

Sakiko Kanamori '63 Memorial

GALA ALUMNI CONCERT

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24 | 7:30 p.m.

Concert Hall

Jack H. Miller Center for Musical Arts

Featuring Hope College graduates pursuing performance careers in voice & piano



Hope COLLEGE

PROGRAM

- Arise, Ye Subterranean Winds (from *The Tempest*) Henry Purcell
1659-1695
Brent Michael Smith '12
- Sommi dei (from *Radamisto*) G. F. Handel
1685-1759
Sarah Ashcroft '11 VandenBrink
- Amfortas! Die Wunde! (from *Parsifal*) Richard Wagner
1813-1883
Greg Frens '01
- Reverenza (from *Falstaff*) Giuseppe Verdi
1813-1901
Meredith Arwady '00 and Isaac Droscha '08
- Come scoglio (from *Così fan tutte*) W.A. Mozart
1756-1791
Briana Sosenheimer '10
- Wie schön ist doch die Musik (from *Die schweigsame Frau*) Richard Strauss
1864-1949
Brent Michael Smith '12
- Caro nome (from *Rigoletto*) Giuseppe Verdi
Jenna Buck '12
- Alzati! La tu figlio (from *Un ballo in maschera*) Giuseppe Verdi
Isaac Droscha '08



PROGRAM

Quando m'en vo (from *La Bohème*)

Giacomo Puccini
1858-1924

Briana Sosenheimer '10

Fire Aria (from *L'enfant et les sortilège*)

Maurice Ravel
1875-1937

Jenna Buck '12

Non piu andrai (from *Le nozze di Figaro*)

W. A. Mozart

Isaac Droscha '08

Rusalka's Song to the Moon (from *Rusalka*)

Antonin Dvořák
1841-1904

Sarah Ashcroft '11 VandenBrink

Ein Schwert verhiess mir der Vater (from *Die Walküre*)

Richard Wagner

Greg Frens '01

The Best Pies in London (from *Sweeney Todd*)

Stephen Sondheim
b. 1930

Meredith Arwady '00

Champagne Finale (from *Die Fledermaus*)

Johann Strauss
1825-1899

Company



BIOGRAPHIES

MEREDITH ARWADY '00



Meredith Arwady graduated from Hope College in 2000 with a B.A. in English Literature and a B.M. in Vocal Performance. She then went on to earn her M.M. in Opera from The Curtis Institute.

Following Curtis, Meredith joined the Ryan Center young artist program with the Lyric Opera of

Chicago for three years, performing on 100 occasions. Summer programs included five years at the Chautauqua Institution Vocal Program, two summers at the Merola Program at the San Francisco Opera, and a summer at Glimmerglass.

Ms. Arwady has won several competitions and awards, including the Metropolitan Opera National Councils, the George London, the Licia Albanese/Puccini Competition, the Marian Anderson Award,

a Sara Tucker as well as a Richard Tucker Career Grant from the Tucker Foundation, a Grammy, and several scholarships. Her roles have ranged from Monteverdi to world premieres, with Wagner and Verdi featured prominently. Favorite roles include Mrs. Lovett, Dame Quickly, Madame Flora, the Old Prioress, Erda, Zita, and roles in newer works by John Adams and other contemporary composers, when she can truly make a role her own. She also enjoys concert work, with Mahler (2, 3, and 8), Beethoven (9th and *Missa Solemnis*), Brahms (*Alto Rhapsody*), Prokofiev (*Alexander Nevsky*) and Handel (*Messiah*) being favorites.

She has performed with opera companies and symphonies including the Metropolitan Opera, the San Francisco Opera, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Houston Grand Opera, the Opera Company of Philadelphia, English National Opera, Oper Frankfurt, the New York Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Pittsburgh Symphony, and the Toronto Symphony.

JENNA BUCK '12



Jenna Krystine Buck is a third year Doctoral Student at Michigan State University under the tutelage of Professor Jane Bunnell. She originally hails from the Chicagoland area. She began her studies of music through higher education at Hope College in Holland, MI, where she earned her

Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance while studying under the head of the Hope College Vocal Department, Linda Dykstra. Miss Buck's professional debut on the operatic stage occurred in 2012 with the Opera Grand Rapids company singing 'Second Genie' in their production of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*.

Buck was thrilled for her professional debut to be shared with the company that was an iconic figure throughout her undergrad. When her time at Hope came to a close she moved to East Lansing,

MI and received her Masters in Performance from Michigan State. Since her time on the west side of the state, she has participated in both Michigan State University's Todi, Italy Program in the summer of 2014 and Michigan State's China Exchange Program in the fall of 2014. In the Umbrian countryside of Todi Miss Buck had the opportunity to learn the Italian language from native speakers as well as perform operatic repertoire immersed in the culture that fostered the birth of opera performance.

While participating in Michigan State University's China Exchange Program, Buck was able to explore Chinese culture in the city of Beijing as well as foster friendships with student level Chinese opera singers at the Beijing Conservatory. In the past few years Buck has sung the role of 'Queen of the Night' in MSU's production of *The Magic Flute* and completed an MSU affiliated production of Poulenc's *La voix humaine* in April of 2016. Most recently Miss Buck participated in the Martina Arroyo, Prelude to Performance Program in the summer of 2017.

BIOGRAPHIES

ISAAC DROSCHA '08



Isaac Droscha, operatic baritone, holds a Doctorate in Vocal Performance from the University of Michigan and is currently a professor of Humanities at The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, where he is also co-conductor of the HKUST University Choir and is the music director and vocal coach of the

HKUST summer musical. The important singers and teachers in his career have been Linda Dykstra, Stephan Lusmann, and Dr. John Hines.

Isaac has performed a number of roles with various companies in the United States, including the Des Moines Metro Opera (young artist), Michigan Opera Theater, Opera New Jersey (young artist), the Bayview Music Festival, and Arbor Opera Theater, for which he is currently serving as a board member. His performances have

received numerous positive reviews. Major roles performed include the title roles in Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*, the title role in Verdi's *Falstaff*, the Musik Lehrer in *Stauss' Ariadne auf Naxos*, Nick Shadow in Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*, Escamillo in *La Tragédie de Carmen*, Dancaire in *Carmen*, and Dr. Falke in Strauss' *Die Fledermaus*, and Dulcamara in *L'elisir d'amore*. He is also a prolific concert performer of oratorio and art song and has performed roles in Handel's *Messiah*, Faure's *Requiem*, Mozart's *Requiem*, and Haydn's *The Creation*. He has sung as a soloist with the Great Lakes Chamber Orchestra, the Ann Arbor Symphonette, The Pro Arte Orchestra of Hong Kong, and was featured as a guest artist at the 2017 Intimacy of Creativity Festival of Contemporary Song in Hong Kong. In Hong Kong he is frequent collaborator with Musicviva Hong Kong, performing in operas and song recitals through the year. Isaac has also performed numerous recitals in the United States, Russia, and Hong Kong, including performances at the Estates Theater in Prague, CZ and at the Rimsky-Korsakov Museum in St. Petersburg Russia.

BETH QUIMBY '99 FISCHER



Beth (Quimby) Fischer, an accomplished pianist and singer, is a native of Williamsville, New York. She holds a Bachelor of Music degree (*magna cum laude*) in piano from Hope College, and a Master of Music degree in piano from the Peabody Conservatory of Music (Johns Hopkins University,

Baltimore, MD). Additional studies at the Gnesin School (Moscow), Eastman School of Music (Rochester). Currently, Beth is the choral accompanist at the Harley School in Rochester, NY, and maintains a busy private piano studio.

Piano Highlights: Second place winner, Liszt-Garrison Piano Competition, 2006. Guest artist, Hope College Recital Series, 2007. Major teachers include Dorothy Soong, Sue Vasquez, Claudio Vasquez, Ann Newton Vaughn, Charles Aschbrenner, and Ellen Mack. Additional studies and master classes with Nancy Roldán, Katherine Jacobson, Leon Fleisher, Paul Barnes, Sergey Senkov,

Frina Archanska Boldt, Jean Barr, and Natalya Antonova. Choral conducting studies with Weston Noble and James Jordan at the Westminster Conducting Institute, Westminster Choir College of Rider University, Princeton, NJ. Performances throughout New York State, the Baltimore-Washington-Annapolis region, Michigan, Nebraska, Canada, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Moscow, Russia. Appearances with the Annapolis Symphony, the Hope College Symphony and the Peabody Camerata; accompanying credits include the Metropolitan Young Artists' Competition (Washington, D.C.), the Gretchen Hood Competition (Arlington, VA), numerous degree recitals and freelance work (Peabody Conservatory, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Nebraska Wesleyan University). Former Director of Music, Buffalo Academy of the Sacred Heart, Point o' Pines Camp for Girls, Brant Lake, NY, member of the keyboard faculty at the Peabody Conservatory of Music, Hope College's Children's Performance Troupe.

Professional memberships: New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA), Delta Omicron, and Pi Kappa Lambda International Honorary Music Fraternity.

GREG FRENS '01

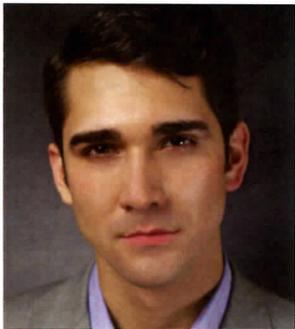


With a robust middle voice, ringing highs and commanding stage presence, Greg Frens epitomizes the heroic image of the heldentenor. A native of Michigan, Greg began his career at Opera Columbus while still a baritone—following the developmental path taken by many of his predecessors. With Opera Columbus, he appeared in

Il Barbiere di Siviglia, *Carmen*, *Don Giovanni*, *Tosca*, and *Susannah*. Subsequent performances included his international debut with the Graz Festival Orchestra, performing excerpts from *Fidelio*, *Tannhäuser* and *Faust* in concert, an Oper Abend for Illinois Opera, and *Roméo et Juliette*, *La Fanciulla del West*, and Giannini's *Beauty and the Beast* for DiCapo Opera in New York City. As the latter, the NEW YORK TIMES exclaimed, "Greg Frens was a sympathetic father, singing best in a heartfelt outpouring upon Beauty's return." Mr. Frens has appeared to critical acclaim in some lesser-known repertoire, from Ben in Menotti's *The Telephone*, to the title character in the world premiere performance of Libby

Larsen's *Everyman Jack*, for which the COLUMBUS DISPATCH noted, "Greg Frens, as Jack London, gave a skilled and amusing performance." More recently, Mr. Frens appeared as Siegmund in *Die Walküre* at the National Cathedral in Washington DC, as a featured performer with the American Wagner Project. Subsequently, Mr. Frens was awarded a study grant from the Wagner Society of Washington, D.C., for the purpose of preparing the principal heldentenor repertoire with the musical staff of the Metropolitan Opera. On the concert stage, Mr. Frens boasts an active repertoire that includes Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* and *Missa Solemnis*, Britten's *War Requiem* and *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings*, Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*, Mozart's *Requiem*, and Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder*. A finalist in the Palm Beach Opera Competition, Mr. Frens is a fellowship recipient from the American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria. Mr. Frens holds a B.A. in Vocal Performance from Hope College (2001), where he was a student of Linda Dykstra, and an M.M. in Vocal Performance from Ohio State University (2003), where he studied with Dr. Robin Rice. He currently resides in New York City, where he teaches Vocal Production at the Actor's Studio at Pace University, and studies with internationally acclaimed tenor, Scott Flaherty.

BRENT MICHAEL SMITH '12



Acclaimed by Opera News as a "standout," young American bass, Brent Michael Smith, is a rising star whose rich voice and dynamic stage presence have attracted the attention of companies across the United States.

This Fall, Brent joins the roster of resident artists at the esteemed Academy of Vocal Arts in

Philadelphia, where he will study with Bill Schuman. He will sing Ferrando in *Il trovatore*, Fafner in *Das Rheingold* and Truffaldino in *Ariadne auf Naxos*. He also makes his debut with Arizona Opera singing The God of Evil and Procrustes in their production of *Hercules vs. Vampires*, a new score by Patrick Morganelli synchronized to the 1961 cult classic film *Hercules in the Haunted World*. This summer, Brent made his mainstage debut with The Glimmerglass Festival as Ariodate in *Xerxes*. He also starred as The Commentator in Derrick Wang's *Scalia/Ginsburg*, which featured a talk back by the notorious RBG herself. Brent recently finished his time as a Resident Artist at Michigan Opera Theatre (MOT). His roles at MOT this past season included: Zuniga in *Carmen*, the British Major in the Pulitzer Prize winning opera, *Silent Night*, by

Kevin Puts, Friedrich Bhaer in *Little Women*, Ashby in *La fanciulla del West* and Marquis de Brisaille in David DiChiera's *Cyrano*. In February, Brent made his debut with Toledo Opera, performing Antonio in *Le nozze di Figaro*.

During his first season as a Resident Artist with MOT, Brent made his debut as Colline in *La bohème*. Other notable roles that season were the Second SS Officer in *The Passenger*, Grandpa Moss in *The Tender Land*, The Doctor in *Macbeth* and the Speaker in *The Magic Flute*. In 2015, Brent sang Harry Hopkins in the world premiere of Daron Hagen's *A Woman in Morocco*, as a part of Kentucky Opera's American Opera Initiative. Brent has also been young artist with Sarasota Opera, Central City Opera and with Des Moines Metro Opera where Colorado Music Buzz praised him for "making the most of his brief appearances" as Billy Jackrabbit in *La fanciulla del West*. Brent received his master of music degree from the University of Northern Iowa (UNI), singing under the tutelage of John Hines. He received his bachelor's degree in music from Hope College (Holland, MI), majoring in piano performance and minoring in Spanish. He studied voice with Linda Dykstra.

Brent is a first-place winner of the Grand Rapids Opera Competition (2012).

BRIANA SOSENHEIMER '10



Soprano Briana Sosenheimer has performed internationally in Austria, Canada, Italy, South Africa, and throughout the United States. Her selected opera roles include Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Musetta in *La Bohème*, Sophie in *Werther*, and Michaela in *Carmen*. Briana has also performed in oratorios as a soloist,

including Handel's *Messiah*, Mozart's *Requiem*, and *Coronation Mass*. As a former member of the Bowling Green Children's Opera and Indianapolis Opera Ensemble, Briana has toured the Midwest performing educational outreach programs including Little Red in *Little Red's Most Unusual Day*, Cherubino Pig in *The Three Little Pigs*, and Lucy in *The Billy Goats Gruff*. Recently, Briana appeared as Maria in *The Man of La Mancha* with Indianapolis Opera and performed at Pittsburgh Festival Opera in cabarets and concerts. She also premiered works by composer Jonathan Brooks at Anderson University. As an opera director, Briana's comedic staging has been praised as "pure fun" (PA Theater Guide). Briana has directed and assistant directed with Indianapolis Opera, Pittsburgh

Festival Opera, Ball State University, and Indiana Wesleyan University. Productions include *The Old Maid and the Thief*, *The Tender Land*, *La Tragédie de Carmen*, *Kiss Me, Kate*, *Xerxes*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, and *The George Washington Suite*. She also wrote and directed a newly written opera for children *Sam the Snake Saves the Day* that toured Indiana elementary schools. She recently wrote a new children's opera entitled *The Three Little Hoosier Pigs* to be performed by the Resident Artists at Indianapolis Opera this fall and is assistant directing *La Traviata* with Indianapolis Opera.

Briana is currently the Stage Director for the I.O. Resident Artist Ensemble and Resident Assistant Director at Indianapolis Opera. She is part of the voice faculty at Taylor University and will also guest direct the opera production at Anderson University in the spring. Briana graduated from Hope College in 2010 with a B.M. in vocal performance and minor in dance. She holds a M.M. in Vocal Performance from Bowling Green State University and a D.A. in Vocal Performance and Stage Direction from Ball State University. Briana has studied voice with Dr. Margaret Kennedy-Dygas, Linda Dykstra, Edye Hyde, Myra Merritt, and Dr. Kathleen Maurer. She has coached with Sylvia Stone and Dr. Robin Rice.

SALLY VANDERPLOEG '10



Sally Vanderploeg studied piano performance at Hope College with Dr. Andrew Le. During her time at Hope, Vanderploeg was a two-time winner of the concerto/aria competition and performed with the Hope College Orchestra during her freshman and junior years. She was also active as a vocal and instrumental accompanist, playing

for multiple voice studios and opera workshop, and was a member of the Chapel Choir. Vanderploeg went on to pursue a Master's Degree in Collaborative Piano from The Boston Conservatory under the

direction of Dr. Karl Paulnack and Dr. Andrew Altenbach. During her time at the conservatory, Vanderploeg discovered her love for opera, playing for multiple productions, voice lessons and opera workshops. She has served as rehearsal pianist for multiple productions including *La Bohème*, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *Don Giovanni*, *Tosca*, *Aida*, *La Battaglia di Legnano* Conrad Susa's *Transformations*, and Jonathan Dove's *Flight*. Vanderploeg has participated in many young artist programs including the Aspen Music Festival, the International Performing Arts Institute in Germany, the Natchez Music Festival and was an apprentice artist for Sarasota Opera's 2016 winter season. She recently completed a Bachelor's of Science in Nursing from the MGH Institute of Health Professions and is currently working on the labor & delivery floor at Massachusetts General Hospital.

SARAH ASHCROFT '11 VANDENBRINK



Soprano Sarah Ashcroft VandenBrink is a 2011 graduate from Hope College with degrees in Vocal Performance and Vocal Music Education. She studied voice with Linda Dykstra. During her undergraduate years, Sarah was heavily involved in the music department, but the greatest reward was the honor of singing

the role of Anna Maurant in Hope's first opera, *Street Scene*. She participated in the National Association of Teachers of Singing Voice Competitions and received first place regularly at both the Regional and State levels. Sarah also competed in the Opera Grand Rapids Collegiate Competition becoming a finalist in 2010, and winning first place in 2011. Taking an extra semester to complete her undergraduate degree, Sarah moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to complete her student teaching at the prominent Julia R. Masterman Laboratory and Demonstration School. While in Philadelphia, Sarah coached with Donald St. Pierre at the Curtis Institute of Music, which lead to her participation in the Chautauqua Voice Summer Program in 2012. Upon graduation from Hope in

December of 2011, Sarah accepted a position teaching Elementary Music for Hamilton Community Schools, but decided to move to Rochester, NY to do graduate work at Eastman.

Currently, Sarah is completing a Doctor of Music Arts in Vocal Performance and Literature with a minor in Vocal Pedagogy from the Eastman School of Music, where she also received her Master's of Music in 2014. She studies with Carol Webber, but also studied with Rita Shane and Constance Haas while at Eastman. Some of her Eastman Opera Theatre credits include Anna Maurant in *Street Scene*, Madame Lidoine in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Lady Billows in *Albert Herring*, and Mrs. Grose in *Turn of the Screw*.

Equally passionate for both singing and teaching, Sarah is an active member of the National Association for Music Education and the National Association of Teachers of Singing. In 2016, Sarah was a finalist for the Teaching Assistant Prize at the Eastman School of Music, and in 2017, Sarah was awarded the prestigious prize. When neither singing nor teaching, Sarah runs a successful online business with her husband, and goes on long walks with her two dogs.

SAKIKO KANAMORI '63

Sakiko was born in Japan in 1939. She grew up in Mikuni, in those days a small farming-and-fishing village on the Japan Sea. The nearest sizeable town was one hour away. When she was 12, she moved to Kochi, a medium-sized city. She went to secondary school there, got her first piano, and learned English from an American missionary family. When she thought about university, this family suggested Hope College.

In 1959, she sailed from Kobe for San Francisco. The journey took two weeks. She then boarded a train for a one-week trip across the western United States to Chicago, and finally on to Michigan, where she arrived with a suitcase marked "Sakiko Kanamori, Hope College, USA".

At Hope, she intended to concentrate on social science, but in her first year, she joined the college choir. Two years later, she auditioned for the Metropolitan Opera and was encouraged to move to New York. With her Hope degree in hand, she enrolled in the Juilliard School of Music. She then entered the Metropolitan Opera audition competition, won the Eastern regionals, and went on to share first prize in the National finals. She was the first National Council winner from East Asia.

Her goal was an opera career in Germany. In 1968, when the Städtische Bühnen Essen offered her a contract, she became one of only two Japanese female soloists in German opera houses. Between 1969 and 1981, she appeared in more than 400 opera performances, in Essen and in other venues. She also had an active concert career. Her focus was on German lieder, as well as on 19th-20th century French chansons and 20th century American songs.

In 1964, Sakiko married Byron Mook, an Oberlin graduate and specialist in agricultural development. Between opera and concert performances, they had one son and she commuted to India, Sri Lanka, and Sudan (where they lived for one year and she learned Arabic). They then settled in the Netherlands and had another son. Barry and Dennis are now both medical doctors. In May 2004, she suddenly developed meningococcal sepsis, a rare bacteria-based blood infection, and died later that year.

"The Sakiko Kanamori Prize" is given each year to one or more voice students who are on their way to professional singing careers. It is based on need and may be used only for expenses outside the college. Sakiko always remembered how difficult it was to get started and how important little things were.



With deep appreciation to President and Mrs. Voskuil, Dean Sandra Visser, Byron Mook, Cultural Affairs, Office of Alumni Affairs, the Office of Development and Alumni Engagement, Office of Events and Conferences, and Patrons for the Arts for their support of this concert. Patrons wishing to contribute to the Nykerk Fund, which provides discretionary funds for talented and exceptional students, may contact Mark Dewitt at dewittm@hope.edu.