

Beste Kalender (Carmen)

Calgary Opera's opening night performance of Carmen: "...on one hour's notice, mezzo-soprano Beste Kalender, originally scheduled to sing the role of Mercedes, learned that she would have to sing the title role. This she did, and with remarkable success..." Kenneth Delong, Calgary Herald. Described as having "a voice that is both fluid and

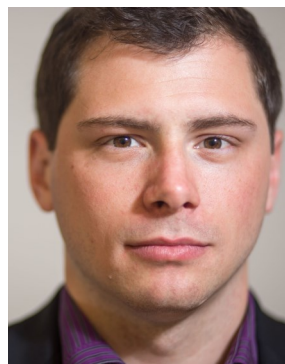
expressive" (Edmond Johnson, Opera News) Beste Kalender was a resident artist and a Rebanks Fellow at The Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto during season 2015/16. Beste also performed as an Emerging Artist with Calgary Opera during season 2014/15, where she made her main stage debut with the company in the title role of Bizet's *Carmen*. Turkish native mezzo soprano has been named Jeunes Ambassadeurs Lyriques du Canada for a fourth time in 2016. She won Bourse Lyrique Coréen & Bourse Lyrique Allemande, as well as other engagements through which she has recently represented Canada in South Korea (Jeonju Int'l Sori Festival, Jeonju), Italy (Teatro Comunale di Bologna, Bologna) and Germany. She was the recipient of the 2013 Prix Jeune Espoir and Prix du Cnipal de Marseille of Jeunes Ambassadeurs Lyriques du Canada. In 2014, she performed with Les Chorégies D'Orange, representing Canada in France. Her American role debut was in the title role of Music Academy of The West's production of Rossini's *La Cenerentola* in 2015. In January 2016 she has performed at The Song Continues Masterclass Series with Stephanie Blythe at The Carnegie Hall. Beste will be returning to Carnegie Hall, this time making her recital debut with Warren Jones, in January 2017. Ms. Kalender's repertoire includes roles such as: Bianca (*The Rape of Lucretia*, Banff Centre & Against The Grain Theatre & Canadian Opera Company), Giovanna (*Rigoletto*, Teatro Comunale di Bologna), Hansel (*Hansel and Gretel*, CoOPERative Program at Westminster), Cenerentola (*La Cenerentola*, Rossini-Music Academy of The West), Mercedes (*Carmen*, Bizet-Music Academy of The West); *Carmen* (*Carmen*, Bizet-Calgary Opera), Fox (*The Cunning Little Vixen*, Janacek-Glenn Gould School Opera-GGS), Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*, GGS Opera), Cherubino (*Le Nozze di Figaro*, Mozart-Opera by Request), Ellen (*Three sisters who are not sisters*, Rorem-GGS) and Tancredi (*Tancredi*, Rossini-Summer Opera Lyric Theater). Beste was a finalist at the 2016 Opéra Concours International de Chant de Marmande, France. She is a recipient of the 2015 Canada Council for The Arts Grants for Professional Musicians and the winner of the 2016 Sylva Gelber Music Foundation Award.



Justin Stolz (Don José)

Tenor Justin Stolz has been praised for his "effortlessly powerful" voice (The Chronicle Journal), and is establishing himself as an exciting young performer. Currently a graduate student at Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music, Mr. Stolz is studying under the tutelage of Timothy Noble. He is a recent graduate of The Glenn Gould School (The Royal

Conservatory of Music), where he studied under Monica Whicher. His voice studies began with Mary McGhee in his hometown of Thunder Bay, Ontario. Mr. Stolz's recent performance credits include Mr. Owen in Argento's *Postcard from Morocco*, Rodolfo in Puccini's *La bohème*, and Don Ottavio in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. Last season, Mr. Stolz placed first in The S. Livingston Mather Competition (Cleveland) and made his IU Opera and Ballet Theater debut as Don José in Bizet's *Carmen*. He most recently performed the role of B.F. Pinkerton in the company's production of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. Spring/Summer 2017 will see him perform Britten's *Serenade* at Indiana University, as the tenor soloist in Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with the Columbus Indiana Philharmonic Orchestra and as Don José for the Brott Music Festival in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.



Johnathon Kirby (Escamillo)

Baritone Johnathon Kirby is from Newmarket, Ontario. He joined the Emerging Artist program of Calgary Opera for their 2016-2017 season where he performed the role of Constable Lawson in their production of *Filumena*. He made his professional opera debut with Opera Nova Scotia in their Canadian premier of Mozart's *Zaide*. He has

appeared in subsequent Opera Nova Scotia seasons for their main stage productions of *The Beggar's Opera* as Macheath, *Don Giovanni* as Masetto, and *Luisa Miller* as Miller. Other roles he has performed include Ford in *Falstaff* (American Singer's Opera Project), Belcore from *L'Elisir d'amore* (Metro Youth Opera), and The Forrester in Janáček's *The Cunning Vixen* (The Glenn Gould School). He earned his Bachelor of Music degree from Dalhousie University where he appeared in several productions including the title role in *Gianni Schicchi*, and Jupiter in Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld*. Last summer he appeared in the world premier of the Dean Burry and Lorna Macdonald original work *The Bells of Baddeck*.



LAUREN MARGISON (MICAĚLA)

Recognized at an early age for her ability to communicate with an audience, soprano Lauren Margison joined the prestigious Atelier Lyrique de l'Opéra de Montréal as one of their youngest members ever in the fall of 2016. This past summer Lauren placed as a finalist in the prestigious and highly competitive Meistersingers Vocal Competition in

Nürnberg. A versatile soprano, she has performed extensively both in Canada and internationally, specializing in classical, jazz and pop repertoire. Some highlights to date include performances for Opera Ontario, the TD Toronto Jazz Festival, The Beaches Jazz Festival, the Ottawa Chamber Music Festival, The Cincinnati Pops, Hannaford Street Silver Band, the noon hour concerts at the Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre, Ottawa Choral Festival Gala, and the Venetian Ball under the baton of Marco Armiliato, (fundraiser for Villa Charities, Toronto) held on the main stage of the Four Seasons' Centre for the Performing Arts. She was chosen as one of four singers to perform the music of Gordon Lightfoot for Gordon Lightfoot at the Lifetime Achievement Heart and Vision Awards ceremony and concert and was a featured soloist on the City TV Christmas Carol Sing aired across Canada. She has shared the stage with such distinguished artists as Gordon Lightfoot, Rufus Wainwright, Russell Braun, Isabel Bayrakdarian, Measha Brueggergosman, Nicole Cabell, The Canadian Opera Company Orchestra, Louise Pitre, Sheila McCarthy, The Tenors, Jackie Richardson, Rex Harrington, John Fanning, Elaine Overholt, and her father, Richard Margison. Lauren has also been part of the 4-member female vocal group, 'The Real Divas' and their CD, *Café Society*, is currently in release. In August 2014 was the youngest member of the Highlands Opera Studio. Lauren performs across Canada with her father, Richard Margison, in their vocal duo, 'Back to Back', and continues to hone her vocal art under the tutelage of Richard Margison and Valerie Kuinka.



CHELSEA RUS (FRASQUITA)

Canadian Soprano Chelsea Rus is a recent graduate of McGill University (M.Mus) and winner of the Elizabeth Wirth Vocal Competition. Rus has appeared repeatedly as a soloist with many of the prominent symphonies on the West Coast of Canada, including the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and the Okanagan Symphony Orchestra. Rus recently joined the Orchestra

Symphonique de Laval in Quebec this past December as the soprano soloist in Handel's *Messiah*. Rus had her first performance in Europe very early on in her operatic career. In

2013, she appeared as Lisak from the *Cunning Little Vixen* with the Usti nad Labem Opera House in the Czech Republic. As a winner of the 2014 Johann Strauss Competition, Chelsea had the opportunity to study at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria with distinguished sopranos Helen Donath and Anna Tomowa-Sintow. In 2015, Chelsea travelled to Amsterdam as a finalist in the prestigious Belvedere International Competition. Chelsea's most recent operatic appearances include Venus (*Venus & Adonis*, Opera McGill, 2014), Lauretta (*Gianni Schicchi*, Opera McGill, 2015), Countess (*The Marriage of Figaro*, Kelowna Opera, 2015), Beth (*Little Women*, Opera McGill 2015), and Adina (*L'Elisir D'Amore*, Opera McGill, 2016). Last summer, Chelsea played the role of Female Chorus in The Banff Centre's production of Benjamin Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* as a part of the Open Space: Opera in the 21st Century festival. Currently, Chelsea is resident young artist at the Atelier Lyrique at the Opéra de Montreal, and will be making her debut in the Young Artist Ensemble as Frasquita in Bizet's *Carmen* this coming May.



JAN VACULIK (LA DANCAÏRE)

Slovakian born baritone Jan Vaculik is praised for his bright voice full of natural lightness and his daring yet sensitive interpretations. Jan has been an active member of the Canadian Opera Company in Toronto for the past 6 seasons. In 2010, Mr. Vaculik had his solo debut with the Canadian Opera Company as the Polish Father and Guide in *Death in Venice*. Jan last

appeared on the COC mainstage in 2015 as the Messenger in *La Traviata* as well as Fiorello and the Officer in the production of *The Barber of Seville*. His other COC credits include a fisherman in Peter Grimes, an understudy of El Dancairo in *Carmen* and the 1st Soldier in Salome. Other operatic credits include Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*, Escamillo in *Carmen*, the title role in *Don Pasquale*, Alfio in *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Tonio in *I Pagliacci*, the title role in *Don Giovanni*, Figaro in *The Marriage of Figaro* and more. Jan regularly toured Germany with the Festival Ensemble Stuttgart, and also performed on a tour in China. Mr. Vaculik has recently won The Clifford Poole Orchestra vocal competition. He has also participated in one of Slovakia's classical music festivals, where he performed with the Kosice State Opera as well as live on National Television in Slovak Republic. Jan was awarded a special prize from the State Opera of Banska Bystrica at the International vocal competition of Mikulas Schneider-Trnavsky. Jan has completed his Master of Music Degree at the Academy of Music Arts in Banska Bystrica, where he also regularly performed as Belcore with the Slovak State Opera. Mr. Vaculik has performed live on the professional stages in Shanghai, Fuzou, Berlin, Stuttgart, live broadcast of Classical 96.3 in Toronto and many more. He is continuing his vocal studies under the tutelage of the world renowned tenor Richard Margison.

**MORGAN TRAYNOR (MERCÉDÈS)**

While born in Grand Forks, BC, Morgan Traynor also considers Whitehorse, Yukon, her hometown. The vibrant young mezzo-soprano, praised for her fine musicianship, characterizations, and beautiful singing, will be performing the role of Mamma Costanzo in *Filumena* this February with Calgary Opera as part of their Emerging Artist Development Program. She completed a Masters in

Music Performance at the University of Western Ontario and received her Bachelor of Music from Mount Allison University. Ms. Traynor's other roles include Véronique in *Dr. Miracle*, which was part of Calgary Opera's "Christmas at the Opera", Mrs. Quickly in UWOpera's *Falstaff*, directed by Michael Cavanagh and conducted by Alain Trudel, the title roles of Cesare (*Giulio Cesare*) with Summer Opera Lyric Theatre, Isabella (*L'Italiana in Algeri*) with La Musica Lirica, and The Child (*L'enfant et les sortilèges*) with UWOpera, and Mother (*Hänsel und Gretel*) with L'Atelier d'opéra de l'Université de Moncton.

**SAMUEL CHAN (MORALÈS)**

Canadian baritone Samuel Chan has been praised by critics for his "Velvet tones" and for his "vocal versatility" on the operatic, concert and recital stage. Recent stage performances include the roles of Don Asdrubale, Calandrino, and Gomatz in Mozart's *o sposo deluso*, *L'oca del Cairo*, and *Zaide* (City Opera Vancouver), Jacob Grimm and the Donkey in Dean Burry's *The Brothers*

Grimm/The Bremen Town Musicians (Highlands Opera Studio), Yoshimoto in Stephen K MacIntyre's workshop of *Tom Pinkerton: The Ballad of Butterfly's Son* (Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre), and Bob in Menotti's *Old Maid and the Thief* (Fear No Opera). Other stage credits include Ruggiero in Handel's *Alcina* (CCM Opera d'arte), Pastore II/Apollo in Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* (Cincinnati Chamber Opera), the Page in Meotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (Claremont Philharmonic), Ernesto in Haydn's *Il mondo della luna* (Cincinnati Chamber Opera), and the Count in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* (CCM Opera d'arte). Samuel is the 2nd place winner of the 2016 Canadian Opera Company's Ensemble Studio Competition, a district winner at the 2015 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions – Western Canada district, and a 2014 encouragement award winner at the 2014 MONC Auditions – Ohio district. Samuel is a graduate of the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, with further educational training at Highlands Opera Studio, VISI, Ravinia Steans Music Institute, Toronto Summer Music Festival, and the Aspen Music Festival. He is a member of the Canadian Actors' Equity Association.

**MATHIEU ABEL (REMENDADO)**

Originally from the Lotbinière region of Québec, Mathieu Abel is a graduate of the Conservatoire de musique de Montréal. He studied with the coloratura soprano Aline Kutan and the vocal coach Olivier Godin. Last december, he sang the role of King Kaspar in *Amahl and the night visitors* with the *Atelier lyrique* of the Opéra de Montréal. Last September, he

takes back the role of Ramiro, from *La cenerentola* at *Lunenburg Academy of Music Program* (Nova Scotia), with the well known Alberto Zedda. Last August, at the *Highlands Opera Studio* (Ontario), he sings the roles of Wilhem and Rooster in two Canadian operas from Dean Burry. In the last edition of *Brott Opera*, he interprets Don Basilio from *Le nozze di Figaro*. In June, he sings beside Aline Kutan and Pierre-Yves Pruvot for *Choeurs éternels* (France).

**JEREMY LUDWIG (ZUNIGA)**

Baritone Jeremy Ludwig performs regularly on concert and opera stages across the country. Recent opera credits include Bartolo in Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* with BrottOpera and Cowtown Opera, and Marcello in *Puccini's La Bohème*, with Jeunesses Musicales du Canada and Cowtown Opera. As a concert soloist, he has recently appeared with the Toronto Concert

Orchestra, the Bach Elgar Choir, the Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Orchestra, and the Kingston Chamber Choir. An avid performer of new music, Jeremy has collaborated with a number of young composers and producers in the creation and presentation of new operatic works. Most recently, he appeared in the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra's What Next Festival in a performance of *The Perfect Screw* by Abigail Richardson Schulte. He has also performed in new works presented by the Toy Piano Composers, Spectrum Music, and Essential Opera. Other opera credits include Schaubard (*La Bohème*), Il Conte (*Le nozze di Figaro*- Mozart), Guglielmo (*Così fan tutte*- Mozart), Belcore (*L'elisir d'amore*- Donizetti), Il re (*Ariodante*- Handel), Achilla (*Giulio Cesare*- Handel), and Top (*The Tender Land*- Copland). Jeremy has appeared as a finalist in a number of international vocal competitions, including the Nico Castel International Master Singer Competition, the Oratorio Society of New York Lyndon Woodside Oratorio Solo Competition, the Cathedral Bluffs Symphony Clifford Poole Vocal Competition, and most recently, the inaugural Tafelmusik Vocal Competition. He was also awarded first prize in the St. Andrew's Aria Competition and third prize at the North York Concert Orchestra Mozart Competition.