



CU PERFORM
ING ARTS
EKLUND
opera
PROGRAM

West Side Story

A musical by Leonard Bernstein

Oct. 26-28

West Side Story

Oct. 26-28, 2018

Based on a Conception of Jerome Robbins

Book by Arthur Laurents

Music by Leonard Bernstein

Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

**Entire Original Production Directed and
Choreographed by Jerome Robbins**

**Originally Produced on Broadway by
Robert E. Griffith and Harold S. Prince
By Arrangement with Roger L. Stevens**

West Side Story is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI).
All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.MTIShows.com

The videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.

The production will run approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes, including a 15-minute intermission.

Special thanks to:



Paul Mitchell the School and Foushee salonspa for providing student and professional hair stylists
Nadia Artman for hosting Maestro Philip Hesketh In Boulder, Colorado
Grand Teton Music Festival in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, for providing the mambo recording
The Costume House, LLC for providing costumes for the production

Cast

Role

Maria
Tony
Anita
Bernardo

Friday/Sunday

Name

Sabina Balsamo
Patrick Bessenbacher
Elizabeth Bowersox
Dominic Aragon

Saturday

Name

Christine Honein
Andrew Taylor
Berenice Carrera
Skyler Schlenker

Jets

Riff
Action
A-RAB
Baby John
Snowboy
Big Deal
Diesel
Gee-Tar
Mouthpiece

Zachary Bryant
Brendan Lutes
David Starry
Zachariah Smith
Wesley Juels
Michael Gaven
Sam Bruckner
Mack Rodgers
Michael Crone

Zachary Bryant
Brendan Lutes
David Starry
Zachariah Smith
Wesley Juels
Michael Gaven
Sam Bruckner
Mack Rodgers
Michael Crone

Sharks

Chino
Pepe
Indio
Luis
Anxious

Steven Vinolas
Tyler Padgett
Kinari Rima
Steven Groth
Skyler Schlenker

Steven Vinolas
Tyler Padgett
Kinari Rima
Steven Groth
Dominic Aragon

Jet Girls

Graziella
Velma
Minnie
Clarice
Anybodys
A Girl

Jenna Snyder
Helena Regan*
Sophia Zervas
Mara Riley
Megan Pryor
Mara Riley

Jenna Snyder
Helena Regan*
Sophia Zervas
Mara Riley
Megan Pryor
Mara Riley

Shark Girls

Rosalía
Consuelo
Teresita
Francisca
Estella
Margarita
Leala

Julieta García
Kate Johnson
Leanne Rubinstein
Dominique Grogan
Asha Romeo
Sophie Engerman
Berenice Carrera

Julieta García
Kate Johnson
Leanne Rubinstein
Dominique Grogan
Asha Romeo
Sophie Engerman
Elizabeth Bowersox

Adults

Doc
Schrank
Glad Hand
Officer Krupke

Caleb Sharp
Steven Groth
Michael Crone
Adam Ewing

Caleb Sharp
Steven Groth
Michael Crone
Adam Ewing

**Dance Captain*

Featured Dancers

Ryan Sinton
Olivia Fertig

Production staff

Stage Director

Leigh Holman

Guest Conductor

Philip Hesketh

Set and Lighting Designer

Peter Dean Beck

Stage Manager

Joel Atella

Costume Designer

Tom Robbins

Technical Director

Ron Mueller

Choreographer

Stephen Bertles

Assistant Director

Erin Hodgson

Assistant Director

Javier Abreu

Production Assistant

Mary Kettlewell

Orchestra

Violin

Lindsie Katz
Autumn Pepper
Michael Miller
Hannah Kennedy
Kimberly Bill
Mary Evans
Kashmira Tata

Cello

Chas Barnard
Gabriel Ramos
Nelson Walker
Eliot Johnson

Double bass

Eleanor Dunlap
Jordan Walters

Flute

Kaleb Chesnic
Brice Smith
Indigo Fischer

Oboe/English horn

Brittany Bonner

Clarinet

Jacob Eichhorn
Jade Garcia
Maggie Greenwood
Ellen Kennedy

Bassoon

Ethan Shuler

Saxophone

Brian Lambert
Jamyson Lindhorn
Michael Meier

Horn

Spencer Koscik
Erika Hollister
Maggie Barnes

Trumpet

Ryan Spencer
Drew Ziemba
Luke Finaldi
Jeremiah Kersting

Trombone

Alison Orthel
Kenny Ross

Guitar

Mike Hyland

Piano

Nathália Kato

Timpani

Andrew Quinlan

Drum set

Taylor Edwards

Percussion

Alberto Ortega
Mallory Graves
Ryan Pride

Production and technical staff

Assistant Technical Director

Jeff Rusnak

Stage Manager

Joel Atella

Assistant Stage Managers

Paige Sentianin

Jacob Baker

Courtney Williams

Carpenters

Cooper Braun-Enos

Ben Smith

Dan Sjaastad

Scenic Artist

Jennifer Melcher

Assistant Scenic Artist

Lelah Radostis

Makeup Designer

Jeanette Hickok

Hand Properties & Wig Designer

Tom Robbins

Head Hair Stylist

Chad Boltz

Assistant Hair Stylist

Jenna Krenzelok

Photoshoot Hair and Makeup Stylist

Sarah Opstad

Costume Assistant

Whitney Wolanin

Costume Stitcher

Yvonne Hines

Music staff

Head Vocal Coach

Jeremy Reger

Vocal Coach

Mutsumi Moteki

Rehearsal Pianists

Nathália Kato

Barbara Noyes

Lennart Triesschijn

Macky crew

Production Manager & Master Electrician

Richard Barrett

Production Manager & ASM (Sound)

Trevor Isetts

Rail Operator

Ben Smith

Sound Engineer

Dan Sjaastad

Deck Hands

Kristianna Hartsen

Spot Operators

Scott Wickam

Andrew Schuster

Light Board Operator

Chris Evans

Pit Manager

JD Rogers

Assistant Director of Production

JP Osnes

Synopsis

Act 1

It's a balmy summer in the slums of the upper west side, Manhattan, New York.

After ruling the turf of their neighborhood for the past several years, the Jets, a street gang of Polish American teenagers led by Riff, find themselves competing in a territorial battle with the newly immigrated Puerto Rican Sharks, led by Bernardo. Tensions heat up, resulting in bullying and a fist fight on the playground broken up by Lieutenant Schrank and Officer Krupke. After the incident, Riff plots with his fellow Jets to settle their differences with the Sharks through a rumble (or street fight) at the neighborhood dance. The dance is at the gym—some of the only neutral territory in the neighborhood. Riff brings up that the Sharks may fight with weapons instead of their fists, but the group seems excited about this possibility.

Riff also wants to invite Tony, his close friend and former fellow Jet, but the group is concerned about Tony's loyalty.

Riff meets with Tony at Doc's Drugstore to convince him to join the Jets at the dance. Tony is reluctant to join—he has left the gang life behind him—but he decides to help Riff and to meet the group at the dance. Tony tells Riff that he feels that something incredible is about to happen to him, and Riff suggests that it may happen at this dance.

Maria, sister of Shark leader Bernardo, is working in a bridal shop with Bernardo's girlfriend, Anita. Maria is new to the neighborhood, having just arrived from Puerto Rico. It has been arranged that Maria will marry Chino—another member of the Sharks—but Maria confesses that she does not have feelings for him. Anita and Maria plan on attending the neighborhood dance, and Anita is making a dress for Maria.

Both groups arrive at the dance. It is already obvious that tensions are high, and a fight is likely to break out. Glad Hand, a social worker, and Officer Krupke quickly rush to break up the teens. The dancing begins. Tony and Maria see each other from across the room for the first time, and it's as if all of their friends have disappeared. They begin to dance. Bernardo spots the two together and angrily pulls Maria away, telling her that Tony is only trying to take advantage of her. Bernardo orders Chino to take Maria home. Before both gangs leave the dance, Riff and Bernardo make a plan to meet at Doc's to decide where and when the final rumble will take place and to establish some rules.

Once home, Bernardo warns Maria about Tony and tells her to keep her distance. Anita scolds him, saying that in America women have the right to be involved with whichever man they want. The group breaks into song about the pros and cons of living in America as immigrants.

Tony is walking the streets of the neighborhood alone, still dazzled by Maria, calling out her name. Maria hears him and climbs out onto her fire escape. The two express their love for each other and agree to meet at the bridal shop the next day after closing.

The Jets await the Sharks at Doc's store. Officer Krupke shows up, suspicious of the group. The teens show no respect for him and proceed to make fun of him and other societal authority figures. The Sharks arrive, and the discussion of the time and location of the fight begins. Tony joins the group and convinces them that only fists should be used. Schrank arrives on the scene, attempting to discover the details of the upcoming rumble. Tony tells Doc about his love for Maria, much to the concern of Doc.

The next day, Maria couldn't be in better spirits at the bridal shop, and her co-workers have noticed. Tony arrives at the shop, and Maria asks him to try to stop the fight from happening. The two playfully pretend to get married in the bridal shop.

Both gangs prepare for the rumble that evening. The teens meet at the designated location—under the highway—and the fighting begins between Bernardo and Diesel. Tony arrives and tries to stop the conflict, but Bernardo advances towards him and blades are quickly drawn between Riff and Bernardo when Riff comes to Tony’s defense. Riff has an opportunity to kill Bernardo but is held back by Tony. Bernardo attacks and kills Riff. Tony, in a fit of rage, attacks and kills Bernardo. Mass chaos breaks out between the gangs and sirens are heard. The groups scatter. Tony, filled with shame and shock at what he has done, flees the scene at the last moment. The bodies of Riff and Bernardo are left alone.

Act 2

Maria, still giddy with new love and currently daydreaming about Tony, has no idea what has unfolded between the gangs. Chino tells Maria what Tony has done, and Maria, overcome with disbelief, runs to her room and prays that it isn’t true. Tony is there waiting for her. Every part of her being wants to hate Tony, but she is still in love with him. The streets outside are glowing with flashing lights from police cars, but the two dream of a place where they can be free of judgment and prejudice and live peacefully. The two plan to run away.

The Jets meet, shocked and angry, because nobody actually planned on killing anyone. Their new leader, Ice, tells them to relax and be cool. Anybodys tells the group that Chino is hunting Tony with a loaded gun, craving revenge for Bernardo’s death. The group plans efforts for Tony’s protection. Anita arrives, terribly upset, and Tony quickly leaves, telling Maria to meet him at Doc’s later. Anita can tell that Tony has been in the house and is very angry with Maria for staying faithful and continuing to love Tony. However, through Maria’s efforts to explain, Anita realizes that Tony’s love for Maria is just as strong as her own love for Bernardo, and she warns Maria of Chino’s plan.

Lieutenant Schrank arrives, detaining Maria for questioning about Bernardo’s death. Anita leaves to tell Tony that Maria will be late. The Jets, who have already found Tony and are waiting at Doc’s, attack Anita verbally and physically. Anita is livid, and out of spite tells the Jets that Chino has shot and killed Maria.

Doc tells Tony this horrible news, and Tony seeks out Chino in agony to beg for his own death. Tony arrives at the playground and sees Maria, alive and healthy. He runs towards her overjoyed, but Chino steps out of the darkness and delivers a fatal shot. All gang members and adults flock to the scene, and Maria holds Tony in her arms as he dies, both reliving their previous daydream of finding a peaceful place. Full of anger, the Jets yet again advance toward the Sharks, but Maria grabs the gun and threatens both gangs. She claims that it was the Sharks and the Jets together who killed Bernardo, Riff and Tony. Maria is not able to bring herself to use the gun, however, and drops it to the ground. The gang members assemble on both sides of Tony’s body, symbolizing that the feud has finally ended. A procession of both Jets and Sharks is formed, and Tony is carried away, with Maria the last one to leave.

Notes from Leigh Holman

Stage director

After our decision to produce *West Side Story* during the yearlong celebration of Leonard Bernstein's 100th birthday, I walked around with a huge knot in my throat. There are many reasons to be intimidated by the piece—not to mention that still relevant topic of racism in America—but because this musical is a masterpiece. Like *The Sound of Music*, so many people have been forever changed by the film. How does one begin to touch this work? I had some sleepless nights about this one. How to understand the cultural implications, how to pull off a big dance work in a university opera program, how to cast correctly, how to truly respect the Bernstein-Sondheim score and Jerome Robbins' brainchild? Most importantly, what do I have to offer to my students in regard to this so well recognized, revered and celebrated work of art?

My first decision in tackling this beautiful beast was to surround myself with artistic experts: a choreographer who has staged the piece multiple times and played the roles of both the Jets' "Riff" and the Sharks' "Bernardo;" an assistant director who brings the culture of Puerto Rico and a deep understanding of the migration (not immigration—the Sharks are American!) of Puerto Ricans to New York City in the 1950s after the war; a fight director who has choreographed the violence for *West Side Story*, *Romeo and Juliet* and musicals, plays and operas all over the country; and a maestro who takes great care with every detail of the score and, with his personality, is able to inspire great music from the orchestra and performers. Artistically, our students are in good hands and from this writing have advanced their skills in dance, singing, stage fighting and acting at an uncanny rate. Education: priority #1. Check that box.

I was still left with the problem: What do I have to bring to this piece? Am I just a ringmaster in the middle of a gorgeously chaotic circus? I'm not sure how to answer that one. I can say that as the piece's director, the students and I have worked hard to tell a riveting story and to develop authentic, individual characters onstage. For, as in real life, who are the people that create mob groups—identifiable and seemingly dangerous gangs of people that only seem to have one shared thought? Individuals. Each individual can choose to follow their own heart or can choose to move anonymously within a group. In *West Side Story*, we meet Tony and then Maria who have dared to taste their individualism from before our first meeting. We learn bit by bit that Riff, who is like a brother to Tony, has a deep love for the former leader of the Jets and who is probably more devoted to that friendship than any gang. We meet Anita who, after the interchange with Maria in "A Boy Like That," begins to show signs that she too ranks true love above mob thought. After that, character by character, we see a "Someday, Somewhere" world when the sparks of inclusiveness, original thought and love begin to ignite in each of the teenagers onstage. For me, Maria has the biggest transformation to make: Will she allow the biggest tragedy in her life to destroy her or to propel her to make a difference in the world? How many of us can say we have been at that crossroads and what decision, if any, did we take? *West Side Story* continues to be a story for the ages—relevant in Shakespeare's day, in 1950s America and, clearly, today. Perhaps someday, somewhere we'll live in a world that will finally find the theme of fear in losing one's territory, the fear of individual thought and the fear of inclusiveness an outdated idea for a musical. For now, though—it's firmly set in its place.

A toast to Leonard "Lenny" Bernstein—thank you for your individual thought, inclusiveness and choice to make a difference. 100 is a big birthday. I'm sure we'll be toasting you at 200, 300 and beyond.

Notes from Philip Hesketh

Guest conductor

I was lucky enough to be part of a generation of musicians who experienced the phenomenon that was Leonard Bernstein when he was arguably at the height of his powers, in the 60s and 70s. To us, it seemed that he lived life on a more intense plane of existence than those around him. As a conductor and performer, he was well known for the extremes of expression that he brought to his interpretations; a frenetic rhythmic drive, voluptuously sensual lyricism and musical climaxes of white-hot intensity, all drawn from the musicians with a flamboyant and balletic conducting technique. Given the attitudes of some in “classical” music, it must be no wonder that he was and remains a controversial figure. As a very young British musician at this time, I and many of my fellows were transfixed and inspired by this man who, it seemed, embodied so many of our ideals and aspirations for the future and caught perfectly the singular Zeitgeist. The darkness and austerity of two world wars was being replaced by a bright, exhilarating freedom and optimism; but bright, too, was the terror of the four-minute warning. To see someone consuming life and everything in it with such voraciousness resonated deeply within us; “live fast, die young” indeed.

It can come as no surprise that these qualities, which so energized a generation, shine out in Bernstein’s own music. This is particularly so in *West Side Story*, which he must have seen as a chance to really let his musical hair down. So often, when a composer of “serious” music experiments with “crossover,” the results are a pastiche; superficial and self-conscious. For me, this is absolutely not the case here. When Bernstein writes Broadway, it is truly great Broadway. When he writes opera, it’s opera of the first order, radiant and lush. Like the man, the work crosses boundaries and by crossing them, breaks them down and denies them existence.

To those who love labels, both Leonard Bernstein and *West Side Story* must be a sore trial. The man, in his musical life as conductor, composer, pianist and educator; in his public life as political activist, philanthropist and author; in his personal life with its complex relationships and fluid sexuality, conformed to no stereotype. The work also refuses to be categorized. Is it music theatre? Is it opera, operetta or ballet? The only possible answer to these questions is: Yes. It is all of these. Together with Bernstein’s genius, they are all ingredients in this unique and wonderful recipe.

The company

DOMINIC ARAGON (Bernardo/Anxious)

This is Aragon's first role with Eklund Opera. Roles elsewhere: Yamadori (*Madama Butterfly*) Opera Fort Collins, Sarastro (*Die Zauberflöte*) Colorado State University, Ariodate (*Serse*) CSU, Fredrik (*A Little Night Music*) CSU, Falke (*Die Fledermaus*) CSU, Escamillo (*The Tragedy of Carmen*) Baldwin Wallace University, Tío (*La vida breve*) Ohio Light Opera, Nardo (*La finta giardiniera*) BWU. Awards: First Prize, NATS Colorado/Wyoming Regional Competition, Graduate Division 2017.

SABINA BALSAMO (Maria)

This is Balsamo's first role with Eklund Opera. Past roles elsewhere: Mabel (*The Pirates of Penzance*), Elsie (*The Yeomen of the Guard*), and Rose (*Ruddigore*) The Pittsburgh Savoyards; Fredrika (*A Little Night Music*) and Mickey (*Damn Yankees*) Pittsburgh Festival Opera; Blanche (*Dialogues of the Carmelites*), Polly (*The Threepenny Opera*) and Pitti-Sing (*The Mikado*) The Baldwin Wallace University Opera. She has also premiered the role of Anne in Cleveland Opera Theater's production of *Verlorene Heimat*.

PATRICK BESSENBACHER (Tony)

Patrick Bessenbacher is a junior from Overland Park, Kansas. With Eklund Opera, Bessenbacher has performed as Lurcanio (*Ariodante*), Chorus (*Sweeney Todd*), Paul (*Red Hot and Cole*), Raoul de St. Brioche (*Die lustige Witwe*) and Chorus (*Die Zauberflöte*). Bessenbacher is a student of Matthew Chellis.

ELIZABETH BOWERSOX (Anita/Leala)

Past roles with Eklund Opera: Dancer/Chorus (*Ariodante*), Young Lucy/Chorus (*Sweeney Todd*), Young Hanna/Frou-Frou/Chorus (*Die lustige Witwe*) and Chorus (*Die Zauberflöte*).

SAM BRUCKNER (Diesel)

Past roles elsewhere: Nicely Nicely Johnson (*Guys and Dolls*), Frank Butler (*Annie Get Your Gun*), Beast (*Beauty and the Beast*) and Joe Hardy (*Damn Yankees*).

ZACHARY BRYANT (Riff)

Past roles with Eklund Opera: Paul (*If I Were You*), King of Scotland (*Ariodante*), Anthony (*Sweeney Todd*), Kromov (*The Merry Widow*), Lead Baritone (CU NOW Composer Fellows' Initiative). Past roles elsewhere: Count Almaviva (*Le nozze di*

Figaro) Prague Summer Nights Young Artists Music Festival.

BERENICE CARRERA (Anita/Leala)

Past roles with Eklund Opera: Chorus (*Sweeney Todd*). Past roles elsewhere: Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*) Opera Express Quito-Ecuador, Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*) Opera Express Quito-Ecuador. In the spring Carrera will be having her junior recital at the University of Colorado Boulder College of Music.

MICHAEL CRONE (Mouthpiece/Glad Hand)

Past roles with Eklund Opera: Slave/Chorus (*Die Zauberflöte*), Chorus (*Die lustige Witwe*), Chorus (*Sweeney Todd*), Guard (*Ariodante*). Past roles elsewhere: Boo (*The Marriage of Bette and Boo*) CU Theatre & Dance.

SOPHIE ENGERMAN (Margarita)

This is Engerman's first role with Eklund Opera. From Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, Engerman is a sophomore pursuing degrees in voice performance and international affairs. She has performed in many productions throughout high school including Miss Sandra (*All Shook Up*) and Lady Larken (*Once Upon a Mattress*).

ADAM EWING (Officer Krupke)

Past roles with Eklund Opera: Stevie (*Side by Side* by Sondheim), John Brooke (*Little Women*), Celebrant (Bernstein's *Mass*), Schaunard (*La bohème*), Gianni Schicchi (*Gianni Schicchi*), Slook (*La cambiale di matrimonio*). Past roles elsewhere: Bernardo (*West Side Story* in concert) Boulder Philharmonic; Schaunard (*La bohème*) Colorado Symphony; Major General Stanley (*Pirates of Penzance*) Loveland Opera; Dog (*Brundibar*) Colorado Music Festival. Awards: NATS Artist Awards, National Finalist, 6th place, Berton Coffin Award.

OLIVIA FERTIG (Ballet Dancer)

Past companies: Bria Young Dancer's Project, *Bria Danse* (Apprentice), San Francisco Conservatory of Dance Summer Intensive. In the spring, Fertig will be performing in *The Current* with CU Theatre & Dance.

MICHAEL GAVEN (Big Deal)

This is Gaven's first role with Eklund Opera. Past roles elsewhere: Enjolras (*Les Misérables*) Harvard-Westlake Upper School, Boomer

Bronson (*Prom Queen*) Stagedoor Manor United States Debut, Chad Danforth (*High School Musical*) Stagedoor Manor, Clifford Bradshaw (*Cabaret*) Harvard-Westlake Upper School, Benjamin Coffin III (*Rent*) Stagedoor Manor, Daddy Cane (*Bright Star*) Stagedoor Manor non-professional debut cast.

DOMINIQUE FRANCIS GROGAN (Francisca)

Past shows with Eklund Opera: Chorus (*Sweeney Todd*), Dorothy Parker (*Red Hot and Cole*), Chorus (*Die Fledermaus*) and Chorus (*Dialogues of the Carmelites*). Grogan will be performing her senior recital at the University of Colorado Boulder this spring.

STEVEN GROTH (Luis/Shrank)

Past roles with Eklund Opera: Polinesso (*Ariodante*). Past roles elsewhere: Baron Douphol (*La Traviata*) and Frank (*Die Fledermaus*) with Missouri Symphony Society, Mr. Webb (*Our Town*) and Count Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*) with Show-Me Opera. This spring, Groth will be performing with Loveland Opera covering the role of Don Alfonso (*Così fan tutte*).

CHRISTINE HONEIN (Maria)

Past roles with Eklund Opera: Dalinda (*Ariodante*). Last fall, Honein performed the roles of Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*) and Ilia (*Idomeneo*) in the Eklund Opera Scenes program. Past roles elsewhere: Drusilla (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*) and Dora (*The Three Feathers*) FSU Opera.

KATE JOHNSON (Consuelo)

Past roles with CU Theatre & Dance: Sherl (*Hair*), Loud Stone (*Eurydice*), and Ensemble (*44 Plays for 44 Presidents*).

WESLEY JUELS (Snowboy)

Past roles with Eklund Opera: Principal Dancer/Chorus (*The Merry Widow*) and Chorus (*Sweeney Todd*). Past roles elsewhere: Tribe (*Hair*) CU Theatre & Dance, Mr. Two (*The Adding Machine*) CU Theatre & Dance. During the spring and summer semester, Juels will be moving to Orlando, Florida, and working at the Walt Disney World Resort.

BRENDAN LUTES (Action)

This is Lute's first production with Eklund Opera. Past roles elsewhere: Javert (*Les Misérables*)

Center Stage, Billy (*Anything Goes*) Sword and Stone Productions.

BRANDON TYLER PADGETT (Pepe)

This is Padgett's first role with Eklund Opera. Past roles elsewhere: John Proctor (*The Crucible*) University of Tennessee Opera Theatre, Bartolo (*Le nozze di Figaro*) University of Tennessee Opera Theatre, Pirate King (*Pirates of Penzance*) Tennessee Valley Players, Masetto (*Don Giovanni*) University of Tennessee Opera Theatre and Mr. Kofner (*The Consul*) University of Tennessee Opera Theatre.

MEGAN PRYOR (Anybodys)

Past roles with Eklund Opera: Jou-Jou/Principal Dancer (*The Merry Widow*) and Beggar Woman (*Sweeney Todd*). Past roles elsewhere: Second Spirit (*Die Zauberflöte*) Opera Colorado.

HELENA REGAN (Velma)

Past roles with Eklund Opera: Grisette (*The Merry Widow*), Protean/Dancer (*Ariodante*) and Chorus/Dance Captain (*Sweeney Todd*). Regan is an international student from England, earning her Bachelor of Music in voice performance and Bachelor of Science in strategic communications. Regan is a sophomore studying under Abigail Nims.

JULIETA GARCÍA REYES (Rosalia)

Past roles with Eklund Opera: The Beggar Woman (*Sweeney Todd*) and Second Spirit (*Die Zauberflöte*). Past roles elsewhere: La Suora Zelatrice (*Suor Angelica*) and Soledad (*La mulata de Córdoba*) Conservatorio de las Rosas, México. Next spring, García will be performing her senior year recital.

MARA RILEY (Clarice/A Girl)

This is Riley's first role with Eklund Opera. As a double major, Riley is also a dedicated flutist, and is currently a member of the CU Symphony Orchestra and undergraduate woodwind quintet. In 2018, she was named an Anderson Undergraduate Vocal Scholarship Competition winner.

KINARI RIMA (Indio)

This is Rima's first role with Eklund Opera. Past roles elsewhere: Paul (*Hair*) CU Theatre & Dance.

MACK RODGERS (Gee-Tar)

This is Rodgers' first role with Eklund Opera. Rodgers is pursuing a Bachelor of Music in voice performance and is also pursuing a degree in astrophysics.

ASHA ROMEO (Estella)

This is Romeo's first role with Eklund Opera. Past roles elsewhere: Sally (*Cabaret*) Center Stage Theatre Company, Joanne Jefferson (*Rent*) Boulder High School. Romeo was nominated for Best Actor in a Leading Role by the Bobby G Awards.

LEANNE RUBINSTEIN (Teresita)

Past roles with Eklund Opera: Chorus (*Sweeney Todd*). Leanne received honorable mention in her division in the NATS 2017 competition (classical category) and a first place prize in the 2016 Colorado region's Rising Stars Competition.

SKYLER SCHLENKER (Bernardo/Anxious)

Past roles with Eklund Opera: Sweeney Todd (*Sweeney Todd*), Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), and Top (*The Tender Land*), amongst others. Past roles elsewhere: Luther (*Les contes d'Hoffman*) Aspen Opera Center at the Aspen Music Festival and School, Kromov (*The Merry Widow*) and (*Speed Dating Tonight!*) Janiec Opera Company at the Brevard Music Center. Schlenker was a recipient of the Louis and Harold Price Foundation Fellowship for his studies at the Aspen Music Festival and School this past summer.

CALEB SHARP (Doc)

This is Sharp's first role with Eklund Opera. Past roles elsewhere: Teddy/Tribe (*Hair*) CU Theatre & Dance, Buck Badem (*Alas! Alack! Zorro's Back!*) Colorado ACTs, Roommate (*1000 Bad Films*) Andy George Productions, Detective (*Beatrice*) Brandon Blanc Productions, Waller (*Trapped*) CU Boulder Student Directed Scenes, The King (*Snow White*) Colorado ACTs, Lendall (*Almost, Maine*) Colorado ACTs.

RYAN SINTON (Ballet Dancer)

This is Sinton's first performance with Eklund Opera. Past roles elsewhere: Sugar Plum Fairy (*The Nutcracker*) Reach Dance Academy, Soloist (*Serenade*) The Jillana School. Sinton will be performing in Provenance here at CU in November, and Wake in January 2019.

ZACHARIAH SMITH (Baby John)

Past roles with Eklund Opera: Chorus (*Sweeney Todd*).

JENNA SNYDER (Graziella)

Past roles elsewhere: Madeline Livingston (*The Women of Lockerbie*) International Thespian Festival: Troupe 7206, Annabella Schmidt (*The 39 Steps*) Rock Canyon High School, Pilar (*Legally Blonde*) Rock Canyon High School, and Hot Box Girl (*Guys and Dolls*) Rock Canyon High School. Snyder is a member of CU's only all-female a cappella group "On the Rocks." They will be having their winter concert on Dec. 8 in Old Main.

DAVID STARRY (A-RAB)

This is Starry's first role with Eklund Opera. Previous roles elsewhere: Tamino (*Die Zauberflöte*) University of Wisconsin Eau Claire, The Marquis de Tarapote (*La périchole*) University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, Tom Watson (*Parade*) Greendale Community Theater and Stephen (*If/Then*) Greendale Community Theater. Starry is currently a member of CU's Opera Theater Singers.

ANDREW TAYLOR (Tony)

This is Taylor's first role with Eklund Opera. Past roles elsewhere: Il contino (*La finta giardiniera*) USU Opera, Kaspar (*Amahl and the Night Visitors*) USU Opera, Astolfo (*La liberazione di Ruggiero dall'isola d'Alcina*) USU Opera, Ivan (*The Music Shop*) Opera Outreach Quartet. Taylor was a featured soloist in the Xi'an International Choral Festival. He was also featured in the Utah State University Chamber Singers' recent album, *Amazing Grace*.

STEVEN VINOLAS (Chino)

Past roles with Eklund Opera: William Putnam (Jake Heggie's *If I Were You* CU NOW musical workshop), Anthony Hope (*Sweeney Todd*), and Cascada (*Die lustige Witwe*). Vinolas is currently pursuing his master's in vocal performance and pedagogy. He is a student of John Seesholtz.

SOPHIA ZERVAS (Minnie)

Past roles with Eklund Opera: Dance Soloist (*Die Fledermaus*), First Spirit (*Die Zauberflöte*) and Cupid/Chorus (*Ariodante*). Additionally, she was a winner of the 2018 Anderson Voice Competition at CU. Zervas is a senior pursuing a double degree in voice and piano performance.

Artistic and production staff

Peter Dean Beck, Set and Lighting Designer

Beck has designed scenery and lighting for Eklund Opera for 24 seasons and for more than 300 productions around North America. Among his opera credits are *Falstaff*, *Turandot*, *Manon*, *Don Giovanni*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Roméo et Juliétté* for such companies as Atlanta Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Virginia Opera and Chautauqua Opera. He has designed productions of *Andrea Chenier*, *The Italian Girl in Algiers*, *Macbeth*, *Elektra* and *Tristan and Isolde* for Hawaii Opera Theatre, where he has been principal designer for 32 seasons. In Asia, he designed a double bill of *The Nightingale* and *Cavalleria Rusticana* for Sakai City Opera in Japan and lit *Cav/Pag* in Macau and *Don Carlo* in Hong Kong. His musical theatre credits include *Fiddler on the Roof*, *The Sound of Music*, *The Music Man*, *Les Misérables*, *The Wizard of Oz* and *Into the Woods* for Skylight Music Theatre. His work for dance includes *The Indigo Girls Project* for Atlanta Ballet and *The Nutcracker* for Ballet Hawaii.

Leigh Holman, Stage Director

Leigh Holman balances a teaching and professional stage directing career in the United States and abroad. In recent years, she has made directing debuts at the Pafos Aphrodite Festival in Cyprus, L'Opéra de Montréal and Florida Grand Opera. Recent CU Boulder productions include *Sweeney Todd* and *Ariodante*. As well-suited to new operatic works as she is to traditional works, Holman has produced and directed workshops of operas in association with composers and librettists, including Jake Heggie, Gene Scheer, Mark Campbell, Mark Adamo, Colm Toibin, Kirke Mechem, Libby Larsen, Lori Laitman, Herschel Garfein, Robert Aldridge, Daniel Kellogg, Alberto Caruso and Dave Mason. As the founder and artistic/general director of CU Boulder's New Opera Workshop, she continues to passionately promote the creation, collaboration and production of new American works.

Philip Hesketh, Guest Conductor

The British conductor Philip Hesketh studied at the Guildhall School of Music in London. His life as a professional musician began as a cellist, playing for many of that city's great orchestras and companies. He began conducting symphony orchestras in 1991, becoming musical director

of The West London Sinfonia and The Richmond Orchestra and receiving invitations to conduct as a guest in Britain and around the world. In 2001 he made his debut in The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, conducting The Royal Ballet in *The Nutcracker* and, in 2004, became musical director of the French opera festival Opéra de Baugé. Opera now plays a large part in his life: in the summer before coming to Boulder he conducted productions of Verdi's *Rigoletto* in France and Puccini's *La bohème* and *Tosca* in London. After *West Side Story*, he will return to London to fulfill a busy winter schedule of concerts. As well as performing, Hesketh is much in demand as a communicator on all aspects of classical music. He is very keen to break down traditional barriers, both between audiences and performers and between classical music lovers and those who have yet to discover the pleasure that it offers.

Ron Mueller, Technical Director

Ron Mueller has been with Eklund Opera for 20 seasons. His past Eklund Opera productions include *The Rake's Progress*, *La Traviata*, *Sweeney Todd* and *Dead Man Walking*. His other professional credits include Skylight Opera, Boulder Ensemble Theatre Company, Crested Butte Music Festival, Colorado Shakespeare Festival and Boulder Dinner Theatre.

Jeremy Reger, Head Vocal Coach

International pianist and educator Jeremy Reger maintains an active performing and coaching career. He has served on the music staff of Virginia Opera, Eugene Opera, Hawaii Opera Theater, Mill City Opera, Minnesota Opera, Skylark Opera and Aspen Opera Theater. He recently joined the CU Boulder faculty as a vocal coach. Previously, he taught at the Music Academy of the West, at Christopher Newport University, in Recife, Brazil, and at Indiana University. He has played in the Virginia Symphony, the Williamsburg Symphonia, the Carmel Symphony and the Terre Haute Symphony. Reger earned a doctorate in collaborative piano from the University of Michigan under Martin Katz.

Tom Robbins, Costume Designer

Tom Robbins has been with Eklund Opera for 28 seasons. His past Eklund Opera credits include *Sweeney Todd*, *Don Giovanni*, *Anything Goes*,

Susannah, Carousel and *The Rake's Progress*. His other professional credits include Bonfils Theater, Opera Colorado and Colorado Ballet.

Chad Boltz, Head Hair Stylist

Chad Boltz is a Denver-based hair stylist and award-winning National Educator for John Paul Mitchell Systems. He holds a degree in vocal performance from the College of Music and credits his ease on the hair stage to the lessons he learned at CU. Boltz is thrilled to work with Tom, Leigh and the cast and crew of this production.

Jenna Krenzelok, Hair Stylist Assistant

Jenna Krenzelok is a recent graduate of Paul Mitchell the School Denver. She already has experience working backstage with top industry talent, including Paul Mitchell's Global Artistic Director Robert Cromeans. She is excited to be able to work on this production with Chad Boltz and the amazing cast and crew!

Mary Kettlewell, Production Assistant

A recent graduate of the master's program in voice at the University of Colorado Boulder, Kettlewell began working as temporary production assistant to Eklund Opera this past September. As a performer, roles that Kettlewell has performed with Eklund Opera include Dalinda (*Ariodante*), Valencienne (*Die lustige Witwe*), Second Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*) and Rosalinda (*Die Fledermaus*). Kettlewell also has a passion for new opera, and during her time at the university she participated in CU's New Opera Workshop, performing the roles of Miriam in Mark Adamo's *The Gospel of Mary Magdalene* and Selena in the musical workshop of Jake Heggie's *If I Were You*. This November Kettlewell will be featured as the soprano soloist in Handel's *Messiah* with the Choral Union ensemble directed by Paul Crabb at the University of Missouri-Columbia. She is currently pursuing a certificate in arts administration at the University of Colorado Boulder.

Erin Hodgson, Assistant Director

Erin Hodgson has appeared with the Minnesota Opera in *Turandot* and *Rusalka*. Hodgson graduated with a bachelor's degree in music from Oberlin Conservatory studying under Salvatore Champagne. Erin is a second-year master's student at CU Boulder. She premiered with Eklund Opera as the role of Mrs. Lovett in *Sweeney Todd* last semester. This will be her third directing credit with Eklund Opera—her assistant directing premiere with Eklund Opera was *The Merry Widow*, and she was the Associate Director for *Ariodante*.

Javier Abreu, Assistant Director

Puerto Rican tenor Javier Abreu has been described as a commanding force on stage, incorporating a rich, sweet and agile voice with ample dramatic skills. Opera News described him as "a natural Rossini singer," and The Washington Times stated, "His high, supple lyric voice possesses great conviction." Last season's performances include the world premiere of *Bless Me Ultima* with Opera Southwest, a return to Opera Orlando as Ramiro in *La cenerentola*, Lindoro in *L'italiana in Algeri* with Blackwater Valley Opera in Ireland, and a debut with Chicago Opera Theater as the title role in *Il Pigmaliione*, and Beppe in *Rita* by Donizetti. Recent performances include Orpheus in Offenbach's raucous *Orpheus in the Underworld* with Virginia Opera, Almaviva in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* with Florida Grand Opera, and debuts with the Prototype Festival in American Lyric Theater's concert of *La Reina*, Arizona Opera as Fenton in *Falstaff*, South Bend Symphony Orchestra for *Carmina Burana*, and Mill City Summer Opera in *Sweeney Todd*. In the 2016-17 season, he returned to Florida Grand Opera for *Before Night Falls* as well as American Lyric Theater for roles in *The Life and Death(s) of Alan Turing*. A champion of contemporary opera, Abreu has premiered the roles of Pepe in *Before Night Falls* with Fort Worth Opera, Castleman in *The Long Walk* with Opera Saratoga, Ruffiano in *The Inspector* with Wolf Trap Opera, and El enano de Salnés in *La cabeza del bautista* with Gran Teatro del Liceu in Barcelona. He has garnered critical acclaim for his portrayals of Rossini's leading men with New Jersey Opera, Nashville Opera, Lyrique en Mer, Opera de Oviedo, Theater Basel, Teatro Municipal de Chile, Austin Lyric Opera, New York City Opera, The New Israeli Opera, and the Stuttgart Staatsoper. He has also appeared with some of the world leading orchestras, including the Pittsburgh Symphony, Naples Philharmonic, Phoenix Symphony, Louisville Symphony, and the Lexington Philharmonic Orchestra, to name a few. This season's performances include Philip Glass' *In The Penal Colony* with San Francisco's Opera Parallèle, Ferrando in Mill City Opera's *Così fan tutte* and a return to Pittsburgh Opera as Ernesto in *Don Pasquale*.

Joel Atella, Production Stage Manager

Joel Atella is a native of Fort Collins, Colorado, and is thrilled to be working his first season with the Eklund Opera Program. Atella graduated with distinction from the Eastman School of Music with a degree in voice performance. Since 2008 he has maintained a freelance career as a stage

manager, assistant director and tour manager. Highlights include tour managing for Itzhak Perlman and his *In the Fiddler's House Tour*, two seasons as the resident assistant director for San Diego Opera, and working as stage manager for Yuletide Celebration with the Indianapolis Symphony. Other companies include Santa Fe Opera, Opera Colorado, Chautauqua Opera, Opera Omaha, Opera Southwest and Syracuse Opera. A 2005 Presidential Scholar in the Arts, Atella is a passionate advocate of the power of music, live theatre and opera.

Stephen Bertles, Choreographer

This production of *West Side Story* marks Bertles' 18th production as choreographer at CU. Some favorites include: *Fledermaus*, *Carousel*, *Marriage of Figaro*, *The Merry Widow*, and *La bohème* to name a few. His first production here was *West Side Story* over 10 years ago, and he is thrilled to recreate this wonderful show to mark the birthday of Leonard Bernstein. Never say "can't" but instead—I'll try! Thank you to all the performers here who have tried their best to dance like they have never danced before.

Canadian Brass

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