

**The Cleveland Institute of Music  
Opera Theater  
presents**

# ***Hänsel und Gretel***

**Music by ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK**  
(1854-1921)

**Libretto by ADELHEID WETTE**  
(1858-1916)  
based on a fairy tale by Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm

Premiere: Weimar, Germany, December 23, 1893

~ ~ ~

**David Bamberger, *director***  
**Harry Davidson, *conductor***  
**Dave Brooks, *set & lighting designer***  
**Inda Blatch-Geib, *costume designer***

~ ~ ~

Kulas Hall  
February 28 - March 2, 2018, 7:30pm  
March 3, 2018, 3pm

*Hänsel und Gretel is made possible in part by  
a grant from the John P. Murphy Foundation  
and is generously sponsored by Hyster-Yale Materials Handling.*

## From the Director

### “H&G” FAQs

#### **What is the relationship between the opera’s Engelbert Humperdinck and the singer of the same name?**

In the 1960s, when Arnold Dorsey was having a hard time being noticed in the popular music world, someone suggested that he take a distinctive name to gain attention and recommended that of the opera composer. The idea worked. The “new Humperdinck” has sold more than 150 million records worldwide!

#### **Why did 19th century composers write operas based on fairy tales?**

With the rise of Romanticism and nationalism, folk tales came to be regarded as the repository of a nation’s spirit. One of the motivations for the scholarly Brothers Grimm to study folklore was to help create a German identity at a time when there was no German state. This same spirit motivated Richard Wagner to base most of his operas on German legends and myths.

#### **Isn’t *Hänsel und Gretel* a children’s opera?**

It certainly wasn’t viewed that way when it was created. The world premiere in 1893 was mounted and conducted by Richard Strauss, who was already famous as a composer and conductor though he had yet to complete his first opera. The following year, the Hamburg premiere was conducted by no less a personage than Gustav Mahler. Richard Wagner’s widow Cosima, who was not inclined to say nice things about anyone other than her late husband, named it the most important German opera written since Richard’s death.

#### **But isn’t it really for children?**

Teresa Stratas, the famous soprano who was a brilliant Gretel, said it best: “I think that *Hänsel und Gretel* is a story *more* for adults. Children will understand and enjoy the fairy tale, but adults will find refreshing the spirit of children and of life. You come away with a cleansed feeling. There’s something very good about it, especially in an age when there is not much goodness left in the world.”

#### **Why is it thought of as a Christmas opera?**

The Weimar premiere happened to be on December 23 and the work has been identified with Christmas ever since. This has nothing to do with the action. Hänsel und Gretel are sent to the woods to collect strawberries, so the piece can’t be set in a time of snow and ice. However, the opera’s message of innocence, hope and triumph of good over evil can be enjoyed in any season—perhaps especially in the midst of a Cleveland winter.

## Cast

(in order of singing)

\* Wednesday/Friday

# Thursday/Saturday

### Hänsel und Gretel

Music by Engelbert Humperdinck / Libretto by Adelheid Wette

Gretel	Jennifer Robble * Anne Carruthers #
Hänsel, <i>her brother</i>	Merav Eldan * Meg Linebaugh #
Gertrude, <i>their mother</i>	Brianna Nemback * Emily S. Brown #
Peter, <i>their father; a broom-maker</i>	Xiaoyang Zhang * Matthew Brennan #
The Sandman	XiaoGe Zhang * Kaylee Norris #
The Dew Fairy	Lingzi Yang * Shaoting Huang #
The Witch	London Long-Wheeler * Briana Pudsell #

*Children and Angels:*

Rachael Aust, Yanru Chen, Gwendolyn DeLaney, Amanda Duspiva,  
Gillian Fisher, Shaoting Huang, Eunhye Hyun, Soobinh Lee,  
Yueshan Liang, Liza Moss, Kaylee Norris, Aoife Shanley, Qianru Wu,  
Yingia Xu, Lingzi Yang, XiaoGe Zhang

*There will be one intermission.*

## About the Composer

**Engelbert Humperdinck** began to write *Hänsel und Gretel* as four songs to accompany a puppet show his nieces were giving at home. He was a prestigious 30-year-old who had started composing at age 7, won numerous awards, been appointed a professor and assisted Richard Wagner in the preparation of the world premiere of *Parsifal*. Still, he chose to keep developing his little home entertainment, his sister Adelheid Wette providing the expanded libretto for a full-length work. The opera was an instant success and is now performed throughout the world. Humperdinck continued to compose—his opera *The King's Children* received its world premiere at the Metropolitan Opera in 1910 and was performed each season until the outbreak of World War I; but it was only *Hänsel und Gretel*, the work first written for puppets, that gained him immortality.

## Cover

An announcement will be made if a cover is to perform  
in place of a listed singer

Gretel...Lingzi Yang  
Hänsel...Gwendolyn DeLaney

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Craig Terry, piano

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Mixon Hall

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## Opera Theater

Artistic Director...David Bamberger  
 Music Director & Conductor...Harry Davidson  
 Opera Coach and Chorus Master...John Simmons  
 Opera Theater Administrator...Caroline Bergan  
 Production Manager...Sarah Stewart

## Voice Department

Mary Schiller, Head  
 Clifford Billions  
 Dean Southern

## Production Staff

Set & Lighting Designer...Dave Brooks  
 Costumes, Wig & Makeup Designer...Inda Blatch-Geib  
 Props Master...Sarah Stewart  
 Production Manager...Sarah Stewart  
 Assistant Stage Director...Elizabeth Frey  
 Board Operator...Jill Harbaugh  
 Stage Manager...Sarah Stewart  
 Assistant Stage Managers...Liza Moss, Ariana Umbriac  
 Costumes, First Hand...Mark Baiza  
 Wardrobe, Wig & Makeup Assistant...Brielle McGrew  
 Supertitles Creator...Paul and Kathleen Zweifel  
 Supertitles Operator...Kevin Krumenauer  
 Supertitles Assistant...Shiyong Choi  
 Master Electrician...Andrew Roland  
 Electricians...Shawn Delaney, Victoria Ki'Somma, Malia Lewis,  
 Alexander Lilley, Shane McNicholas, Keith Newman, Adam Smetana  
 Carpenters...Nate Boeman, Nora Dlugo, Charles Hargrave,  
 Isaac Lorton, Ryan Manthey, Xavier McSwain, Lee Piskunoff, Adam Polder  
 Coach Accompanist/Chorus Master...John Simmons  
 Assistant Conductor...Sean Radermacher  
 Rehearsal Pianist...John Simmons

## CIM Orchestra

### FIRST VIOLIN

Sarah Biagini, concertmaster  
*La Crescenta, CA*

Anja Endestad  
*Fairbanks, AK*

Ju-Eun Lee  
*Seoul, South Korea*

Hsin-Yu Shih  
*Taipei, Taiwan*

Zion Lee  
*Ames, IA*

Satoka Abo  
*Moscow, ID*

### SECOND VIOLIN

Marianne Martinoli, principal  
*Seattle, WA*

Johnathan Wu  
*Plano, TX*

Zichuan Wang  
*Wuhan, China*

Charles Lee  
*New York City, NY*

### VIOLA

Katja Yeager, principal  
*Potomac, MD*

John-Paul Shoemaker  
*Minneapolis, MN*

Jerome McCoy  
*Washington, DC*

Conor McAvinue  
*Wilmington, DE*

### CELLO

Henry Stubbs, principal  
*Marietta, GA*

Eva Roebuck  
*Merriam, KS*

Joseph Teeter  
*Topeka, KS*

Paul Maxwell  
*Vista, CA*

### DOUBLE BASS

Adam Har-zvi, principal  
*Glen Rock, NJ*

Mitchell Reiner-Coffey  
*Columbus, OH*

### FLUTE

Peter Arfsten, principal  
*Queens, NY*

Jessica Chancey  
*Orlando, FL*

Moises Lopez Ruiz  
*Cantillana, Spain*

### PICCOLO

Moises Lopez Ruiz, principal  
*Cantillana, Spain*

### OBOE

Michael Isaac Ripple, principal  
*Erie, PA*

Eric Juneau  
*McLean, VA*

**CLARINET**

Zikang Wang, principal  
*Chengdu, China*

Martin Kocev  
*Valandovo, Macedonia*

**BASS CLARINET**

Zachary West, principal  
*Plymouth, MA*

**BASSOON**

Ian Morin, principal  
*Deltona, FL*

David Burrough  
*Katy, TX*

**HORN**

Willem Crone, principal  
*Blacksburg, VA*

Miranda Deppisch  
*Akron, OH*

Susannah Greenslit  
*Odenton, MD*

AllenJade Carter  
*Austin, TX*

Rachel Lauson  
*Edina, MN*

**TRUMPET**

Joseph Boughton, principal  
*Guilford, CT*

Shane O'Brien  
*Benicia, CA*

**TROMBONE**

Christopher Brosius, principal  
*Seattle, WA*

David Hector  
*Evergreen Park, IL*

Zachary Whitney  
*Augusta, GA*

**TUBA**

HaoNan Liao, principal  
*Shenzhen, China*

**TIMPANI**

Charles Renneker, principal  
*Birmingham, AL*

**PERCUSSION**

Samuel Connor  
*Burke, VA*

James Leonard  
*Cincinnati, OH*

Albert Mackey  
*Honolulu, HI*

Linda Wallenthin  
*Balsta, Sweden*

**HARP**

Natalie Pui Hang Man, principal  
*Hong Kong*

## About the Staff

**David Bamberger** (Artistic Director) has staged some 200 productions on three continents in styles from grand opera to musicals. A founder of Cleveland Opera, he was the company's General Director from 1976 to 2004, building it into one of America's major regional opera companies. He secured The Three Tenors in Concert to celebrate its 25th anniversary. At the insistence of Jerome Robbins, Bamberger staged the dialogue scenes for *West Side Story*, thus gaining permission for Cleveland Opera to be the only opera company in the Western hemisphere permitted to re-create Robbins' original choreography. Bamberger's work from coast to coast ranges from *The Barber of Seville* at Lincoln Center (New York City Opera) to *The Ballad of Baby Doe* (Los Angeles Music Center), with such stars as Roberta Peters, Beverly Sills and Sherrill Milnes. For Santiago, Chile, he staged *Rigoletto* and *Lucia di Lammermoor* and, for the Israel Vocal Arts Institute, *La bohème* and *La Cenerentola*. His writings include several articles for *Opera News* and best-selling textbooks for religious schools. His two-volume History of the Jews based on Abba Eban's "My People," banned in the former Soviet Union, has been used in Russian translation in both Russia and Israel. Bamberger's many honors include the Ohio Governor's Award for Arts Administration and honorary doctorates from Swarthmore College (his alma mater, from which he graduated Phi Beta Kappa), Cleveland State University and CIM. He joined the CIM faculty in 2004.

**Harry Davidson** (Conductor) has, since 1998, served as Music Director and Conductor of the Duke Symphony Orchestra and Professor of the Practice of Music at Duke University. In spring 2007, he was named Music Director and Conductor of Opera at the Cleveland Institute of Music, where he conducts one opera production each semester while continuing in his role as Music Director of the DSO. In July 2000, he made his major orchestra conducting debut, leading the National Symphony Orchestra in concert at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Davidson has guest conducted orchestras in Austria, Finland and the U.S., including the Charlotte and Akron symphonies, as well as the Symphony and Chamber Orchestras of Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, where he has held residencies on two occasions. He has held the positions of Associate Conductor of the Wichita Symphony Orchestra, Professor of Music and Director of Orchestras at Wichita State University, Conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra and Associate Professor of Music at the University of Akron. He sometimes serves as a cover conductor for the North Carolina Symphony and The Cleveland Orchestra. Davidson was a finalist in the Detroit Symphony's Antal Dorati Conducting Competition and the Hans Swarowsky Conducting Competition in Vienna.

**John Simmons** (Opera Coach and Chorus Master) was appointed to Cleveland Institute of Music Opera Faculty in 2005. Simmons has appeared in numerous recitals in Austria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Italy and in the U.S. at Weill Recital Hall, Merkin Hall and the Austrian Cultural Forum in New York City. He has performed with such artists/ensembles as Jonas Kaufmann, Christopher Maltman, John Aler, London Symphony Chorus, Westminster Choir, Joffrey Ballet of Chicago, Spoleto Festival Orchestra and The Cleveland Orchestra in the Beyond the Score Series. Simmons has coached, taught and performed at AIMS, Spoleto Festival USA, Centro Studi Italiani, Amalfi Coast, Shaker Mountain and Lincoln Center festivals. He was pianist/coach for two seasons at the Graz Oper and teaching assistant at the Hochschule für Musik in Graz, an associate coach at the Juilliard Opera Center for three years and on the coaching faculty at the CW Post campus of Long Island University for six years. Simmons is music director and conductor for Nightingale Opera Theater in Hudson, Ohio, and is the pianist for the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Chorus.

**Dave Brooks** (Set & Lighting Designer) has been designing and building operas in Kulas Hall for over three decades. His list of favorites is long, but a few of the highlights would have to include productions of *The Rake's Progress*, *HMS Pinafore* and *Dido and Aeneas* for director Michael McConnell, *The Medium* and *Patience* for director Gary Race and *The Magic Flute*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Hänsel und Gretel* and *Alcina* for director David Bamberger. Brooks' work has also been seen at Lyric Opera Cleveland, The Cleveland Play House, Michigan Opera Theater, Dayton Opera and Opera Pacific. His day job is as a production designer for Hughie's Event Production Services, where he specializes in corporate event design.

**Inda Blatch-Geib** (Costume Designer) has been costume and production designer for over 900 theatrical, commercial and film releases in a career that has spanned 30 years and crossed four continents. Blatch-Geib's costume and puppet designs were seen on Broadway last November in a special production of *Kris Kringle The Musical*. Her production design work takes an interior design twist with a new club owned by Machine Gun Kelly opening soon. Current commercial work includes Costume Design for The Cleveland Cavaliers' 1970s and 80s themed videos and five national spots for the team. Print designs have included set styling for *Harper's Bazaar* UK Scarlett Johansson cover and spread, as well as catalogue set styling for Foundations and Kilgore Trout. Blatch-Geib's designs have been showcased in exhibits at The Smithsonian Institute as well as national and regional commercials including Microsoft, McDonald's, Under Armour, TroyBuilt, The Original Mattress Factory and Momentive. Recent film projects include Ohio Art Direction for *The Signal* starring Laurence Fishburne. Music Video Production and Costume Design include Machine Gun Kelly's Alpha Omega and Let You Go releases. Locally, she is the 2017-18 Resident Designer for Cleveland Public Theatre, Karamu House, Magical Theatre Company, New World

Performance Lab and Cleveland Institute of Music. Blatch-Geib was recently recognized with the Cleveland Critics Circle Award with Best Costume Design for *Blues in the Night*.

**Sarah Stewart** (Production Manager) joined the CIM Opera Theater staff in 2007 after five years at Playhouse Square Center, where she worked as line producer and production stage manager for seven long-running musicals in the Hanna Theatre (including *Love, Janis* and *Forbidden Broadway*). Previously, she completed a 20-year tenure at Cleveland Opera as Director of Production and Artistic Administrator, while serving as a member of Opera America's Production/Technical Committee for eight years. Local credits also include work at The Cleveland Play House, Great Lakes Theatre Festival, Ohio Ballet, Cleveland Ballet, Dance Cleveland and Cain Park, as well as other special projects such as the Tall Ships Festival, the Police Memorial Tattoo and live broadcasts from the Hanna Theatre. Stewart has been proud to be a member of Actor's Equity for over 25 years.

CIM Opera Theater Presents

# Spring Scenes

*from operas grand and light*

Friday, April 20, 2018

Saturday, April 21, 2018

at 7:30pm

Matinee on

Sunday, April 22, 2018

at 3pm

## Tickets

\$20 adults | \$10 students

\$15 seniors & groups of 10+

Call 216.795.3211 or visit [cim.edu/events](http://cim.edu/events)

## About the Cast

**Rachael Aust** (soprano) is in her fourth year of CIM's Bachelor of Music degree, studying with Mary Schiller. Aust's work at CIM has included the role of Barbarina in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Denise in *Beatrice and Benedict*, Berenice in *La clemenza di Tito*, and, in scene studies, Gianetta in *The Gondoliers* and Norina in *Don Pasquale*. During the summer of 2015, she traveled to Salzburg, Austria, with the Miami Frost School of Music. In 2016, she was one of three students from across the United States to be awarded an Arts in Action scholarship by Live On Stage, Inc.

**Matthew Brennan** (baritone), originally from Chicago, Illinois, is in his final year of the Master of Music degree at CIM, studying with Dean Southern. Last year, he portrayed Guglielmo in CIM's production of *Così fan tutte*. Some of his favorite credits include Count Almaviva in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* (Vanderbilt University), Prosper in Offenbach's *La Vie Parisienne* (Ohio Light Opera), and Dancairo in Bizet's *Carmen* (*/kor/* productions). Brennan is currently adjunct faculty in voice at Notre Dame College as well as bass section leader at Old Stone Church. He completed his Bachelor of Music degree at Vanderbilt University.

**Emily S. Brown** (soprano) studies with Mary Schiller and is a second year master's student. Brown has performed the full roles of Glauce in *Medea*, the Monitor and Abbess in *Suor Angelica*, Papagena in *The Magic Flute*, Principessa in *La bella dormiente nel bosco*, as well as scenes of the Countess in *Le nozze di Figaro* and Mimi in *La bohème*. She is a 2016 graduate of North Park University (Chicago, Illinois) where she was the 2015 winner of Performance Awards and the 2015 recipient of the National Presser Foundation Award for excellence in music. Currently, Brown sings with the Trinity Episcopal Cathedral choirs.

**Anne Carruthers** (soprano) is in her second year of the Master of Music degree at CIM, studying with Mary Schiller. Carruthers was a young artist at the Curtis Institute of Music in the summer of 2014 and won scholarships in 2015 and 2017 to attend the Frost at Salzburg program. Her complete roles include The Neighbor in Igor Stravinsky's *Mavra*, La Ciesca in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*, a chambermaid in *Amelia al ballo* and both a Lay Sister and an Alms Sister in *Suor Angelica*. She covered the role of Despina for CIM's March 2017 production of *Così fan tutte*.

**Yanru Chen** (soprano) is in her first year of CIM's Bachelor of Music degree, studying with Mary Schiller. At age ten, Chen participated in the China Youth Spring Festival and sang chorus in the Golden Hall of Vienna's Musikverein. For eight years she sang in the Chongqing City Student's Talent Show, winning first prize for classical voice in 2013, 2014 and 2015. In 2016, she performed

at the Chongqing Grand Theater and the Guotai Art Center in the Shuren Student Choir. In 2017, she won first prize at NATS and made her opera debut singing in the chorus of *La traviata*. Last November, she performed First Ancella in CIM's *Medea*.

**Gwendolyn DeLaney** (soprano) grew up in Boise where she worked with Opera Idaho as a chorister, supernumerary and in small roles. At CIM she has appeared in several choruses and as Suor Osmina in *Suor Angelica*. Her favorite credits include Gherardino in *Gianni Schicchi*, Christine in *The Bad Seed*, Cherubino in scenes from *Le nozze di Figaro*, Young Baby Doe in *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, chorus in *Falstaff* and chorus in *La bohème*. In addition to appearing on stage, DeLaney works behind the scenes as a stage manager. She is a sophomore studying with Mary Schiller.

**Amanda Duspiva** (soprano) is a freshman in Mary Schiller's studio at CIM. Previously, Duspiva sang with the Metropolitan Youth Orchestra's Youth Chorale for five years, performing in venues like Carnegie Hall. In her senior year of high school, she was awarded first prize in the Metropolitan Youth Orchestra's Concerto/Aria Competition. She studied at the Tanglewood Young Artist Vocal Program this past summer, learning new repertoire and performing opera scenes. Now at CIM, she is pursuing a Bachelor of Music degree with a focus in vocal performance.

**Merav Eldan** (mezzo-soprano), a native Israeli, studies with Mary Schiller at CIM. Eldan recently performed a recital at the Jewish Community Center of Youngstown and a collection of arias with the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. She has performed the roles of Dorabella, Damon, La zia Principessa, Hänsel and Componist. Eldan performed in Schloss Mirabell after winning the Miami Frost competition in Salzburg. She won first prizes in CIM's Darius Milhaud competition and the NATS Ohio State competition. She performed Mozart's Requiem and premiered Bardanashvili's Passion with Israel Camerata Jerusalem. In November she sang Neris in CIM's *Medea* and premiered Margaret Brouwer's *Voice of the Lake*.

**Gillian Fisher** (mezzo-soprano) is in her first year of the Bachelor of Music degree at CIM, studying with Mary Schiller. Fisher is an alumna of the Interlochen Arts Academy where she had the privilege of studying under Jeffery Norris and Dr. Ian Greenlaw. Fisher has participated in many chorus and chamber ensembles. She was also a member of Interlochen's audition-based Chamber Singers. While at Interlochen, Fisher played Cherubino in Act 3 of *Le nozze di Figaro*. She is passionate about music's ability to change lives and continues to be involved in many outreach initiatives across northeast Ohio.

**Shaoting Huang** (soprano) is in her second year of CIM's Master of Music degree, studying with Dean Southern. In 2013, she soloed at the New Year

Concert of the Embassy of Italy in Beijing. From 2012 to 2015, she studied in the China Conservatory from which she received her bachelor's degree majoring in music education. In 2016, she was one of the scatterbrained chambermaids in Menotti's *Amelia al ballo* and was heard as Zerlina in CIM's Opera Scenes. Recently, she participated in La Musica Lirica where she sang Suor Osimina in *Suor Angelica*.

**Eunhye Hyun** (soprano) of South Korea is in her second year of the Master of Music degree at CIM, studying with Dean Southern. She made her CIM debut as an Alms Sister in *Suor Angelica*. At the age of 16, Hyun performed with The Guri Philharmonic Orchestra in Seoul. She received the Konkuk University scholarship for 2011 and performed as the soloist in Mozart's Mass in C Major in a Konkuk University Choir concert. In 2014, she performed as Annina in a professional production of *La traviata*. She has also performed in the chorus of Handel's *Messiah*.

**Soobinh Lee** (soprano) is a sophomore at CIM, studying with Clifford Billions. She comes from Korea where she became involved in music when she was very young. She has participated in various musicals and choirs in church and school. From these musical experiences, she gained much stage and acting experience with the knowledge of how to interact with other performers. She has also participated in CIM's opera chorus and is in a church choir in Cleveland. Her former teachers include Hae-Suk Hwang for three years and Hee-Bok Ahn who is the head director of the Hee-Bok Opera Company.

**Yueshan Liang** (soprano) is in her second year of the Professional Studies diploma at CIM, working with Mary Schiller. Liang made her opera debut in her native China in 2013 when, recommended by her conservatory's faculty, she was hired by the Opera Theatre of Guangzhou for the chorus of *La traviata*. Subsequently, as part of her Bachelor of Music degree, she performed as Micaëla in scenes from *Carmen*. *Suor Angelica* was her first performance in America. In 2017, at the summer program of La Musica Lirica, she sang in the chorus of *La bohème* and as Silvia in Mozart's *Ascanio in Alba*.

**Meg Linebaugh** (mezzo-soprano) is in her second year of CIM's Master of Music degree, studying with Mary Schiller. Linebaugh recently appeared with Opera Columbus in the choruses of *La traviata*, *La bohème*, *Armide* and *Pagliacci*. She received her Bachelor of Music degree from Ohio Wesleyan University where she starred as Desiree Armfeldt (*A Little Night Music*). In 2016, she received first place in the Advanced Women Category at the Buckeye NATS auditions. In 2016-17, she was seen at CIM as the Princess (*Suor Angelica*), Amelia's Friend (*Amelia al ballo*) and as Carmen in the Sensational Scenes program. Last November, she was seen as Neris in CIM's *Medea*.

**London Long-Wheeler** (mezzo-soprano) is in her second year of the Master of Music degree at CIM, where she is studying with Mary Schiller. Long-Wheeler was seen at the 2017 Hawaii Performing Arts Festival in a double bill of *Suor Angelica* and Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*. Previous CIM credits include L'amica in *Amelia al ballo*, La maestra delle novizie in *Suor Angelica*, *Così fan tutte*, and in scenes, Mercédès in *Carmen* and La Marquise in *La fille du régiment*. During her undergraduate studies at Oklahoma City University, she was also Dritte Dame in *Die Zauberflöte*, La suora zelatrice in *Suor Angelica* and Sister St. Charles in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*.

**Liza Moss** (soprano), a junior at CIM, studies with Mary Schiller. Moss is a four-year graduate of Interlochen Arts Academy, where she majored in voice. In 2014, she performed the lead role in the world premiere of a one-act opera, *The Lottery*, based on Shirley Jackson's story. Notable work at CIM includes performing Sister Lucilla in *Suor Angelica* and singing in the ensemble while serving as Assistant Stage Manager for *Così fan tutte*. Moss has performed with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and the Skylight Opera Theatre. She also recorded for publisher Hal Leonard's music textbook series.

**Brianna Nemback** (soprano) is in her second year of CIM's Master of Music degree, studying with Mary Schiller. At CIM, she has performed as the Abbess in *Suor Angelica* and covered the title role. In the spring Opera Scenes, she was Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* and Mimi in *La bohème*. Last summer she attended the Frost School of Music Summer Program in Salzburg, Austria. Before attending CIM, she performed as Ronette in *Little Shop of Horrors* and in opera scenes programs, including the role of Elisabetta in *Maria Stuarda* and the title role in *Cendrillon* at Mount San Antonio College.

**Kaylee Norris** (soprano) is a sophomore at CIM studying with Dean Southern. Last summer, she sang the role of Genovieffa in Italy for La Musica Lirica's production of *Suor Angelica*. She is a three-time winner of the NATS Ohio chapter competition (2014-16) and in 2017 placed first in the undergraduate division of the NATS regional competition. Last year she appeared as the first Tourière in CIM's *Suor Angelica* and as Zerlina in the Spring Scenes. She has an extensive background in dance, acting and musical theater, talents she showcased at Severance Hall in the CIM benefit "Broadway in the Circle."

**Briana Pudsell** (soprano) is in the final year of CIM's Master of Music degree, studying with Mary Schiller. Pudsell performed the role of La suora zelatrice in CIM's production of *Suor Angelica* and sang in the ensemble of *Amelia al ballo*. For CIM's Sensational Scenes, she performed the role of Emilia in *Otello* and sang in the ensemble in *La bohème*. A native of Fairmont, West Virginia, she was the soprano soloist for performances of Handel's *Messiah* and Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* with Fairmont State University. In summer

2015, she traveled to Salzburg, Austria, where she studied with Clifford Billions.

**Jennifer Robble** (soprano) studies at CIM under the guidance of Mary Schiller. At CIM she has been seen as Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Amelia (*Amelia al ballo*) and Despina (*Così fan tutte*). She also covered the role of Hero (*Beatrice et Benedict*). She was the First Fairy/2nd Woman in Henry Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* at the Hawaii Performing Arts Festival and last summer she appeared as Musetta in *La bohème* at La Musica Lirica in Novafeltria, Italy. In February 2017 she was featured at Severance Hall in the "Broadway in the Circle" concert.

**Aoife Shanley** (soprano) is a junior at CIM, studying with Mary Schiller. She has sung in many of CIM's productions including Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* and Puccini's *Suor Angelica*. She has also performed with Opera Memphis in its productions of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and Puccini's *La bohème*. While at CIM, she has had the privilege of working with conductor Jahja Ling. Last summer, she was given the opportunity to participate in the University of Miami Salzburg program and sing in the opening festivities of the Salzburg Festival.

**Ariana Umbriac** (soprano) is a junior at CIM, studying with Clifford Billions. She comes from Hazleton, Pennsylvania. At CIM, she performed the role of the Messenger in *Béatrice et Bénédict* and Tessa in a scene from Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Gondoliers*. In 2016, she placed first in her category at the Ohio Chapter of the National Association of Teachers Singing and studied at the University of Miami Vocal Program in Salzburg, Austria. Last spring, she served as Assistant Stage Manager for CIM's Sensational Scenes program while also performing as Zerlina in a scene from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, and last November was Stage Manager for *Medea*.

**Qianru Wu** (soprano) is in her second year of the Professional Studies diploma at CIM, studying with Dean Southern. She made her American stage debut at CIM in the ensembles of *Suor Angelica* and *Amelia al ballo*. She received her bachelor's degree in music performance from Shanghai Normal University where she performed scenes from such leading roles as Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, Liu in *Turandot*, Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi* and Oscar in *Un ballo in maschera*. In 2017, Wu joined La Musica Lirica festival in Novafeltria, Italy. She performed Sophia in *Il Signor Bruschino* in the scenes program and a sister in *Suor Angelica*.

**Yingjia Xu** (soprano) is in her second year of CIM's Bachelor of Music degree, studying with Mary Schiller. In 2004, Xu was selected for the CCTV Galaxy Children's Television Art Troupe. She performed extensively with this troupe around China and in Taiwan, Japan, Hawaii and Utah. In June and July 2015, she performed *The Yellow River* as a member of the China National Opera and Dance Theater with the internationally celebrated pianist Lang

Lang and the China Philharmonic Orchestra. Last year, she made her American stage debut at CIM in the ensembles of *Suor Angelica* and *Amelia al ballo*.

**Lingzi Yang** (soprano) studies with Mary Schiller in CIM's graduate program in vocal performance. In her native China, prior to studying in the China Conservatory of Music, Yang was designated as the lead singer at the renowned Shenzhen Lily Girls' Choir, and participated in various international competitions and performances. She performed with Canadian singer Matthew Lien during his China Concert tour. Yang played Rapunzel in the musical *Into the Woods*, which had 30 performances in Asia. In her first year in America, she played First Lay Sister in *Suor Angelica* and Peep-Bo in a scene from *The Mikado*.

**XiaoGe Zhang** (soprano) is in her first year of CIM's Bachelor of Music degree, studying with Dean Southern. She began her piano studies in China at age 9 at the Wuhan Conservatory of Music, graduating in 2017. Zhang won several scholarships in high school. At age 15, Zhang participated in the All School Singer Competition in Wuhan Conservatory of Music and received second place. At age 16, Zhang won first place of the high school division in the Classical Singer International Vocal Competition in China and won the Outstanding Award in the later competition in Boston.

**Xiaoyang Zhang** (baritone) was a scholarship-winning undergraduate in the Shanghai Conservatory. He received his Master of Music degree from CIM last May, winning the Elizabeth Stoeckler Stevens Prize in Lieder. He also won third place in his category in the National Association of Teachers of Singing competition. He is now in the Professional Studies program, continuing his work with Clifford Billions. At CIM he has been heard in a wide range of solo roles: Publio in *La clemenza di Tito*, Dr. Bartolo in *Le nozze di Figaro*, The Husband in *Amelia al ballo*, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* and, most recently, Creonte in *Medea*.

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