

12th ANNUAL
HANDEL ARIA
COMPETITION



FRIDAY, AUGUST 8, 2025
7:30 pm

Grace Episcopal Church
Madison, Wisconsin

HandelAriaCompetition.org



WISCONSIN
CHAMBER
ORCHESTRA

Handel's Messiah

Bethel Lutheran Church, downtown Madison
Festival Choir of Madison

November 21 at 7:00 PM
November 22 at 2:00 PM

Kick off the holiday season early with a beloved tradition.

Composed in just 24 days by George Frideric Handel, *Messiah* is one of the most frequently performed classical works in the world. Though rooted in religious texts, its message is universal—and Handel intended it to be experienced in the concert hall.

TICKETS: 608.258.4141 | wcoconcerts.org/messiah

2025

HANDEL ARIA COMPETITION



Finalists

Elisse Albian, *soprano*
Freddy Bonilla, *baritone*
Sam Denler, *tenor*
Paulina Francisco, *soprano*
Morgan Mastrangelo, *tenor*
Trevor Scott, *tenor*
Jeremy Weiss, *baritone*

Madison Bach Musicians

Micah Behr, Leanne Kelso,
Kangwon Lee Kim, and Craig Trompeter
Director: Trevor Stephenson

Judges

Mimmi Fulmer
Taya König-Tarasevich
Andrew Megill

Artistic Director

Sarah Brailey

Friday, August 8, 2025 | 7:30pm
Madison, Wisconsin



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Classical Symphonies: *Storm & Stress ... Sunny Lyricism ... the Daring Turn*
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15th Annual Holiday Concert: *Christmas with the Baroque Masters*
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Bach—Mass in B minor
March 28 & 29, 2026

Princely Architects: *Bach, Beethoven, and Frank Lloyd Wright*
May 9 & 10, 2026

Trevor Stephenson—ARTISTIC DIRECTOR Kangwon Kim—ASSISTANT ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

MADISONBACHMUSICIANS.ORG

PROGRAM

Sam Denler, tenor

“Costui si custodisca...Tuo drudo
è mio rivale” from *Rodelinda*

“Total eclipse!” from *Samson*

Fredy Bonilla, baritone

“Tis Dioclesian’s natal day...
Go, my faithful soldier, go”
from *Theodora*

“Sibillar gli angui d’Aletto”
from *Rinaldo*

Trevor Scott, tenor

“Fato tiranno e crudo” from *Flavio*

“Comfort ye my people...
Ev’ry valley shall be exalted”
from *Messiah*

Paulina Francisco, soprano

“O Sleep, why dost thou leave me?”
from *Semele*

“Quanto più fien tenaci...Scherza,
in mar la navicella” from *Lotario*

INTERMISSION

Morgan Mastrangelo, tenor

“Di ad Irene” from *Atalanta*

“Deeper, and deeper still...
Waft her, angels, through the skies”
from *Jephtha*

Jeremy Weiss, baritone

“The hand of Time pulls down...
Loathsome urns, disclose your
treasure” from *The Triumph of
Time and Truth*

“Tirannia gli diede il regno”
from *Rodelinda*

Elisse Albian, soprano

“Felicissimo punto...
A dispetto di sorte crudele”
from *Aminta e Fillide*

“I know that my Redeemer liveth”
from *Messiah*

TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Sam Denler

“Costui si custodisca...Tuo drudo è mio rivale” from *Rodelinda*

Synopsis: Grimoaldo, the usurping king, allows Rodelinda one final embrace with her husband, Bertarido (who Grimoaldo believes to be dead), before revealing his intention to execute Bertarido, subtly implying that Rodelinda’s display of affection will only seal Bertarido’s fate.

Recit: Costui si custodisca; e tu m’ascolta;
o tuo drudo, o tuo sposo, ancor una volta
lo stringi al sen, te lo consento anch’io;
sien legittimi o no,
gli dian gli amplessi
tuoi l’ultimo addio.

Aria: Tuo drudo è mio rivale,
tuo sposo è mio nemico,
e morte avrà.
L’amplesso tuo fatale,
legittimo o impudico,
or reo ti fa.

Recit: *This one let him be guarded; and you listen to me;
whether your lover, or your husband, once more
embrace him, I grant you that;
be they legitimate or not,
let your embraces
be a final farewell.*

Aria: *Your lover is my rival,
your husband is my enemy,
and death he will have.
your fatal embrace,
legitimate or immodest,
makes you guilty.*

“Total eclipse!” from *Samson*

Synopsis: Delilah’s betrayal has brought about Samson’s tragic state. After coaxing the secret of his strength from him, she cut his hair while he slept, allowing the Philistines to capture and blind him. In “Total Eclipse,” the now-blinded Samson laments his profound despair and the utter darkness that has enveloped his life, seeing no hope or joy in his physical and spiritual blindness.

Aria: Total eclipse!

No sun, no moon!
All dark amidst the blaze of noon!
Oh, glorious light!
No cheering ray to glad my eyes with welcome day!
Why thus depriv’d Thy prime decree?
Sun, moon, and stars are dark to me!

Fredy Bonilla

“Tis Dioclesian’s natal day...Go, my faithful soldier, go” from *Theodora*

Synopsis: Valens, the Roman governor of Antioch, orders a festival in honor of Emperor Dioclesian.

Recit: ‘Tis Dioclesian’s natal day. —

Proclaim, throughout the bounds of Antioch,
A feast, and solemn sacrifice to Jove. —
Whoso disdains to join the sacred rites,
Shall feel our wrath, in chastisement, or death.
And this, Septimius, take you in charge.

Aria: Go, my faithful soldier, go,

Let the fragrant incense rise,
To Jove, great ruler of the skies.

“Sibillar gli angui d’Aletto” from *Rinaldo*

Synopsis: In Jerusalem during the First Crusade, Argante, the Saracen King of Jerusalem, enters the city in a triumphal chariot pulled by horses, and is followed by a great number of guards on foot and men on horses, to meet with Goffredo, leader of the Crusader army.

Aria: Sibillar gli angui d’Aletto,

E latrar vorace Scilla,
Parmi udir d’intorno a me.

Rio velen mi serpe in petto,
Né ancor languida favilla
Di timor, pena mi diè.

Aria: The hissing snakes of envies locks

And Scilla barking from her rocks,
Cou’d I around me hear,

Shou’d stabbing Pain invade my Breast,
And racking Poyson break my Rest,
This Heart wou’d scorn to fear.

Trevor Scott

“Fato tiranno e crudo” from *Flavio*

Synopsis: Ugone laments the cruelty of fate’s injustice after being caught in a political and emotional conflict that forces him into a tragic dilemma.

Aria: Fato tiranno e crudo

Ogn’ora danni miei
Armato ti vedei, per tormentarmi

La mia virtù fu scudo
All’empietà del Fato
Ma egli è ogn’or parato, a saettarmi.

Aria: Tyrant and cruel fate!

I have ever found thee
Arm’d to torment me.

My virtue was still a shield
Against the rigour of fate,
Always prepar’d to wound me.

“Comfort ye, my people...Ev’ry valley shall be exalted” from *Messiah*

Synopsis: In this tender recitative, the tenor conveys God’s message of consolation to his people, drawn from Isaiah’s prophecy. It leads directly into “Ev’ry valley shall be exalted,” a jubilant aria that foretells the coming of the Messiah, using vivid musical imagery to depict the transformation of the world in preparation for his arrival.

Recit: Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.
Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her,
that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned.
The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness;
prepare ye the way of the Lord;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Aria: Ev'ry valley shall be exalted,
and ev'ry mountain and hill made low;
the crooked straight and the rough places plain.

Paulina Francisco

“O Sleep, why dost thou leave me?” from *Semele*

Synopsis: Semele, a mortal princess and mistress to Jupiter (King of the Gods), has just awoken from the most wonderful dream, in which she envisioned a future with her lover. Tricked by the cruel impermanence of Sleep, she wakes longing for him and the life of her dream world.

Aria: O Sleep, why dost thou leave me?
Why thy visionary joys remove?
O Sleep, again, deceive me –
To my arms restore my wondering love.

“Quanto più fien tenaci...Scherza, in mar la navicella” from *Lotario*

Synopsis: From imprisonment in a dungeon, Empress Adelaide sings of her strength and steadfastness as a warning to her captors. Through the allegory of a ship, which is frightened and sinks amidst the turbulent waves, Adelaide proclaims her intention to withstand the storm.

Recit: Quanto più fien tenaci
Le catene onde avvinto
Dall' altrui Crudeltà sarà il mio piede,
Vie più care saranno al alma mia
E il carcere più grato ancor mi fia

Aria: Scherza, in mar la navicella
Mentre ride aura feconda;
Ma se poi fiera procella
Turba il Ciel, sconvolge l'onda
Và perduta a naufragar

Non così questo mio core
Cederà d'un empia sorte
Allo sdegno, ed al furore,
Che per anco in faccia a morte
Sà da grande trionfar

Recit: How much stronger shall I persist
*entangled in the wrapping waves
of Cruelty's imprisonment,
My soul shall find more precious ways [to persist]
and the prison will be gracious to me.*

Aria: The little ship plays in the sea
*Whilst the air laughs along;
But when a boasting storm
disrupts the sky and flusters the waves,
It will be lost to shipwreck*

*It is not in my heart
To concede to such a wicked fate,
To indignation, and rage,
That still, in the face of death,
knows how to triumph.*

Morgan Mastrangelo

“Di ad Irene” from *Atalanta*

Synopsis: Aminta the shepherd loves Irene, but she pretends to be in love with King Meleagro as a means of torturing Aminta, consistently treating him with disdain. In “Di ad Irene”, Aminta wavers between calling her cruel names and desperately pleading that she'll never find another heart as devoted as his.

Aria: Di ad Irene, tiranna, infedele ria,
crudel d'un mostro peggiore...
Ah, no... Dille, dille piuttosto,
dille ch'un core qual è il mio,
più trovar non potrà.

Dille, barbara, dille...
Ma ché?
No, che basta
alla pura mia fè,
di veder quei begli occhi sereni
con la prima amorosa pietà.

Aria: Tell Irene, tyrant, faithless wretch,
cruel one worse than a monster...
Ah, no... Tell her, tell her rather,
tell her that a heart such as mine,
she will never find again.
Tell her, cruel one, tell her...
But what?

No, it is enough
for my pure faith,
to see those beautiful serene eyes
with the first loving pity.

“Deeper, and deeper still...Waft her, angels, through the skies” from *Jephtha*

Synopsis: The Israelite leader, Jephtha, vows to God that if he is granted victory over the Ammonites, he will sacrifice the first object he sees upon his return. Jephtha wins the battle and returns home, only to be met by his beloved daughter, Iphis. Devastated by the realization that he must sacrifice his daughter, he is overcome with grief—torn between his duty and his love for his daughter. In this moment of sorrow and resignation, Jephtha sings “Waft her angels to the skies,” beseeching angels to receive her spirit.

Recit: Deeper, and deeper still, thy goodness, child,
Pierceth a father’s bleeding heart, and checks
The cruel sentence on my falt’ring tongue.
Oh, let me whisper it to the raging winds,
Or howling deserts; for the ears of men
It is too shocking. Yet have I not vow’d?
And can I think the great Jehovah sleeps,
Like Chemosh and such fabled deities?
Ah no; Heav’n heard my thoughts, and wrote them down;
It must be so. ‘Tis this that racks my brain,
And pours into my breast a thousand pangs
That lash me into madness. Horrid thought!
My only daughter, so dear a child,
Doom’d by a father! Yes, the vow is past,
And Gilead hath triumph’d o’er his foes.
Therefore, tomorrow’s dawn... I can no more.

Aria: Waft her, angels, through the skies,
Far above yon azure plain,
Glorious there, like you, to rise,
There, like you, for ever reign.

Jeremy Weiss

“The hand of Time pulls down...Loathsome urns, disclose your treasure”
from *The Triumph of Time and Truth*

Synopsis: In “Loathsome urns, disclose your treasure”, the character Time scorns Beauty by invoking the imagery of urns containing the remains of the dead, emphasizing the transient nature of beauty and the certainty of death. This aria serves as a poignant reminder of mortality and the futility of earthly pleasures.

Recit: The hand of Time pulls down
The great colossus of the sun,
The stone built castle, cloud-capt tower,
And shall Beauty oppose my power?

Aria: Loathsome urns, disclose your treasure,
Pride and Pleasure,
Unveil to me,
That I may see,
If now any
Spark of Beauty still remains?

No, all dark as night!
Only worms their prey enjoying,
Dust and ashes still destroying,
That which greedy time disdains.

“Tirannia gli diede il regno” from *Rodelinda*

Synopsis: In this aria, Garibaldo coldly and emphatically defends his insistence that Grimoaldo kill Rodelinda’s child Flavio, asserting that tyranny grants power and that cruelty, not compassion, is the true foundation of rule. Sung in D minor, the aria’s bold and dissonant harmonies reflect Garibaldo’s ruthless ambition and Machiavellian outlook.

Aria: Tirannia gli diedi il regno,
gliel conservi crudeltà.

Del regnar base e sestogeno
è il rigor, non la pietà.

Aria: Tyranny gave him the kingdom,
cruelty will allow him to keep it.

The basis and foundation of reigning
is rigor, not pity.

Elisse Albian

“Felicissimo punto... A dispetto di sorte crudele” from *Aminta e Fillide*

Synopsis: Aminta, a young shepherd, is hopelessly in love with Fillide, the most beautiful nymph with a heart that is not so easy to win over. After ceaseless attempts to woo Fillide to no avail, Aminta ceases his attempts only to overhear Fillide expressing a change of heart. Overcome with excitement from hearing this news, he sings of his love, joy, and eagerness to prove his fidelity to Fillide.

Recit: Felicissimo punto, in cui nel seno la mia
fiamma ti giunge,
e l'amoroso dardo il cor ti punge.

Aria: A dispetto di sorte crudele, costante e fedele
quest' alma sarà.

Che se Filli ad amarmi si muove, son chiare le
prove di sua fedeltà.

Recit: Ah, the happy moment when
my flame reaches your breast and love's dart
pierces your heart.

Aria: Despite cruel fate, my soul will be constant
and faithful.

Since Fillide is moved to love me, my fidelity
has been vindicated.

“I know that my Redeemer liveth” from *Messiah*

Synopsis: Following the depiction of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ, this aria describes the redemption of humanity that is made possible through Christ's resurrection.

Aria: I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand
at the latter day upon the earth.

And tho' worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.
For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep.

THE FINALISTS



Elisse Albian

Praised by *OperaWire* for their “bright and glimmering soprano”, Elisse Albian finds delight in presenting oratorios, opera, choral compositions, and all that resonates in between. An ardent advocate for the collaborative essence of musical creation, Elisse places immense value on versatility and the inherent instrumental qualities of the human voice.

Elisse's artistic collaborations extend to prestigious ensembles such as The Choir of Trinity Wall Street, Seraphic Fire, Apollo's Fire, The Clarion Choir, Ensemble Altera, Voices of Ascension, Artefact Ensemble, and The Benedict XVI Choir. Elisse also frequently collaborates with opera companies such as Opera Lafayette and Teatro Nuovo. A crowning achievement in Elisse's journey was securing first place at the Lyndon Woodside Oratorio-Solo Competition hosted by the Oratorio Society of New York.

In the 2024-2025 season, Elisse performed frequently as a soloist. Season highlights included performances of BWV 32 *Liebster Jesu, mein Verlangen*, Handel's *Messiah*, J.C. Bach's cantata *Meine Freundin, du bist schön*, Bach's *Ascension Oratorio* with Trinity Wall Street, and performing as the soprano soloist in Hadyn's *The Creation* with Princeton Pro Musica, and Bach's *St. John Passion* with the American Classical Orchestra.

Elisse currently resides in Brooklyn, New York.



Fredy Bonilla

Fredy Bonilla, baritone, comes from Houston, Texas where he received his Bachelors of Choral Music Education from the University of Houston. He taught high school choir in the Houston area for seven years where his choirs received top ratings and awards. Fredy has performed with Houston ensembles including Cantare Houston, the Houston Chamber Choir, and the Houston Grand Opera Chorus. He also sang in local

churches including Christ Church Cathedral (Episcopal) in Houston, and has sung evensongs in England, Scotland, and Ireland as ensemble member, soloist, and cantor.

This May, he completed studies at the Yale University's School of Music and Institute of Sacred Music, earning his Master of Music degree studying voice with professor James Taylor. As a member of the Yale Voxtet, he was featured soloist in performances with the Yale Schola Cantorum. Last year he was bass soloist for Handel's *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato* conducted by Bach Collegium Japan's Masaaki Suzuki with Yale Schola Cantorum and Messiah with Yale Glee Club. He was also bass soloist for Bach's *Mass in B Minor* conducted by David Hill while touring the United Kingdom.

Recently, he was a finalist for the Lyndon Woodside Oratorio-Solo Competition in New York City, winning the William Grogan Award. He is working on building a career in singing various genres, focusing on oratorio and concert works, as soloist and ensemble member. He especially enjoys working on music in Spanish across early through modern genres. Fredy is currently based in New Haven, Connecticut.



Sam Denler

Sam Denler is a tenor based in New Haven, Connecticut. He sings in the Philadelphia Symphonic Choir and regularly performs with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Yannick Nézet-Séguin and was a 2023-24 Voces8 Scholar. He is the tenor soloist for Ryan Brandau in *Amor Artis* in New York City, recently performed with elite early music ensemble Res Facta, which was featured on WWFM Sounds Choral, and filmed a scene with Bradley Cooper for Netflix's

Leonard Bernstein biopic *Maestro*. Mr. Denler has attended numerous music festivals, most recently with the Bachakademie in Stuttgart, Germany, and in his sixth fellowship with the Spoleto Festival USA Chorus in Charleston, South Carolina. This year is his third year as singer, audio engineer, and cofounder of startup group Convoco, a small ensemble of professional musicians. Mr. Denler finished his first year of his Masters in Voice: Early Music, Oratorio + Chamber Ensemble in the prestigious Voxtet ensemble at Yale University this Spring. He earned his Bachelor's in Music Education at Westminster Choir College in 2019, where he sang with the Westminster Choir for three years, touring the U.S., Spain, and China. He was also a member of early music ensemble Kantorei, and Symphonic Choir, which performed in premier venues such as Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts in Philadelphia.



Paulina Francisco

Paulina Francisco is a versatile and engaging interpreter of Baroque and early Classical music. Recent reviews have celebrated her vivacious soprano as “a ray of sunshine” (*The Guardian*), and hailed her “agility, impact, and vibrant projection” (*ClassyKey*) which “preserves a finesse of delivery allowing one to savor the ornamentation and agility” (*Olyrix*).

In March, Paulina made her London Handel Festival debut singing the role of L'Allegro in *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato* with Jonathan Cohen and Arcangelo. She is a winner of the 11th edition of Le Jardin des Voix with Les Arts Florissants, and is a soloist in their internationally-renowned production of Henry Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*, with staging and choreography by Mourad Merzouki. In the 2023-2024 season, Paulina made her Kennedy Center debut with Opera Lafayette, singing the role of Thalie in *Les Fêtes de Thalie* under the direction of Christophe Rousset, which was received as “delightfully insouciant” (*The Washington Post*) and “like a rainbow-haired Cyndi Lauper” (*Washington Classical Review*). Other recent highlights include singing the title role in John Eccles' *Semele* with American Baroque Opera Company, curating a chamber recital for the Washington Bach Consort, and a summer festival performance with Vox Luminis.



Morgan Mastrangelo

Praised for their “ringing and clear” tenor (*The Toledo Blade*), Morgan Mastrangelo is an Emerging Artist with Boston Lyric Opera, where they were recently seen as Hades in Matt Aucoin's *Eurydice*. Other recent credits at BLO include Don Ramiro in *La Cenerentola*, (cover), Marzio in *Mitridate* (cover), and Enoch Snow in *Carousel* (cover) Regional credits include Count Almaviva in *il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Wichita Grand Opera), Hades in the Opera Grand Rapids production of *Eurydice*,

Edemondo in the modern premiere of *Anna Di Resburgo* (Teatro Nuovo, cover), Frederic in *The Pirates of Penzance* (New York Gilbert and Sullivan Players), and Tobias in *Sweeney Todd* (Opera Saratoga). Recent concert credits include their “eye-catching and ear popping” debut with Boston Baroque as the Narrator in Bach's *Coffee Cantata*, BWV 211. Other concert credits include the tenor solos in BWV 5, 78, 94, 148, and 181 (Emmanuel Music, Boston) Handel's *Messiah*, (Hudson Valley Philharmonic), Rossini's *Petit Messe Solenne* (Opera Saratoga), and Orff's *Carmina Burana* (Carnegie Hall). Upcoming engagements include Priest/Ensemble in *The Light in The Piazza* at the Huntington Theatre,

Ascanius/First Sailor in Errolyn Wallen's *Dido's Ghost* (Emmanuel Music) and the semi-finals of the Froville International Baroque Competition. They are a Laffont Competition Encouragement Award Winner, and the 2nd Prize winner of both the 2025 American National Oratorio Competition and the 2024 Lyndon-Woodside Oratorio Competition. They are an alumnus of the Young Artist Programs of Opera Saratoga and Teatro Nuovo, and studied at Northwestern University and New England Conservatory.



Trevor Scott

Lyric tenor Trevor Scott recently received his Masters of Musical Arts degree in Early Music, Art Song, and Oratorio, studying through a degree program sponsored by both the Yale School of Music and Institute of Sacred Music. Last summer, he was honored to make his professional international operatic debut, singing with the Danish National Opera in the chorus of Bohuslav Martinů's *The Greek Passion*. He was also thrilled to be the tenor soloist in Bach's *Mass in B Minor* (presented

by Yale's Schola Cantorum and Juilliard's J415), which toured across England and Scotland. His most prominent performances at Yale have been as the tenor soloist in Haydn's *Stabat Mater* (November 2024, Schola Cantorum), Handel's *L'Allegro* (October 2023, Schola Cantorum) and Handel's *Messiah* (December 2023, Yale Glee Club). He was also honored to sing as a studio artist with the Chautauqua Opera Company, where he covered Tobias and Beadle and performed in the ensemble of their productions of *Sweeney Todd* and *La tragédie de Carmen*. He received his Masters of Music in Vocal Performance from the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance, where he studied under Professor Stanford Olsen. He completed his undergraduate degree at the Eastman School of Music, under the direction of Professor Robert Swensen. While currently based in New Haven, CT, Trevor proudly hails from St. Louis, Missouri.



Jeremy Weiss

With a "heart wrenchingly beautiful" (*Interludes*) voice possessing an "indigo-tinged sensuousness" (*Opera News*), baritone Jeremy Weiss channels his training as an actor into his work as a musician, bringing human stories to life in performances that are radically open-hearted. His career spans two continents with recent credits including L'Opéra National de Paris, The Ravinia Festival with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, L'Opéra-Théâtre de Metz

Metropole, and The Brooklyn Academy of Music. Next season will bring house premieres with Seattle Opera, Portland Opera, Cincinnati Opera, and San Diego Opera.

A vocal chameleon, Weiss has sung Schaunard in *La Bohème*, Orfeo in Belli's *Orfeo Dolente*, Steve Jobs in Mason Bates's *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs*, and Garibaldi in Handel's *Rodelinda*. Also known for his work as a crossover artist, Weiss has performed the roles of Curly in *Oklahoma!*, Freddy in *My Fair Lady*, and the Wolf/Prince in *Into the Woods*. Jeremy was awarded third prize in the Lotte Lenya Competition in 2022, where he was also a prizewinner in 2019 and 2020.

Weiss is also on the forefront of developing "innovative, engrossing, and boundary-shattering" (*Opera News*) multidisciplinary projects that transform the way audiences connect with classical music. His major projects include: *The Wandering*, a queer, transmedia visual album and immersive experience based on Schubert's *Lieder*, and *Infinitesimal*, a genre-shattering chamber opera for voice, piano, and electronics that interweaves memoir with cutting edge research to bring to light what connects us all.

Jeremy completed his undergraduate degree at Yale University and earned a Master's in Music and Performers Diploma from Indiana University.

THE JUDGES



Mimmi Fulmer

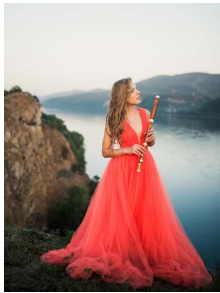
Mimmi Fulmer performs repertoire from early music to works written for her. She has appeared as soloist at the Aspen Music Festival and Kennedy Center, and her career includes premieres of nine opera roles.

The granddaughter of immigrants from Finland and Sweden, Ms. Fulmer is an advocate for bringing Nordic songs to American singers. She has presented programs of Nordic repertoire throughout the US, and is the editor of *Midnight Sun*, a three-volume anthology of songs from Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark. Her publications include a book and engraved score of Milton Babbitt's "Vision and Prayer".

Early music has been a significant part of her career, and she performs regularly with the Wisconsin Baroque Ensemble. Her oratorio roles include major soprano solos of Bach, Vivaldi, and Handel.

Ms. Fulmer has recorded with the Centaur, Albany, Innova, and CRI labels. Her CD, *About Time*, was called “a gratifying testimony to ... composers in America” by Opera News online. Recent performances include recitals at Northern Michigan University, University of Tampa, and the Mindekirken in Minneapolis, as well as lecture-recitals at conferences in Austin and Seattle and the International College Music Society conference in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. She will present a lecture-recital on Finnish women creative artists at the 2025 FinnFest in Duluth, Minnesota.

Ms. Fulmer is Professor of Voice and Opera at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Her students are enjoying success singing at the Metropolitan Opera, on Broadway, and as educators at schools and universities.



Taya König-Tarasevich

Siberian flutist Taya König-Tarasevich enjoys a distinguished international career as a soloist, chamber musician, and orchestral performer on historical flutes. A proud alumna of The Juilliard School, she is the co-founder and artistic director of VERITÀ BAROQUE—an ensemble of elite soloists reimagining Baroque chamber music for the 21st century. Through immersive soundscapes and 360-degree video, VERITÀ transforms the traditional concert experience.

Taya has toured globally, captivating audiences and performing under the baton of renowned conductors. Her Lincoln Center debut at Alice Tully Hall with Masaaki Suzuki marked a major milestone, followed by appearances with ensembles such as Utopia and Les Arts Florissants. She has performed at prestigious festivals, including Salzburg, and was awarded the Smithsonian Chamber Music Fellowship. Recently, she completed a three-month residency at Opéra de Paris, collaborating with Peter Sellars, street dancers, and international musicians under Teodor Currentzis in a project celebrating unity and peace.

Deeply committed to outreach, Taya contributes to educational initiatives in Nairobi, Kenya. She is fluent in English, German, Italian, and Russian, and believes music to be the most universal and truthful language. She holds degrees from institutions in Germany, Switzerland, and the USA, and is on faculty at the University of Wisconsin.

Outside of music, Taya is a passionate dancer, devoted yogini, slalom snowboarder, tea practitioner, and avid poetry collector.



Andrew McGill

Andrew McGill is recognized as one of America’s leading choral conductors, admired for his passionate artistry and unusually wide-ranging repertoire, which extends from early music to newly composed works. His performances have been praised for their “power, subtlety, and nuance” and “profound spirituality” (*Le Devoir, Montreal*), and have been described as “piercing the heart like a frozen knife” (*Monterey Herald*) and “leaving the audience gasping in amazement” (*Classical NJ*).

Andrew McGill leads three of North America’s finest professional choirs, serving as Chef de Choeur for the *Montreal Symphony Orchestra*, Artistic Advisor and Director of Choral Activities for the *Carmel Bach Festival* and as Choral Director for Chicago’s *Music of the Baroque*. He also regularly collaborates with the world’s leading orchestras, including Wagner with the Cleveland Orchestra, Brahms with the Dresden Philharmonie, Berlioz with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, Verdi with the National Symphony, and Bach and Mahler with the New York Philharmonic for conductors such as Pierre Boulez, Charles Dutoit, Rafael Frühbeck du Burgos, Alan Gilbert, Jane Glover, Neeme Järvi, Kurt Masur, Zubin Mehta, Kent Nagano, John Nelson, Rafael Payare, and Julius Rudel.

Dr. McGill serves as Director of Choral Organizations at Northwestern University. He previously taught at the University of Illinois and Westminster Choir College. He has conducted premieres of works by Caleb Burhans, Paul Chihara, Dominic DiOrio, Sven-David Sandstrom, Caroline Shaw, Lewis Spratlan, Steven Stucky, Jon Magnussen, Stephen Andrew Taylor, Arvo Pärt, and Krzysztof Penderecki. He has collaborated with the Mark Morris Dance Company, folk singer Judy Collins, puppeteer Basil Twist, and filmmaker Ridley Scott. Recordings of choirs conducted or prepared by him may be heard on the Decca, EMI, Canteloupe, Naxos, Albany, and CBC labels.

MADISON BACH MUSICIANS

Madison Bach Musicians was founded in 2004 by Artistic Director Trevor Stephenson. In 2025-26, Madison Bach Musicians will present four new programs in four unique architectural settings in our exciting 22nd season. We'll begin with *Classical Symphonies* of Haydn, Boccherini, and C. P. E. Bach on October 4 & 5 in the serene sanctuary of Holy Wisdom Monastery. On December 13, we'll shift to the Georgian splendor of the First Congregational Church for our *15th Annual Holiday Concert: Christmas with the Baroque Masters*. In the spring, on March 28 & 29, we'll give two performances of Bach's incomparable *Mass in B minor* in the acoustic elegance of the Hamel Music Center. And the season will conclude on May 9 & 10 with a program that melds considerations of music and architecture—*Princely Architects: Bach, Beethoven, and Frank Lloyd Wright*—held in Wright's 1951 Madison masterpiece, the Unitarian Meeting House, as part of the Landmark Auditorium's 75th Anniversary celebration. Please join us for this great lineup of concerts! Information at madisonbachmusicians.org



Micah Behr

Micah Behr received his Doctorate in Viola Performance at UW Madison where he studied viola with Sally Chisholm and collaborative piano with Martha Fischer. His compositions and transcriptions have been premiered by the Madison Bach Musicians, Stoughton Chamber Music Festival, Trio With(out) and the Griffon String Quartet. He also composes music for Geneva Campus Church where he serves as Music Director. In 2023, his one-act operetta based on the life of Sarah Bernhardt received second place in The American Prize for composition.



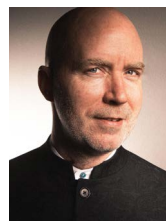
Leanne Kelso

Leanne Kelso enjoys a varied career as a performer and teacher in the Midwest. She is the associate concertmaster of the Madison Symphony and assistant concertmaster of the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra. Leanne teaches a vibrant studio of violinists and violists at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, where she also leads the Chancellor's Quartet and the Baroque Ensemble. Recent solo performances include the Beethoven *Violin Concerto* with the Lake Forest Symphony and Bruch's *Scottish Fantasy* with Symphony 847 in Chicago. As a chamber musician, she performs with the UW-Whitewater Piano Trio, Bach Dancing and Dynamite Society in Madison, and the Illinois Chamber Music Festival in Bloomington.



Kangwon Lee Kim

Kangwon Lee Kim, Madison Bach Musicians (MBM) Concertmaster and Assistant Artistic Director, is a versatile violinist with repertoire ranging from the 17th to 21st centuries, using both Baroque and modern violins. She has performed throughout the US as well as in Korea, Canada, Puerto Rico, Switzerland, Norway, and the Czech Republic. As a Baroque violinist, Dr. Kim has performed with numerous early music ensembles and has given lectures on performance practice both in Korea and the US. She was Assistant Professor of Violin and Chamber Music at Biola University in CA and has also taught at Ripon College and Lawrence University Conservatory in WI. Since 2021, Dr. Kim has served as Music Director of Love in Music, a nonprofit organization that reaches out to the underserved communities in the LA area; she enjoys working with the music teachers who give free lessons to the young students. During the summer, she teaches at Credo Summer Music Festival and is the Chair of MBM's Summer Chamber Music Workshop.



Craig Trompeter

Craig Trompeter is the founder and Artistic Director of Chicago's acclaimed Haymarket Opera Company. As cellist and violist da gamba he has performed with Second City Musick, the Chicago Symphony, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Chicago Opera Theater, Music of the Baroque, the Smithsonian Chamber Music Society, and the Oberlin Consort of Viols. He has performed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Glimmerglass Festival, the Brooklyn Academy of Music,

and the Valletta International Baroque Festival in Malta and has appeared as soloist at the Ravinia Festival, the annual conference of the American Bach Society, with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and with Music of the Baroque. Trompeter has recorded works of Biber, Boismortier, Bologne, Eccles, Greene, Handel, Marais, Mozart, Vinci, Vivaldi, and a potpourri of Elizabethan composers on the Harmonia Mundi, Cedille, and Centaur labels. A committed music educator, Trompeter has conducted operas at DePaul University, served as the director of the Early Music Ensemble at the University of Chicago for seven seasons, and has taught Baroque Performance Practices at Northwestern University.

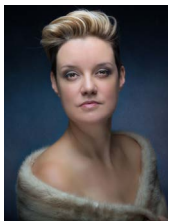


Trevor Stephenson

Trevor Stephenson is the Artistic Director and founder of Madison Bach Musicians. He received a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Historical Performance of 18th-century Music from Cornell University, where he studied fortepiano with Malcolm Bilson. With his colleague, Norman Sheppard, Trevor has made and refurbished a series of historical

keyboard instruments ranging from Italian Renaissance harpsichords to Victorian pianos. He has released recordings on the Light & Shadow label since 1994, and his newest album *Domenico Scarlatti—20 Sonatas for Harpsichord* is due for release in August. Trevor tours throughout the United States as performer and lecturer. Information at trevorstephenson.com.

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR SARAH BRAILEY



GRAMMY Award-winning soprano Sarah Brailey enjoys a versatile career that defies categorization. Praised by *The New York Times* for her “radiant, liquid tone,” and by *Opera UK* for “a sound of remarkable purity,” she is a prolific vocalist, cellist, recording artist, and educator.

Sarah’s numerous career highlights include performing Handel’s *L’Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato* with the Mark Morris Dance Group, serenading the Mona Lisa with John Zorn’s *Madrigals* at the Louvre in Paris, and recording the role of The Soul on the world premiere album of Dame Ethel Smyth’s *The Prison*, for which she

received the 2020 GRAMMY Award for Best Classical Solo Vocal Album. Other notable projects include the Angel in Handel’s *La Resurrezione* with Chicago’s Haymarket Opera, the Strauss *Four Last Songs* with The Experiential Orchestra, and David Lang’s *Song of Songs* at the Barbican Centre.

Dr. Brailey is a member of Beyond Artists, a coalition of artists that donates a percentage of their concert fees to non-profit organizations. Through Beyond Artists, she supports the Natural Resources Defense Council, Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness, and the Animal Welfare Institute. Dr. Brailey serves on the voice faculty of the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

HOW TO LISTEN TO HANDEL ARIAS

John W. Barker

The original audiences for Baroque operas took for granted the repetitive processions of recitatives and arias. The former conveyed plot action, the latter allowed a character to express the emotions of the moment, while also providing the singer with opportunities for display. Of course, the singer would know the story and the aria’s place in it, so as to supply the right expression. The aria was also a test of the singer’s beauty of voice and general artistry.

But what the audience expected was also tied to conventional aria structure. While Handel, and other composers, might create a single melodic piece (such as an arioso), most solos would represent what was known as the “da capo aria”. This was cast in a tripartite ABA form. The A section would state the musical material and mood, concluding with the stipulation of fine (end).

The ensuing B section would be in a contrasting key, giving alternative material. There would then be in the score the instruction da capo al fine (from the head, or beginning, to the fine marking). (Alternatively, there might instead be an instruction of dal segno al fine, from the sign to the end. The “sign” would be a marking at the end of the ensemble introduction that was to be bypassed.) That would launch a repetition of the A section with the purpose of allowing the singer to embellish the written line, and especially create virtuosic cadenzas on final chords. Handel’s audiences would listen for the quality of such embellishment, and so should we.

IN MEMORIAM

Dean H. Schroeder

November 8, 1949 – December 28, 2024

Dean Schroeder, co-founder of the Handel Aria Competition, passed away last year just a month after hearing his last live performance of Handel's *Messiah*. It meant so much to him that one of the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra's featured soloists, Gene Stenger, was a prize winner in the competition Dean helped establish in 2013 to encourage singers to explore Handel's vocal repertoire.

Although he loved wide variety of music genres, from classical music to Cape Breton airs and Chicago blues, opera had never been a favorite of Dean's. But one afternoon, driving on Monroe Street, he heard music on Wisconsin Public Radio that he had never heard before. In Dean's own words, "I was so suddenly taken aback that I had to pull over....THIS was something I could listen to! In fact, I wanted to hear more, and to know all about it. This moment opened a floodgate for me, as I discovered the wealth of vocal music Handel produced: some thirty operas and twenty oratorios, each full of arias and duets that became the melodies I had unwittingly hoped to find." What was the aria he was so moved by that day? It was "Tornami," from Handel's opera *Alcina*, presented by radio host Norman Gilliland.

The Handel Aria Competition came about because of that pivotal moment. Dean had heard about the London Handel Festival's Handel Singing Competition, but discovered that there wasn't anything like it in North America. Together with his wife Orange, Dean decided to create one here in Madison, Wisconsin. "Every year 100 singers choose to work up a Handel aria and submit it to us. This alone makes it worthwhile," he wrote, "and the live competition with those selected as finalists is a delightful bonus. It's my hope that the Handel Aria Competition will continue on, motivating both singers and audiences to discover and enjoy the vast treasure of Handel's vocal works."



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