella Thurgood, Soprano, 22 Provo, UT / Springfield, VA

Deh vieni, non tardar	LE NOZZE DI FIGARO	Mozart
Be kind and courteous	A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM	Britten
Wo bin ich?	HÄNSEL UND GRETEL	Humperdinck
O mio babbino caro	GIANNI SCHICCHI	Puccini

Ethan Fasnacht, Baritone, 27 Galveston, TX / Ephrata, PA

I remember long ago	THE GREAT GATSBY	Harbison
Mein Sehnen, mein Wähnen	DIE TOTE STADT	Korngold
Minnie, dalla mia casa son partito	LA FANCIULLA DEL WEST	Puccini
Avant de quitter ces lieux	FAUST	Gounod

Jordan Knapick, Soprano, 27 Seattle, WA / Rockford, IL

Quel guardo il cavaliere...So anch'io la virtù magica	DON PASQUALE	Donizetti
Ah! Je veux vivre	ROMÉO ET JULIETTE	Gounod
He's always left	OF MICE AND MEN	Floyd
Mein Herr Marquis	DIE FLEDERMAUS	J. Strauss

BREAK FOR LUNCH—COMPETITION TO RESUME AT 2:00PM

Daniel Perez-Recendez, Tenor, 28 Sandy, UT / Sandy, UT

Del destino	FLORENCIA EN EL AMAZONAS	Catán
È la solita storia del pastore	L'ARLESIANA	Cilèa
Ella mi fu rapita... Parmi veder le lagrime	RIGOLETTO	Verdi
Salut! demeure chaste et pure	FAUST	Gounod

Savannah Parsons, Soprano, 26 Lehi, UT / Bakersfield, CA

Quando m'en vo'	LA BOHÈME	Puccini
Sì, mi chiamano Mimi	LA BOHÈME	Puccini
Ah! Je ris de me voir	FAUST	Gounod
Have peace, Jo	LITTLE WOMEN	Adamo

Stephen Pitters, Countertenor, 26 Los Angeles, CA / Orlando, FL

Dawn, still darkness	FLIGHT	Dove
I know a bank where the wild thyme blows	A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM	Britten
Svegliatevi nel core	GIULIO CESARE	Handel
Stille amare	TOLOMEO	Handel

Madison Paez, Soprano, 24 Provo, UT / Billings, MT

Mein Herr Marquis	DIE FLEDERMAUS	J. Strauss
Quel guardo il cavaliere...So anch'io la virtù magica	DON PASQUALE	Donizetti
In uomini, in soldati	COSÌ FAN TUTTE	Mozart
Willow, where we met together	THE BALLAD OF BABY DOE	Moore

Tavita Ah Loe, Tenor, 23 Orem, UT / Warfordsburg, PA

Au Mont Ida, trois déesses	LA BELLE HÉLÈNE	Offenbach
Se di lauri il crine adorno	MITRIDATE, RE DI PONTO	Mozart
Languir per una bella	L'ITALIANA IN ALGERI	Rossini
Quanto è bella	L'ELISIR D'AMORE	Donizetti

Linnea Miner Mott, Soprano, 28 Providence, UT / Pleasant Grove, UT

Take me back	OUR TOWN	Corem
Les oiseaux dans la charmille	LES CONTES D'HOFFMANN	Offenbach
Tornami a vagheggiar	ALCINA	Handel
Der Hölle Rache	DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE	Mozart

Julia Holoman, Mezzo-soprano, 24 Salt Lake City, UT / Raleigh, NC

Sein wir wieder gut	ARIADNE AUF NAXOS	R. Strauss
We had one room in Lambeth Marsh...	ELIZABETH CREE	Puccini
Werther! Qui m'aurait dit...Ces lettres!	WERTHER	Massenet
Di te mi rido	ALCINA	Handel

Hailey Hyein Ji, Soprano, 28 New York, NY / Seoul, South Korea

Me voilà seule...Comme autrefois	LES PÊCHEURS DE PERLES	Bizet
Presentation of the Rose	DER ROSENKAVALIER	R. Strauss
Tornami a vagheggiar	ALCINA	Handel
Ah, tardai troppo...O luce di quest' anima	LINDA DI CHAMOUNIX	Donizetti

Anthony Ruiz, Tenor, 27 American Fork, UT / American Fork, UT

Pourquoi me réveiller	WERTHER	Massenet
Avete torto!...Firenze è come un albero fiorito	GIANNI SCHICCHI	Puccini
Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön	DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE	Mozart
Lonely house	STREET SCENE	Weill

McKenzie Mulberry, Soprano, 23 Provo, UT / Pearland, TX

Da schlägt die Abschiedsstunde	DER SCHAUSPIELDIREKTOR	Mozart
Les oiseaux dans la charmille	LES CONTES D'HOFFMANN	Offenbach
Be kind and courteous	A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM	Britten
Je suis Titania	MIGNON	Thomas

Eden Durham, Mezzo-soprano, 23

Highland, UT / Spanish Fork, UT

Va! Laisse couler mes larmes	WERTHER	Massenet
Que fais-tu, blanche tourterelle	ROMÉO ET JULIETTE	Gounod
Voi che sapete	LE NOZZE DI FIGARO	Mozart
Parto, parto, ma tu, ben mio	LA CLEMENZA DI TITO	Mozart

OFFICIAL PIANIST



Dr. Carol Anderson
Official Pianist

Dr. Carol Anderson joined the University of Utah School of Music faculty as professor of diction, vocal repertoire, and vocal collaboration, following 22 seasons as Principal Coach with Utah Symphony | Utah Opera (USUO). Since 2002, she has also been an integral member of the music staff at The Santa Fe Opera, widely regarded as the nation's leading summer opera festival.

Renowned for her work as a master teacher and clinician, Dr. Anderson has led master classes across the country—both in person and virtually—and has served as a featured panelist for OPERA America, contributing to national conversations on audition preparation and institutional best practices. Her passion for audience engagement is evident in her role as presenter of Utah Opera's acclaimed Preludes and as a lecturer for The Santa Fe Opera's Prelude Dinners.

Prior to her tenure with Utah Opera, Dr. Anderson served as Chorus Master and Music Administrator at Orlando Opera, where she also conducted performances of *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. She has held music staff positions with leading institutions including Houston Grand Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Seattle Opera, Sarasota Opera, Brevard Music Center, Nashville Opera, and Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. In addition, she completed two seasons as an apprentice coach with both the Houston Grand Opera Studio and the Aspen Opera Theater Center.

An active performer and advocate for underrepresented composers, Dr. Anderson recently collaborated with mezzo-soprano Katharine Goeldner in *Silenced Voices: Music by Female Composers of the Holocaust*, performed at the American Gothic Festival and for the Wagner Society of Santa Fe.

Originally from Houston, Texas, Dr. Anderson holds a Doctor of Musical Arts in Keyboard Collaborative Arts from the University of Southern California, Master of Music in Accompanying and Chamber Music from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, and Bachelor of Music in Church Music, Piano Emphasis, from Baylor University.

OTHER PIANISTS

Lawrence Gee is the pianist for Jacob Kenison.

Amy Glenn is the pianist for Linnea Miner Mott.

JUDGES



Beth Clayton

Mezzo-Soprano
Integrative Performance
Coach

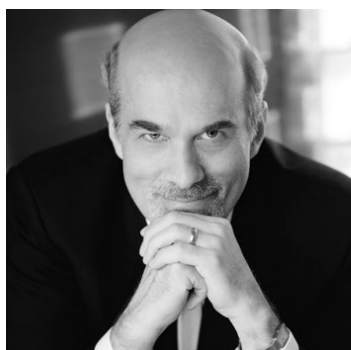
Mezzo-Soprano **Beth Clayton** led an active solo career for over twenty years, singing more than fifty leading roles with companies both in the U.S. and abroad. Particularly known for her interpretation of the title role of *Carmen*, she also created a number of roles in world premieres, including John Adams' *Doctor Atomic*, Thomas Adès' *America*, Howard Shore's *The Fly*, William Bolcom's *A Wedding*, Carlisle Floyd's *Cold Sassy Tree*, Deborah Drattell's *Lilith*, and Lembit Beecher's *I have no stories to tell you*. On the concert stage, she made appearances with leading orchestras ranging from the New York Philharmonic and the Cleveland Orchestra to The Israeli Philharmonic. Her discography includes the Grammy-nominated recording of The Glimmerglass Festival production of *The Mines of Sulphur* as well as *Five Songs of Bernstein* with The Minnesota Orchestra. She holds two bachelor's degrees in both Voice Performance and Music Education from Southern Methodist University, a Master of Music in Voice Performance from the Manhattan School of Music, and most recently a Master of Arts degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Antioch University. She currently combines her performance experience with the platform of total mental well-being in a private practice geared toward the specific needs of performing artists but also those in the LGBTQ community and beyond. Ms. Clayton was a Sullivan Award Winner and a 1995 finalist in the Metropolitan National Council Auditions (the precursor of the Laffont Competition) and has now become an adjudicator for the competition. She is an alumna of The Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Program and the Houston Opera Studio. She is a native of Arkansas and now resides primarily in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and secondarily in New York City.



Paul Hopper

Senior Director,
Artistic Planning
LA Opera

Paul Hopper is LA Opera's Senior Director, Artistic Planning. His duties in Los Angeles include overseeing all casting for the company and serving as the artistic and strategic head of the company's Domingo-Colburn-Stein Young Artist Program. For the five seasons before, he was the Associate Artistic Administrator at The Metropolitan Opera, where he worked on the casting of over 200 performances annually, including the GRAMMY award-winning productions of *Porgy and Bess*, *Akhnaten*, *Fire Shut up in My Bones*, and *Champion*. Previously, he was the Assistant Artistic Director at Houston Grand Opera, where he assisted in long term artistic planning and casting, managed special artistic initiatives, and guided a variety of audiences in learning more about opera, including numerous events in support of the company's first *Ring Cycle*. As principal dramaturg for the company, he worked closely with composers and librettists in the commissioning and development of new works. He regularly serves on the juries for international vocal competitions, including the Metropolitan Opera's Eric and Dominique Laffont Competition, the Queen Sonja International Music Competition, the International Hans Gabor Belvedere Singing Competition, International Stanisław Moniuszko Vocal Competition, and the Tenor Viñas Competition. A graduate of the Eastman School of Music and the University of Houston, Paul is also Artistic Advisor for the Lakes Area Music Festival. He previously held positions at The Santa Fe Opera and ADA Artist Management.



Mark Schnaible

Bass-baritone

Voice teacher

During a performing career of over thirty-five years, Bass-baritone **Mark Schnaible** impressed audiences with his attention to musically- and dramatically-detailed interpretations of both the operatic and concert repertoires. A native of Moline, Iowa, he has enjoyed professional triumphs in Europe, the Middle East, and across the United States. He currently serves on the voice faculties of the Curtis Institute of Music, Manhattan School of Music, Brooklyn College Conservatory of Music, Metropolitan Opera–Lindemann, Washington National Opera–Cafritz, and maintains a private studio in New York City. The students from his voice studio have been chosen for numerous young artist programs and have distinguished themselves as winners of numerous competitions. His professional students currently sing at The Metropolitan Opera, Berlin Staatsoper, Berlin Deutsche Oper, Berlin Komische Oper, The Royal Opera House Covent Garden, English National Opera, Dresden Staatsoper, Barcelona Liceu, Israeli Opera, as well as numerous regional houses in the United States and Europe. Additionally, they are Grammy winners and have recorded for Chandos, Cezanne, Harmonia Mundi, and Deutsche Grammophon. Read more at markschnaible.com, msmny.edu/faculty/mark-schnaible, and curtis.edu/person/mark-schnaible.

Thank you to the following generous donors whose contributions made this November 1, 2025, Utah District Competition possible.

BENEFACTOR

Drew W. Browning in memory of Judy Watts Brady

Ruth S. Walker Trust



The Utah District, Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition Advisory Board and Committee gratefully acknowledge the continued partnership of The University of Utah School of Music, which donates the use of this beautiful facility for the competition.

PLATINUM

Julie & Christopher McBeth

Mills Publishing (in-kind)

GOLD

John & Julie Wright Costa
Dan Deniro

Thomas & Carolyn Klassen
Leslie Peterson

Walter & Marilyn Rudolph

SPONSOR

anonymous

David R. Dean

Paula Fowler

Edwina H. Green



Sydney Crandall



Eden Durham



Ethan Fasnacht



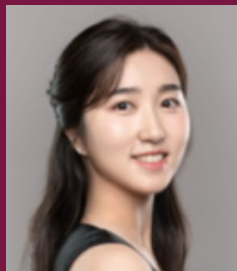
Samuel L. Gilbert



Julia Holoman



Tori Hyman



Hailey Hyein Ji



Jacob Kenison



Jordan Knapick



Tavita Ah Loe



Linnea Miner Mott



McKenzie Mulberry



Olivia Newcomb



Ellie Niver



Madison Paez



Savannah Parsons



Daniel Perez-Recendez



Stephen Pitters



Anthony Ruiz



Aoife Shanley



Ashley Stewart



Isabella Thurgood



Kayleigh Tolley



Julia Woodring



Cristian Zaragoza

UTAH DISTRICT



LAFFONT
COMPETITION

The Metropolitan Opera