

In addition to her operatic roles she has sung many leading roles in musicals and operettas, including *My Fair Lady*, *Carousel*, *The King and I*, *West Side Story*, *Show Boat*, *The Sound of Music*, *The Merry Widow* and *Zorba*. Recitals in the United States and Canada include a New York City debut in the New York Festival of Songs Series with pianist Michael Barrett and Guest Artist with symphony orchestras of Houston, Cleveland, Corpus Christi, Victoria, and the National Symphony. She was last seen nationally and internationally on TV in the role of Suzy in the opera *La Rondine* directed by Marta Domingo, which was released in 2009 on DVD by Decca.

Baritone **Ethan Watermeier** has performed a broad range of roles in opera, musical theatre, and plays throughout the United States. As a recitalist, his work focuses primarily on American repertoire, from early colonial song to works by living composers. In recent years, he has performed new compositions by and worked with John Musto, Jake Heggie, Mark Adamo, Martin Hennessy, Rachel Portman, and Ricky Ian Gordon. Most recently, Watermeier performed the principal role of Darby in The New Old American Company's historic and highly praised revival of the popular 1783 comic opera, *The Poor Soldier*, by William Shield and John O'Keefe. He sang Fred/Petruchio (cover performance) and the role of Ralph in *Kiss Me, Kate* at Glimmerglass Opera and Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with the Maryland Opera Studio.

Mr. Watermeier's other favorite operatic and musical theater credits include: Javert and Factory Foreman/Combeferre (*Les Misérables*), Broadway National Tour; The Geographer/Hunter/Baobab (*The Little Prince*, World Premiere), Pritschitsch (*The Merry Widow*), Marquis D'Obigny (*La Traviata*), and the premiere workshop readings of Mark Adamo's *Lysistrata* (Leonidas) and Jake Heggie's *End of the Affair* (Henry), Houston Grand Opera; Baron Douphol (*La Traviata*), Santa Fe Opera; Masetto (*Don Giovanni*), Théâtre Municipal, Castres, France; Lead Soloist (*Bright-Eyed Joy* with composer Ricky Ian Gordon), Hawaii Performing Arts Festival; Billy Bigelow (*Carousel*), Theatre at the Center and Candlelight Playhouse; Joe Harland in *Later the Same Evening*, an opera inspired by five paintings of Edward Hopper by John

About the Artists

Michael Baitzer, piano, is currently on the full-time music staff of Washington National Opera, a position he began last season after five seasons on a part-time basis, as well as on the music staff of Wolf Trap Opera. In addition to these, he also served as a faculty member of the Juilliard School, and on the music staff of the Spoleto Festival USA for 10 years, as well as on the music staff of The Aspen Music Festival and Central City Opera for four and six years, respectively.

A graduate of Drake University with degrees in both Piano and Vocal Performance, Michael continued studies in Collaborative Piano with John Moriarty and Margo Garrett at The New England Conservatory. He was a member of the Houston Grand Opera studio, as well as an apprentice with Minnesota Opera, and also a participant in the Aspen Opera Theater Center and the Merola Opera Program at San Francisco Opera. An avid recitalist, Michael has been heard with singers throughout the country under the auspices of The Marilyn Horne Foundation and Young Concert Artists Organizations. Long known as one of the top vocal audition pianists, Michael has played auditions for virtually every opera company in North America, and is in frequent demand as a vocal coach.

Soprano **Colleen Daly** is rapidly emerging as a "dramatically powerful" (*The Washington Post*) singer in today's operatic arena. Miss Daly's wide range of roles includes the title roles in The Academy of Vocal Arts' productions of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *La Traviata*, *Kát'a Kabanová*, and *Manon*, the title role in Opera Vivente's production of *Alcina*, Cleopatra in *Giulio Cesare*, Miss Jessel in *The Turn of the Screw* and Berta in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* with the Maryland Opera Studio, Micaëla in *La Tragédie de Carmen* with Olney Theatre Center for the Arts, Die Königin der Nacht in *Die Zauberflöte* with Opera New Jersey, the Annapolis Opera and Symphony Orchestra, and the In Series, Madame Herz in *Der Schauspieldirektor* at the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, and Cunegonde in *Candide* at the Merle Reskin Theater in Chicago.

Miss Daly's "glistening soprano" (*The Washington Post*) is also becoming well-known to concert and recital audiences; she has performed as a soloist in such works as the Mozart, Brahms, Fauré, and Rutter *Requiem* Masses, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Händel's *Messiah* and Haydn's *Creation* and *Missa Solemnis*, and has appeared in concerts with the Master Chorale of Washington (Kennedy Center debut), the Cathedral Choral Society (National Cathedral debut), Washington Concert Opera, the Maryland Philharmonic Orchestra, Opera Lafayette, Ovation Artists, the Washington Arts Club, and the In Series.

Based in New York City, **Chuck Hudson** has directed opera productions at major international companies including Cape Town Opera (South Africa), Florida Grand Opera, Minnesota Opera, Sacramento Opera, Opera Cleveland, Seattle Opera, San Francisco Opera Center, Wolf Trap Opera, Opera Santa Barbara, Caramoor Opera, Berkshire Opera, Piedmont Opera, Connecticut Opera, and Shreveport Opera. He has directed award winning theatre productions in New York and regionally, including productions at The Pearl Theatre, The Chester Theater, Cape May Stage, The Children's Theatre Festival of Houston, New City Theatre, and Chicago's Fox Valley Shakespeare Festival.

In addition to directing professional artists, Chuck continues to focus on his work with artists in training. He is the Artistic Associate at La Lingua della Lirica, an intensive summer training program for opera singers in Italy, and is a co-creator of Seattle Opera's Young Artist Program where he directed productions as well as created and instructed specialized classes on Acting and Movement for singers. Chuck has directed productions at San Francisco Opera's Merola Program, Santa Fe Opera's Apprentice Artist Program, Florida Grand Opera's Resident Artist Program, IU Opera Theatre, CCM Opera Theatre, AVA Opera Theater, BU Opera Institute, USC-Thornton Opera, Music Academy of the West, and Manhattan School of Music Opera Theater.

For 7 years Chuck was Artistic Director of The Immediate Theatre in Seattle: a physically-based company committed to the creation of visually exciting dramatic works. Chuck's specialty in movement comes from a background in gymnastics as well as being one of three Americans to have received a diploma from the Marcel Marceau International School of Mimedrama in Paris. He is the only American to

be appointed to teach at Marceau's School, and he performed with Marceau on his 1991 European Tour and in Klaus Kinski's film *Paganini*.

VaShawn Savoy McIlwain, baritone, is a graduate of the famed Duke Ellington School of the Arts. Mr. McIlwain holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Northern Iowa, and also holds a Master of Music degree from the University of Maryland, College Park and is a graduate of the Maryland Opera Studio. He has sung with the National Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Maestro Steven Simon and performed in the European premiere of H. Leslie Adams' *Drums of Tragedy* at the 562nd anniversary of the Battaglia di Anghiari. Mr. McIlwain is a 2007 Metropolitan Opera Regional Finalist. He has also performed as Joe in the Signature Theatre 2009-2010 production of Kern & Hammerstein's *Show Boat*, and is a frequent guest artist with the Washington National Opera's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program.

Mr. McIlwain's national operatic appearances include Morales in Bizet's *Carmen*, Leporello in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Chief Cameahwait/Sergeant Floyd in Stephen Mager's *Dream of the Pacific*, and Jack Blackburn in the world premiere of Frank Proto's *Shadowboxer*. International appearances include Jake in Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* and Guglielmo in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. He recently performed as Jim in *Porgy and Bess* throughout Germany and will soon appear as Jack Johnson in Adolphe's *Let Freedom Sing*.

Edrie Means has sung in the world premieres of works by Philip Glass, Dominick Argento, and Jacob Druckman, as well as in *Kaballah* by Stewart Wallace, in which the role of Binah was written for her (recording by Koch Records). Ms. Means also sang the NPR broadcast of Dominick Argento's *The Dream of Valentino*, in which she created the role of Jean Aker and in the PBS broadcast of Philip Glass' *The Making of The Representative of Planet 8*, in which she created the role of Klin. Nationally and internationally, she has appeared in leading roles with the Houston Grand Opera, Washington Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Cleveland Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, Opera Mid-Michigan, Opera Grand Rapids, Pittsburgh Playhouse, and the State Opera of Cairo, Egypt.



Sunday, October 10, 2010 at 4 and 8 p.m.
Artisphere

LUCY: a mini-opera

Music and Text by Tom Cipullo

LucyEdrie Means
Young ManEthan Watermeier

Confession Scene from DEAD MAN WALKING

Text by Terrence McNally, Music by Jake Heggie

Joseph De Rocher Ethan Watermeier

CAMERA OBSCURA: a mini-opera

Text by Robert Patrick, Music by Jonathan Sheffer

ManEthan Watermeier
WomanEdrie Means
HeVaShawn Savoy McIlwain
SheColleen Daly

PianoMichael Baitzer
Stage DirectorChuck Hudson

Musto and Mark Campbell (World Premiere); and Ralph Follet (NY Premiere and Premiere Recording on Albany Records, *A Death in the Family*). A winner of both the 2002 Kurt Weill/Lotte Lenya International Competition and the 2002 Anna-Case Mackay Grant, Mr. Watermeier has recently joined the artist roster of Sing for Hope (singforhope.org) – a non-profit organization dedicated to “arts activism in action.”

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Terry Serie
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About UrbanArias

UrbanArias is a new opera company dedicated to producing short, contemporary operas. Our mission is to expose DC-area audiences to engaging, accessible, entertaining operas, and to provide a friendly venue at which both established and emerging composers can present their shorter works.

Beginning in April 2011, UrbanArias will produce a yearly festival of contemporary opera at the newly-renovated Artisphere in Arlington. Each festival will include three to five pieces; UrbanArias will seek to cultivate regular collaborations with both prominent and emerging composers, and our productions will feature both well-known and emerging artists. We intend to begin commissioning works in the 2012 season, and hope to unveil one brand-new short opera each year.

Robert Wood, Executive and Artistic Director

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