

Denver Philharmonic Orchestra

GUEST VOCALISTS

Friday February 17, 2012 7:30 pm KPOF HALL



Gene Stenger, tenor, originally from Pittsburgh, PA, is currently completing his Master of Music Degree in Voice Performance at Colorado State University. While at CSU, Gene has performed the roles of Adolfo Pirelli and The Beadle in *Sweeney Todd*, Marco Palmieri (*The Gondoliers*) and Don Curzio (*Le*

Nozze di Figaro). As an Apprentice Artist with Opera Fort Collins, he most recently performed Kaspar in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, and has also performed Remendado (*Carmen*), Prince Yamadori (*Madama Butterfly*) and the partial roles of Camille (*The Merry Widow*) and Karl (*The Student Prince*) for the 2010 OFC Viennese Arias concert.

Gene made numerous debut performances during the summer of 2011. He made his international debut performing in an Opera Scenes Exchange Program with students of East China Normal University in Shanghai, China, followed by performing the role of Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*) with Opera Orvieto in Orvieto, Italy. After returning from Italy, Gene made his regional debut with The Fort Collins Symphony as the tenor soloist in "A Night at the Movies: Circa 1918." An avid oratorio performer, Stenger most recently performed as the tenor soloist in Handel's *Messiah* with Boulder Messiah Chorale and Orchestra. He was also the tenor soloist in Bach's *Magnificat* in D Major, BWV 243 with The National Collegiate Choral Organization at CSU under the baton of world-renowned Bach conductor, Helmuth Rilling.

Upcoming engagements include performing as the tenor soloist in Bach *Cantata 78* with Fort Collins Bach Festival, Peter Quint (*Turn of the Screw*) with CSU Opera Theatre, participant in the Junges Stuttgarter Bach Ensemble with the Internationale Bachakademie in Stuttgart, Germany under special invitation by Maestro Helmuth Rilling, and covering Count Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* with Opera Fort Collins.

Gene Stenger will perform BACH: Deposuit Potentes from *Magnificat* & HANDEL: Comfort Ye, Every Valley from *Messiah*



Melissa Wimbish, soprano. "...simply incredible....the highlight of the entire evening..." were the quotes from Boulder, Colorado's *Daily Camera* when describing the

young lyric coloratura, **Melissa Wimbish** in her role as Cunegonde with the University of Colorado's production of *Candide*. Of her recent appearance in a master class with world-renowned mezzo-soprano Marilyn Horne, *The Baltimore Sun* recognized her vocal presentation with the remarks: "Wimbish was cranking out the *bel canto* with extra "bel." A master class, indeed."

Melissa Wimbish will make her professional operatic debut with the Baltimore Lyric Opera in Mozart's masterpiece *Le nozze di Figaro* in March 2012. She recently made her Kennedy Center recital debut as a winner of the *2011 Vocal Arts Society Discovery Recital Series* and her international debut in the role of Queen with the first Seoul International Opera Festival in Seoul, Korea under the direction of James Marvel. Her technical precision, warm vocal tone and glowing stage presence have earned a number of performance engagements both on and off the opera stage. A regular featured soloist with the Metropolitan State College of Denver Symphony Orchestra, she performed Mozart's "Vorrei spiegarvi, O Dio!" as a concerto competition winner as well as the soprano soloist in both Orff's *Carmina Burana* and David Brunner's *Ecstatic Songs*. She was invited to be the soprano in the world premiere of "Venus Transiens" by composer Fran Pierson and will return in January 2012 to premiere Cherise Leiter's *Songs of Jane Austen*. Opera productions Serail with Chesapeake Concert Opera (Blondchen cover), Die Fledermaus with Peabody Opera (Adele cover), as well as the monodrama for soprano by Poulenc, *La voix humaine*.

As an actress, Ms. Wimbish has proven that she is fully capable of capturing an audience with or without music. Her roster of theater experience boasts two "Best of Baltimore" companies including Single Carrot Theatre and Glass Mind Theatre.

She premiered the role of Laura in the original one-act by Rebecca Wyrick, *Newer Stranger* in September 2010. This was followed by another premiere as Andy Two in Rich Espey's original work *Three Andys* based on the life of Andy Warhol in conjunction with the Baltimore Museum of Art's *Andy Warhol: The Last Decade* exhibit. She performed the role of the Cuban Singer in Single Carrot Theatre's most recent production, *Linus e's Alora* by Andrew Irons.

In competition, Ms. Wimbish was a winner of the *Denver Philharmonic Young Artist Competition*, *Dante Alighieri Music Scholarship Competition*, and *Denver Lyric Opera Guild Scholarship Competition*, a second-prize winner at the *Kennett Square Symphony Competition* and a second-prize winner in the *Lied* division of the *Graduate Vocal Arts Competition at Metropolitan State College of Denver*. Ms. Wimbish was a finalist in Peabody Conservatory's prestigious *Sylvia Green Concerto Competition* and a second-round semi-finalist in the international *Competizione dell'Opera* held in Dresden.

Memorable equally for her intelligence as she is for her performing, her scholarly recognition has been in the form of awards such as the *L. Rudolph Quinn Scholarship*, *Metro Scholars Award* and the *Excellence in Musicology Award*, which was granted for an original essay and public presentation on Béla Bartók's opera, *Duke Bluebeard's Castle*. Ms. Wimbish received her Master of Music in vocal performance from the University of Colorado at Boulder. She received her Bachelor of Music in voice from the Metropolitan State College of Denver where she graduated *summa cum laude*. Under the tutelage of world-renowned soprano Phyllis Bryn-Julson she is currently pursuing her Graduate Performance Diploma in Chamber Music at the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University where she is the proud recipient of the *Douglas and Hilda Perl Goodwin Endowed Scholarship Fund for Opera*.

Melissa Wimbish will perform CHAUSSON: Chanson perpetuelle



Amy June Cain is a lyric spinto soprano who hails from Kansas. She found her passion for music at an early age. The winner of many district and regional NATS competitions, Amy received a full vocal scholarship at Wichita State University where she studied with Dr. Vernon Yenne.

After completing her B.A. in Music, Amy moved to Colorado and graduated from Boulder College of

Massage Therapy. While working as a massage therapist, Amy resumed her vocal studies with Dr. Christina Lynn-Craig and will participate in the Denver Lyric Opera Guild and Metropolitan Opera Guild auditions this season. Favorite roles include Countessa Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and Beth in *Little Women*. Amy is an active performer in recitals and oratorio work throughout the front range as a freelance soloist at churches in the metro area. Amy is very excited to have this wonderful experience of working with a community orchestra.

Amy June Cain will perform OFFENBACH: Elle a fui, la tourterelle from The Tales of Hoffman.



Anna Montgomery, mezzo-soprano, is excited to be in the midst of her senior year at Holy Family High School. Despite being only 18 years old, she has already

accomplished much in the world of song and theatre. Already she has performed a solo with David Benoit and the Colorado Symphony Orchestra and as a soloist in Carnegie Hall under the direction of renowned composer and arranger, Kirby Shaw.

Her interest in opera began when she was a part of the child's chorus in Bizet's *Carmen* at the Ellie Caulkin's Opera House. The following season, she performed in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* as Spirit Number 3. From there she has gone on to study classical voice with Mary Louise Burke and James Myers. In 2010 and 2011, she was a National Semifinalist in the Classical Singer competition.

Choral music plays a large part in Anna's life. She is currently a member of her high school choir, The Fermata Armada, from which she received the National School Choir Award last year. She also sings with Dynamix singers and several choral groups at her Church. This year she is honored to join the Colorado All State Choir for her second year. Prior to high school, she was a member of the Colorado Children's Chorale. With the Chorale, she traveled to perform in places like Florida and Brazil. She also played the lead role, Sarah, in the world premiere musical, *A Stream of Voices*, commissioned by the Chorale and composed by Gene Scheer and David Shire.

Anna spends a large amount of her time at school participating in school theatre productions. In her

sophomore year, she played the lead role of Marian in *The Music Man*. She has also participated in numerous other shows, including *Guy and Dolls*, *The Sound of Music*, and *Midsummer Night's Dream*. This spring she plans to participate in her school's production of *West Side Story*.

Anna wants to thank all of her friends and family for offering their constant support. Thank you especially to Mom and Dad not only for being number one fans, but also for being the best parents a girl could ask for.

Anna Montgomery will perform GOUNOD: Que-fais-tu-blanche tourterelle from *Romeo et Juliette*.