

Saturday Evening, May 3, 2025, at 7:30

The Juilliard School

presents

Handel and the Power of Music

Juilliard415

Lionel Meunier, *Director*

Soloists From the Marcus Institute of Vocal Arts

Page Michels, *Soprano*

Luna Seongeun Park, *Soprano*

Shiyu Zhuo, *Soprano*

Michael John Butler, *Tenor*

Juilliard Community Chorus

Adrian O. Rodríguez, *Choral Director*

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (1685-1759) **From Concerto Grosso in A Major, Op. 6, No. 11, HWV 329** (1739)

Andante, larghetto e staccato—Allegro

JIMENA BURGA LOPERA, ELA KODŽAS, *Concertino Violins*

KOSUKE UCHIKAWA, *Concertino Cello*

HANDEL ***Cecilia, volgi un sguardo*, HWV 89** (1736)

Overture

Recitative: Cecilia, volgi un sguardo

Aria: La Virtute è un vero nume

Recitative: Tu, armonica Cecilia

Aria: Splenda l'alba in oriente

Recitative: Carco sempre di gloria

Aria: Sei cara, sei bella

Recitative: È ben degna di lode

Duetto: Tra amplessi innocenti

SHIYU ZHUO, *Soprano*

MICHAEL JOHN BUTLER, *Tenor*

Intermission

HANDEL ***Ode for St. Cecilia's Day*, HWV 76** (1739)

Overture: Larghetto e Staccato—Allegro—Minuet

Recitative: From harmony, from heavenly harmony

Chorus: From harmony, from heavenly harmony

continued

Aria: What passion cannot music raise and quell!
Aria and Chorus: The trumpet's loud clangour
March
Aria: The soft complaining flute
Aria: Sharp violins proclaim their jealous pangs
Aria: But oh! What art can teach
Aria: Orpheus could lead the savage race
Recitative: But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher
Grand Chorus: As from the power of sacred lays

PAGE MICHELS, *Soprano*

LUNA SEONGEUN PARK, *Soprano*

MICHAEL JOHN BUTLER, *Tenor*

AVI STEIN, *Vocal soloist preparation*

ROBERT MEALY, *Orchestral preparation*

Performance time: approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes, including an intermission

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Juilliard's full-scholarship Historical Performance program was established and endowed in 2008 by the generous support of Bruce and Suzie Kovner.

Juilliard Historical Performance is grateful for endowment support from the Sidney J. Weinberg Foundation.

Juilliard's Ellen and James S. Marcus Institute for Vocal Arts was established in 2010 by the generous support of Ellen and James S. Marcus.

About the Program

By Fredric Fehleisen

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL

*Born: February 23, 1685, in Halle (Saale),
Germany*

Died: April 14, 1759, in London

The works on this program center on music inspired by the legend of Saint Cecilia and John Dryden's 1687 poem, *A Song for St. Cecilia's Day*. Throughout Europe, St. Cecilia, the patron saint of music and musicians, was celebrated each year on November 22. According to John Rich in his recent illuminating study, the earliest source for the legend is the *Passio sancte Caeciliae*, written by Arnobius the Younger around 450 CE. That source and the *Golden Legend*, dating from around 1260 CE, form the foundation of what little we now know: Cecilia was a young noblewoman who devoted herself to remaining a virgin. During the wedding feast of her arranged marriage to a young nobleman named Valerian, Cecilia heard the music of an angel: Inspired "while the instruments sang, she sang in her heart to the Lord alone, saying 'Let my body and my heart be made pure, that I may not be confounded.'" By the late Renaissance, St. Cecilia had become a favorite subject for artists, who often painted her playing the organ, violin, bass viol, or lute. Gradually, according to Barbara Hanning, Cecilia came to be seen as a personification of music itself. Each November, St. Cecilia's Day turned into an opportunity to celebrate divine musical inspiration, making music on instruments, and above all, listening to it.

In 1683, a group of English men formed the Music Society of London and began a series of annual festivals honoring St.

Cecilia and commissioning musical works from composers including Henry Purcell and Jeremiah Clarke. These festivals continued for only about 20 years, but public celebrations of St. Cecilia's Day continued throughout the 18th century.

As Handel began moving in the direction of producing all-English oratorio seasons in the mid-1730s, he created two major works based on Dryden's poetry that would play important roles in his later career: *Alexander's Feast, or the Power of Music*, composed in 1736, and *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day*, composed in 1739.

By the time Handel composed *Alexander's Feast*, he was widely viewed as the greatest living composer in England. He had repeatedly demonstrated his mastery over the powers of music and become an esteemed figure in British culture. In 1738, the entrepreneur Jonathan Tyres actually erected a statue of Handel in Vauxhall Gardens, where Londoners could stroll through the groves of shade trees on balmy summer evenings and listen to Handel's most celebrated pieces. During those same few years, the idea of producing sustainable seasons of Italian opera quickly began to fade. Opera cost a fortune, its elite, wealthy audience base was too small, and its financial backers gradually ran short of funds. Handel had to reinvent himself in order to satisfy his audiences. The process would take years and it would require him to explore different paths. After finally abandoning opera in 1741, Handel strategically chose to program seasons entirely comprising English theatrical works presented in the "oratorio manner." Presenting full-length, three-part evenings that included one or more major works, filled in with concertos for organ or "several" diverse instruments, was the formula for success.

Cecilia, volgi un sguardo

HANDEL

On February 23, 1736, Handel premiered his setting of Dryden's ode, *Alexander's Feast, or the Power of Musick*, HWV 75, at Covent Garden. This work would prove to be one of Handel's greatest successes with the wider public. Handel scholar Anthony Hicks writes that *Cecilia, volgi un sguardo verso il suolo Britanno* ("Cecilia, cast a glance upon the land of Britain!") was premiered that same evening, between the ode's two parts. Hicks informs us that Handel composed this Italian cantata for the tenor and lutenist Carlo Arrigoni, and appears to have expanded it to include music for his soprano, Anna Strada del Pò. The work is a celebration of St. Cecilia and the idea of Virtue, presented in a series of recitative and aria pairs, followed by a final duet. Originally, Handel only wrote the final recitative and duet for Strada, but he later added a large da capo aria, "Sei cara, sei bella, virtute ognor" ("Virtue, you are always dear and beautiful") to provide her with a more substantial role. The entire cantata is richly adorned with delightful and varied settings that are each memorable in their own way. The B-section of "Sei cara"—"A pure ardor, a beautiful serenity, love, virtue alone gives"—is particularly haunting.

Following Handel's practice of framing and binding together the works he performed onstage with concertos for organ, or for diverse instruments, this evening's cantata will be preceded by the brilliant first two movements of his Concerto Grosso in A Major, Op. 6, No. 11, HWV 329, presented as an overture.

Ode for St. Cecilia's Day

HANDEL

Handel began working on *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day* on September 15, 1739, and he finished it in just 10 days! Handel had

big plans for the upcoming 1739-40 season and was hard at work churning out new pieces throughout the fall. Along with Dryden's *Song*, Handel composed all 12 of his Grand Concertos, Op. 6, in just over a month. He did have some help inventing and arranging all of this music from another composer, Gottlieb Muffat (1690-1770). Handel owned and often mined material from Muffat's 1736 *Componimenti musicali per il cembalo*.

In the beginning, there was "heav'nly harmony," but it remained trapped in chromatic darkness where nature, "underneath a heap of jarring atoms, and could not heave her head." Suddenly, a "tune-ful voice" is heard on high: 'Arise, arise, arise ye more than dead!', and the music explodes across full range of nature's strings. The Creator has now ordered all four of the elements, and the various qualities of our own respective humors—cold, hot, moist, and dry—to their stations. Now is the time for all of nature to obey music's power! On command, Handel unleashes the chorus and full orchestra upon our senses. Our ears are suddenly filled with sonorous chords and two-octave scales, dashing up and down through the entire spectrum of the tonal space in which they have emerged.

Then, the music stops. Silence. A solo cello begins to play an adagio air for Handel's soprano, Elizabeth du Parc, "La Francesina." It begins like an improvisation on a simple tune: "What passion cannot music raise and quell?" The cello plays on, later joined by the strings, and what seems like a musical vista opens up before us. The soprano finally enters, posing her sublime question, and as she sings, we almost forget where we are.

Next is dance-like martial music, sung by the tenor, and then the chorus. The sound of trumpets and strings now rouse us from

our contemplative state. The “double, double, double beat of the thund’ring drums” excites us to arms—“’tis too late to retreat!” A march, for trumpet (without timpani!), oboes, bassoons, and strings brings us back to a sense of good order. Following this, another Handelian masterpiece: “the soft complaining flute,” an air set for strings, transverse flute, and an obligato lute.

Not to be outdone, the “sharp violins” now haughtily “proclaim their jealous pangs and desperation” with trilled dotted rhythms and rapid-fire scales, answered by the tenor, who proclaims his desperation through bravura passagii: “Fury, frantic indignation, depth of pains and height of passion.” The final segment of the *Ode* begins with one last meditative air, “But oh! what art teach.” Enter Handel the organist: *Larghetto e mezzo piano. Organ Diapasons*. Simple chords articulated in the strings supporting sustained harmonies in the organ. About them soars the soprano, singing a simple melody: “But oh! What art can teach, what human voice can reach, the sacred organ’s praise?” It is as though Cecilia has returned to sing this song herself. Next, a hornpipe (a sailor’s dance) with talk of Orpheus’ lyre and savage human-kind, followed by a return to St. Cecilia’s singing, again heard by an angel in heaven.

Lastly, a final chorus, splendidly set in true Handelian fashion: All of creation begins to shudder as planets move and the “dreadful

hour” of the end of the world approaches—in glorious D Major with trumpets and drums: “The dead shall live, the living die, and music shall untune the sky!”

A Song for St Cecilia’s Day, or Ode for St Cecilia’s Day, begins with a majestic Overture in the French style that Handel will, within weeks, turn into the opening movement of his Fifth Grand Concerto. It begins with the customary dotted figures, great leaps and scalar flourishes that one expects, though here set in triple meter: a perfect melding of divine harmony and dance-like character. This larghetto is followed by spritely allegro fugue, and then by a menuetto based on an idea borrowed from Muffat that will also find its way into the same concerto grosso. Curiously, while Handel’s autograph composing score contains all of this material, his performing score begins with the first recitative and accompagnato, written for Handel’s tenor soloist, John Beard.

Fred Fehleisen has been on the Juilliard faculty since 1996 and was previously on the faculty of Mannes College of Music. He performs regularly with period-instrument ensembles in New York and is a member of the American Handel Society.

Texts and Translations

Cecilia, volgi un sguardo

Translation: Robert Mealy

Recitative (tenor)

Cecilia, volgi un sguardo verso il suolo Britanno,
e scorgerei che con sonori accenti
rinnova in questo giorno del nome tuo sì caro
la gradita memoria, per celebrar della Virtù
la gloria.

Cecilia, turn your gaze toward the British soil,
and you will see that with sonorous accents
it renews on this day the welcome memory
of your name, so dear,
to celebrate the glory of Virtue.

Aria (tenor)

La Virtute è un vero nume
del mortal nel basso mondo.
Chi si scosta dal suo lume
va dell'ombre nel profondo.
La Virtute ...

Virtue is a true deity
of mortals in this world here below.
Those who stray from its light
venture into the depths of the shadows.
Virtue ...

Recitative (tenor)

Tu, armonica Cecilia, che rapisti col canto,
che incantasti col suono, fa pur che sia concesso
a questo stuol de' tuoi seguaci egregi
imitarne i tuoi pregi, perché un nobil natale
si rende oscur senza Virtute eguale.

You, harmonious Cecilia, who rapture with song,
who enchants with sound, grant that
this group of your distinguished followers
may imitate your merits, because a noble birth
becomes obscure without equal virtue.

Aria (tenor)

Splenda l'alba in oriente,
cada il sole in occidente,
Virtù sempre esalterò.
Sia la lingua più canora,
sia la cetra più sonora,
oltre il ciel, oltre le stelle,
le sue belle
alte glorie innalzerò.
Splenda l'alba ...

Let the dawn shine in the east,
Let the sun fall in the west;
I will always extol Virtue.
Let my tongue be most melodious,
let my lyre be most sonorous,
beyond the sky, beyond the stars,
I will exalt her beautiful
and splendid glories.
Let the dawn shine ...

Recitative (soprano)

Carco sempre di gloria fu l'altero Tamigi,
ed emulò nella virtù, nel merto, i secoli passati;
e seppe unir, con generoso core,
ad armonica cetra un casto amore.

The proud Thames was always full of glory
and emulated past centuries in virtue and merit;
and knew how to unite, with generous heart,
a chaste love and a harmonious lyre.

Aria (soprano)

Sei cara, sei bella, virtute ognor;
scherzando alletti il cor,
e se ti unisci a un casto amor
il pregio tuo è maggior.
Un puro ardor, un bel seren,
amor, virtù sol dà,
e mille gioie prova il sen,
perché? ma non si sa.
Sei cara ...

You are always dear and always beautiful,
o Virtue;
you teasingly tempt the heart,
and if you are joined with a chaste love
your merit is all the greater.
Pure ardor, beautiful serenity,
these things only love and virtue give us:
and a thousand joys test the heart—
why?—but it is not known.
You are always dear ...

Recitative (soprano)

È ben degna di lode, bella Virtute;
e merta per se stessa gli applausi;
e ancor maggiore ella diviene in un
virtuoso amore.

Beautiful Virtue is truly worthy of praise;
and she deserves applause for herself;
but she becomes even greater with
virtuous love.

Duetto (soprano, tenor)

Tra amplessi innocenti,
tra armonici accenti,
Virtute sol gode.
Un candido affetto,
sincero diletto,
sol mertano lode.
Tra amplessi ...

Only among innocent embraces,
among harmonious accents,
does Virtue alone rejoice.
A candid affection,
and sincere delight
deserves praise.
Among embraces ...

Ode for St. Cecilia's Day

Text: John Dryden

Recitative (tenor)

From harmony, from heavenly harmony
This universal frame began.
When nature, underneath a heap
Of jarring atoms lay,
And could not heave her head.
The tuneful Voice, was heard from high,
Arise! Arise!
Arise ye more than dead!
Then cold, and hot, and moist, and dry,
In order to their stations leap!
And music's power obey!

Chorus

From harmony, from heavenly harmony,
This universal frame began.
Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
The diapason closing full in man.

Aria (soprano)

What passion cannot music raise, and quell?
When Jubal struck the chorded shell,
His listening brethren stood 'round.
And wondering on their faces fell,
To worship that celestial sound!
Less than a god they thought there could not dwell
Within the hollow of that shell
That spoke so sweetly and so well.
What passion cannot Music raise and quell?

Aria (tenor)

The trumpet's loud clangour excites us to arms,
With shrill notes of anger and mortal alarms,
The double-double-double beat,
Of the thund'ring drum,
Cries hark! Hark! Cries hark the foes come!
Charge! Charge! Charge! Charge!
'Tis too late, 'tis too late to retreat!
Charge 'tis too late, too late to retreat!

Aria (soprano)

The soft complaining flute
In dying notes discovers
The woes of hopeless lovers,
Whose dirge is whispered by the warbling lute.

Aria (tenor)

Sharp violins proclaim,
Their jealous pangs,
And desperation!
Fury, frantic indignation!
Depth of pains, and height of passion,
For the fair disdainful dame!

Aria (soprano)

But oh! what art can teach,
What human voice can reach
The sacred organ's praise?
Notes inspiring holy love,
Notes that wing their heavenly ways
To join the choirs above.

Aria (soprano)

Orpheus could lead the savage race,
And trees uprooted left their place
Sequacious of the lyre:
But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher:
When to her Organ vocal breath was given
An Angel heard, and straight appeared—
Mistaking Earth for Heaven.

Aria (soprano)

As from the power of sacred lays
The spheres began to move,
And sung the great Creator's praise
To all the blest above;
So when the last and dreadful hour
This crumbling pageant shall devour,
The trumpet shall be heard on high,

Chorus

The dead shall live, the living die,
And music shall untune the sky.

Meet the Artists

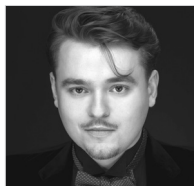
Jennifer Taylor



Lionel Meunier

Internationally renowned as the founder and artistic director of the award-winning Belgian vocal ensemble Vox Luminis, French conductor and bass Lionel Meunier is regarded as one of the most dynamic of today's artistic leaders in the fields of historical performance and choral music. Praised for his detailed yet spirited interpretative approach, he is now increasingly in demand as a guest conductor and artistic director with choirs, ensembles, and orchestras worldwide. Meunier's international breakthrough came in 2012 with Vox Luminis' *Gramophone* recording of the year award for its disc of Heinrich Schütz's *Musicalische Exequien*. Under Meunier's leadership, Vox Luminis has since embarked on extensive concert tours throughout Europe, North America, and Asia; established multiseason artistic residencies at Wigmore Hall, Aldeburgh Festival, Utrecht Early Music Festival, and Concertgebouw Bruges; and recorded more than a dozen critically acclaimed albums. The recording of Buxtehude won its second *Gramophone* award, for 2019 choral recording of the year. As a guest conductor, Meunier has worked with the Orchestra of St. Luke's at Carnegie Hall, Netherlands Bach Society, Danish National Vocal Ensemble, Netherlands Chamber Choir, Salzburg Bach Choir, and Boston Early Music Festival Collegium, and he has led projects with Vox Luminis in collaboration with Orchestra B'Rock, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, and L'Achéron, among many others. He maintains a close relationship with the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra and Consort, returning regularly to lead

collaborative projects with Vox Luminis that cover a wide repertoire. He is a regular guest at Juilliard, where he leads projects with Juilliard415 and students from the Marcus Institute of Vocal Arts. Born in France, Meunier was trained as a singer and recorder player and began his career as a bass in the ensembles Collegium Vocale Ghent, Amsterdam Baroque Choir, and Capella Pratensis. In 2013, he was awarded the title of Namurois de l'Année (Namur Citizen of the Year) for culture in the Belgian town of Namur, where he lives with his family.



Michael John Butler

Tenor Michael John Butler, hailing from Bowie, Maryland, is a second-year Artist Diploma candidate at Juilliard, where he studies with Kevin Short. This past season, Butler debuted in Italy, singing the role of Martin in *The Tender Land* with Teatro Regio di Torino. He also originated the role of Mission Coordinator in Jeanine Tesori's *Grounded* with Washington National Opera, singing the same role in a Metropolitan Opera workshop. His other recent credits include the title role of Gounod's *Faust* with Opera Baltimore and in concert with the Washington Opera Society; Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* with Merola Opera; and Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* with Juilliard. This year, Butler was a winner of the Concurs Tenor Viñas in Barcelona; and, in 2024, he was a national semifinalist at the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, a first-prize winner (Giordani Prize) at the Premiere Opera Foundation and Mario Lanza Foundation competitions, and a second-prize winner at the Marcella Sembrich

International and Gerda Lissner International Song/Lieder competitions.

S. Jay Hazan Scholarship in Vocal Arts



Page Michels

From beautiful Lake Oswego, Oregon, soprano Page Michels is an Artist Diploma candidate at Juilliard studying with Amy Burton. This season, Michels debuted at Alice Tully Hall, performing Tom Cipullo's song cycle *Late Summer*. She also portrayed Miss Jessel in Juilliard's production of *The Turn of the Screw*, performed selections from Alban Berg's *Sieben frühe Lieder* in Juilliard's The New Series, and covered the roles of Esther and Marianne in the premiere of Royce and Vavrek's *Silent Light* at National Sawdust in Brooklyn, among other engagements. Michels is the 2025 Laffont Competition NW Region Encouragement Award winner, a 2021-22 and 2022-23 young artist with Florida Grand Opera, and a 2021 Fleming Artist at the Aspen Music Festival. She received her master's from Rice University and her bachelor's from Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.

Leonie Rysanek and Lisa Della Casa Scholarship in Voice



**Luna
Seongeun Park**

Soprano Luna Seongeun Park, who hails from Seoul, is a Graduate Diploma student

at Juilliard, where she studies with William Burden. Park performed as Le Feu and Le Rossignol in *L'enfant et les sortilèges* with Louis Langrée and the Juilliard Orchestra; Nannetta in *Falstaff* at the Verbier Festival; Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* with Teatro Grattacielo in New York City; and Lucinda in *Dark Sisters* with Mannes Opera. In 2023, she won first prizes at the Career Bridges Grant Awards and the Korea and China Vocal International Competition as well as the Encouragement Award in the Opera Index Competition; last year, she received the encouragement award in the Annapolis Opera Vocal Competition and was a semifinalist in the International Hans Gabor Belvedere Singing Competition. Park earned her master's from the Mannes School of Music.



Shiyu Zhuo

Soprano Shiyu Zhuo, a native of Zhejiang, China, is a Graduate Diploma candidate at Juilliard, studying under Amy Burton. Zhuo has performed the roles of Musetta in *La bohème* and Calisto in *La Calisto* at the New England Conservatory as well as Gretel in *Hänsel und Gretel* at the Musikverein Wien with the Vienna Opera Academy in Austria, and she was a soloist in Mozart's C-minor Mass with the New England Conservatory Philharmonic. This season with Juilliard Opera, Zhuo sang the role of Une Pastourelle in *L'enfant et les sortilèges* and covered Despina in *Così fan tutte*. She also sang in Renate Rohlfing's Liederabend. In 2019, she was the first-prize winner in the Korea China International Music Competition. Zhuo earned her master's from the New England Conservatory, where she studied with Carole Haber.



**Adrian O.
Rodríguez**

Adrian O. Rodríguez is an administrator, educator, and conductor dedicated to cultivating vibrant musical communities through inclusive pedagogy and performance. At Juilliard, he holds positions as director of community engagement and manager of curriculum and family advisement for the Music Advancement Program (MAP) as well as director of both the Juilliard Community Chorus and the MAP Chorus. Prior to Juilliard, he revitalized choral programs in Houston schools and communities, including as founding director of the

Fort Bend Symphony Orchestra Chorus, associate conductor of International Voices Houston multicultural choir, and director of music for Emerson Unitarian Universalist Church. Rodríguez actively advances arts education by presenting lectures and workshops internationally and through his participation in Sphinx LEAD, a program dedicated to fostering the next generation of arts leaders. He received his doctorate and master's at Teachers College, Columbia University, where his interdisciplinary research focused on the interaction of values, ideals, and policy and their impacts on music institutions, communities, and leaders. Rodríguez received his bachelor's in music education from the University of Houston and his master's in choral pedagogy from the Westminster Choir College.

Juilliard415

Since its founding in 2009, Juilliard415—Juilliard's principal period-instrument ensemble—has made significant contributions to musical life in New York and beyond, bringing major figures in the field of early music to lead performances of both rare and canonical works by composers of the 17th and 18th centuries. With its frequent musical collaborator Yale Schola Cantorum, the ensemble has performed throughout Scandinavia, Italy, Japan, South-east Asia, the U.K., India, and Germany, and with the Bach Collegium Japan, conducted by Masaaki Suzuki, Juilliard415 played a historic period-instrument performance of Mendelssohn's *Elijah* at the Leipzig Gewandhaus in Germany. Juilliard415 made its South American debut in Bolivia on a tour sponsored by the U.S. Department of State in 2018, returning there in 2022 and 2024. The ensemble has twice toured in New Zealand. Previous seasons have been notable for side-by-side collaborations with Les Arts Florissants at the Philharmonie de Paris and with Philharmonia Baroque as well as concerts directed by such eminent musicians as Ton Koopman, Kristian Bezuidenhout, and Christopher Hogwood. The many additional distinguished guests who have led Juilliard415 include Kristian Bezuidenhout, Harry Bicket, Monica Huggett, Nicholas McGegan, Rachel Podger, and Jordi Savall. Juilliard415 has performed on five continents, with notable appearances at the Boston Early Music Festival, Leipzig Bachfest, MA Festival (Bruges), and Utrecht Early Music Festival, where Juilliard was the first-ever conservatory in residence.

Juilliard415, which takes its name from the pitch commonly associated with the performance of baroque music (A=415), has performed major oratorios and baroque operas every year with colleagues from Juilliard's Marcus Institute for Vocal Arts, including a fully staged production of Rameau's *Hippolyte et Aricie* and a much-praised 2021 production of Luigi Rossi's rarely performed opera *L'Orfeo*. In 2019, Juilliard415 and the Marcus Institute for Vocal Arts presented Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* at Opera Holland Park in London and the Royal Opera House of Versailles. The ensemble has also premiered new works for period instruments, most recently *MAP: A New World* by Francisco Nuñez, performed with the chorus of Juilliard's Music Advancement Program at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine and, in 2019, *The Seven Last Words Project*, a Holy Week concert at the cathedral for which the ensemble commissioned seven leading composers including Nico Muhly, Caroline Shaw, and Tania León. In 2023, Juilliard415 partnered with Juilliard Dance to produce new choreography for the suite from Rameau's *Naïs*.

In the past few seasons, Juilliard415's activities have included collaborations with Philharmonia Baroque and Yale Schola Cantorum as well as the Royal Conservatoire The Hague, the return of conductors Laurence Cummings and Rachel Podger, and a new production of Handel's *Atalanta* with the Marcus Institute for Vocal Arts, which also joined the ensemble for a dazzling concert presentation of Purcell's *King Arthur*, directed by Lionel Meunier. French director Laurence Equilbey made her Juilliard debut conducting a program of Schubert and Mozart. Last season opened with a program of Lully and Rameau for Music Before 1800, New York's longest-running early music series, and continued with Handel's *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato* with Yale Schola Cantorum, directed by Masaaki Suzuki. The 2023-24 season culminated with the Bach B-minor Mass with Yale Schola Cantorum, under the direction of David Hill, followed by a tour of the mass in Great Britain.

Juilliard415

Lionel Meunier, *Director*

Violin 1

Jimena Burga Lopera
Annemarie Schubert
Ian Jones
Kiyoun Jang

Violin 2

Ela Kodžas
Epongue Wei-Dikaki Ekille
Eliana Estrada

Viola

Lara Mladjen
Ching Wen Wu

Cello

Cordelia Lindsey Mutter
Kosuke Uchikawa
Haocong Gu
Maya Takeda Ridenour

Bass

Josue Daniel Reyes

Flute

Nuria Canales Rubio

Oboe

Remy Libbrecht
Sookhyun Lee

Bassoon

Ashley Mania

Trumpet

David Green
Vincent Yim

Timpani

Jonas Koh

Harpsichord

Ziwei Zhou

Organ

William Rehwinkel

Theorbo

Dani Zanuttini-Frank

Juilliard Community Chorus

The Juilliard Community Chorus was founded in 2022 to bring together faculty, staff, College Division students, Pre-College students, and alumni in a shared musical experience while also reintroducing choral singing to Juilliard's College Division. Under the direction of Adrian O. Rodríguez, this open-enrollment ensemble presents a broad range of choral repertoire designed to foster collaboration across the Juilliard community. This season includes a milestone performance at Carnegie Hall and an appearance at Alice Tully Hall in partnership with Juilliard's Historical Performance program.

Soprano

Rachel Kunce
Elise Winkler
Yufei Qiu
KiMani Bridges
Natalie Stein
Lily Jonsson
Kathy Gertson

Alto

Stephanie Bell
Patricia Burt
Maya Reilly
Emma Luyendijk
Olivia Bennett
Nicolette Weisser
Beth Techow
Christina Gonzalez

Tenor

Ricardo Ferro Hernandez
Andrew Nicholas Maximilian Arloro
Ethan Jankowski
Noah Godard

Bass

Austin Adaranijo
Jatin Himatsinghani
Samuel Blake
Luke Baron
Lucca Caise

Juilliard Historical Performance

Juilliard Historical Performance (HP) students are part of a highly selective training program for advanced students who aspire to leadership in the field of early music. Our graduates have gone on to perform with many of the world's most prominent historical-performance ensembles including Les Arts Florissants (concertmaster), Il Pomo d'Oro (concertmaster), Seattle Baroque (concertmaster), Tafelmusik (principal cello), Boston Baroque (principal cello), the English Concert, Bach Collegium Japan, the Handel and Haydn Society, the Boston Early Music Festival, New York's Trinity Baroque Orchestra, and San Francisco's Philharmonia Baroque (concertmaster, cello).

As outstanding historical performers also must be excellent historians and researchers, the HP program combines high-level performance training with rigorous academic study. Students take private lessons with our renowned faculty and visiting artists; participate in a variety of ensembles; and take classes tailored to the scholar-performer, including improvisation, performance practice, Baroque theory and ear-training, historic dance, and continuo. Students also acquire the skills to create and manage their own ensembles as well as communicate effectively with their audiences. They also share their skills with the members of Juilliard's Music Advancement Program (MAP) and the Sphinx Performance Academy, introducing the idea of historical performance to young music students and the wider community through Juilliard's Community Engagement program.

HP students are in the forefront of reinventing our field for the 21st century. Several students worked with musician Rhiannon Giddens, transcribing and arranging movements from her ballet *Black Lucy* and the *Bard* for historic instruments. Alumni and faculty members headlined the 2022 Ojai Music Festival with their innovative ensemble *Ruckus*. Other graduates are creating new music written in old styles with the collective *Nuova Pratica*. The first HP flute graduate is creating genre-defying albums that climb the Billboard charts while also being principal flute of Handel and Haydn. Other students have founded string quartets that combine period performance with commissions of new works or are exploring the relationship of Bach suites to new choreographies. By discovering unheard works from the archives of early modern Germany or recording French harpsichord music on spectacular instruments of the period, our students are bringing old works to vivid life again.

Juilliard Historical Performance immerses our students in the traditions of the 17th and 18th centuries so this language can speak to us anew.

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One of America's most prestigious programs for educating singers, Juilliard's Ellen and James S. Marcus Institute for Vocal Arts offers young artists programs tailored to their talents and needs. From bachelor and master of music degrees to an advanced Artist Diploma in Opera Studies, Juilliard provides frequent performance opportunities featuring singers in its own recital halls, on Lincoln Center's stages, and around New York City. Juilliard Opera has presented numerous premieres of new operas as well as works from the standard repertoire.

Juilliard graduates may be heard in opera houses and concert halls throughout the world; diverse alumni artists include well-known performers such as Leontyne Price, Renée Fleming, Risë Stevens, Tatiana Troyanos, Simon Estes, and Shirley Verrett. Recent alumni include Isabel Leonard, Susanna Phillips, Paul Appleby, Erin Morley, and Sasha Cooke.

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As of February 19, 2025

* = Alum
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By Dylan Parent

Whether you know her as Queen Lesli or Aunti Lesli, Lesli Margherita is theatre royalty. She won an Olivier Award (in 2009 for *Zorro*) before even making her Broadway debut (in 2013 as *Matilda's* Mrs. Wormwood, who she played for over 1,000 performances). This beloved performer rules her pink and sparkly kingdom with a press-on encrusted fist, generously offering her Instagram or X followers honest advice and anecdotes meant to empower.

"I just try to give back to the youth of the theatre," Margherita says empathically. "[Own] what you are, who you are, and [don't let] anybody tell you who you should be, what you should do. Have absolute ownership of you, and trying to block out people that are going to be negative."

The self-proclaimed "tacky Italian" is currently "bump-bump-bumpin' it" as the demur-er Texas Twirler, Tessie Tura, in the current Broadway revival of *Gypsy* at the Majestic Theatre. This is a role Margherita "begged" her agents to get her an audition for, having always been drawn to characters that tickle her maternal bone.

"I have loved Tessie Tura my entire life," Margherita says, proudly rattling off the many reasons the butterfly-costumed burlesque performer speaks to her. "I don't think she

thinks she has talent." Margherita laughs. "She knows that she has something to give. And when she meets Louise, she's like, 'Oh, this is my expertise. I can fix you up.' I love that about her."

But for Margherita, her biggest point of pride in this production isn't that her character nurtures Louise, nor is it that she appears eight times a week on pointe. It's that she once got co-star Audra McDonald, who plays Rose, to break character while on stage.

"I was doing something, in *that* area," Margherita says, referring to the pelvic placement of a butterfly on her costume. "That she hadn't seen before." Granted, McDonald breaking was a slight upturn of the lips, but Margherita took it as a victory (especially when McDonald pointed at her after the show ended). "We came on for curtain call [I went], 'I won! I won!' I was so proud of myself."

Joining Playbill to get ready before a two-show day for *Gypsy*, Margherita shared her boldest choice auditions (and whether or not they paid off), McDonald's one flaw, and what set of rhinestone accessories she cannot exist without. Get ready with Margherita by scanning the QR code or visiting Playbill.com.





By Andrew Gans

It's been a high-profile few years for Olivier winner David Thaxton, who is currently making his Broadway debut in Jamie Lloyd's stripped-down production of Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Sunset Blvd.* at the St. James Theatre. Thaxton originated the role of put-upon butler (and former silent-film director) Max Von Mayerling opposite Olivier winner Nicole Scherzinger's Norma Desmond when the hit revival opened in London in 2022. His rich, powerful baritone and intensely focused performance have since won acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic, including an Olivier nomination for Best Actor in a Supporting Role in a Musical.

In the interview below, Thaxton shares why Stephen Sondheim had the most impact on his career.

What was your reaction when you learned that you would be transferring to Broadway with *Sunset*? Had Broadway always been a goal?

David Thaxton: Broadway had always been a massive dream. I always thought I might have a route in doing *Les Miz*, *Phantom*, or *Come From Away*. But then they all closed. . . What has happened with *Sunset Blvd.* is more than I could have imagined. I thought the show would transfer for sure, but I just assumed it would be Nicole and lots of other

Americans. Jamie's loyalty and commitment to the vision is amazing.

You won an Olivier in 2011 for playing Giorgio in *Passion*. Did you get the chance to work with Stephen Sondheim?

Steve was there the whole time, from day one of rehearsals. It was the absolute honor and privilege of my career to work with him and get to know him. He was the most openly emotional person I've ever met. I loved every second of the time I spent with him, it was amazing. And I wrote to him not long before he died. I don't know what made me do it, but something just forced me to, and I told him all the things I wanted to say then but couldn't. And he wrote me back. That letter is on my dressing room mirror right now.

Do you have a dream stage role and/or actor you would like to work with?

If I don't play Sweeney Todd before I die, I'll be livid! That video of Angela Lansbury and George Hearn is still one of my favorite things in the world. I saw George Hearn play Max in New York in 1996, amazing. I still have the huge score, with the original artwork on it, all that amazing black and white and red. The last time Steve saw *Passion* in London, I got him to sign it. It's my most treasured possession.



KIERAN CULKIN: PERFORMING WHILE PARENTING

By Diep Tran

At one point, Kieran Culkin tried to back out of *Glengarry Glen Ross* on Broadway. After years of working on HBO's *Succession*—and then right after, on *A Real Pain*, for which he won an Academy Award—the actor was ready to spend more time with his two young children. But with *Glengarry Glen Ross*, he would rarely ever see them because his nights and weekends would be occupied. “As much as I want to do this play, I want out,” he recalled thinking.

Granted, Culkin didn't actually say that. But he did ask if the schedule could be modified so the show was dark on Sunday instead of Monday. He got an immediate yes. And now, two months into the run for *Glengarry Glen Ross* at Broadway's Palace Theatre, Culkin has found his rhythm as a performer and a parent: “I wake up, do a bit of a morning with the kids, and then take a nap for about two or three hours. And then I pick them up from school and get a little bit of time with them. And then go do a show.”

When Culkin got offered the part of Richard Roma, the ruthless real estate agent who backstabs his colleagues to get ahead, the actor had never seen the play or the film. Culkin's wily take on the traditionally hyper-masculine character may be surprising

for those familiar with the show.

“There were some people that were going in with an expectation of who this character is. Some people would say, like, ‘Oh, I wasn't really seeing the alpha male,’” says Culkin. “If an alpha male was trying to sell me something, I would be very put off. So the way I saw it was, if he's gonna be a successful salesman, how does he make the sale? He makes it by connecting with somebody, by kind of charming them, or opening up and showing some kind of vulnerability.”

This is a welcomed return to Broadway for Culkin; he made his debut in 2013 in Kenneth Lonnergan's *This Is Our Youth*, where he played a teenage delinquent who's also a drug dealer. That, coupled with Culkin's long stint on *Succession*, has given the actor something of a reputation for playing morally bankrupt characters. “It's just well written. It's hard to tell why I want to play somebody or do a certain job,” admits Culkin. “If I got a really great role where the guy was a lovely man and a good father, I would probably be drawn to that as well.”

But in the meantime, at least Culkin can be a good father in real life, saying as he departs the interview: “I have to run and pick up my daughter from school now.”