



Natalya Gennadi—Mimi

Ukrainian-Canadian soprano Natalya Gennadi is gaining attention in North America for her performances in wide-ranging repertoire. Natalya caused a sensation in the leading role of *Oksana G*, Tapestry Opera’s harrowing tale about human trafficking. Her Dora Award-nominated performance in this world premiere was described as

“stunning... piercing in its openness and vulnerability” (Toronto NOW Magazine). As Mimi in *La bohème* with Highlands Opera Studio, Dawn Martens of Opera Canada wrote: “Natalya was a gorgeous Mimi; not only did she look the part of the consumptive heroine, she allowed her powerful voice to ebb and flow producing gorgeously rich tones in Act I and sweeter, melodic phrases in Act IV.” Natalya’s operatic roles include Countess Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Tatiana in *Eugene Onegin*, the title role of *Suor Angelica* as well as Yaroslavna in Borodin’s *Prince Igor*. Natalya earned a Specialist Diploma in Russian Linguistics and Literature from Moscow Lomonosov State University, graduated from University of Ottawa (BMus), and received her Masters in Music (Opera Performance) from University of Toronto.



Chelsea Rus—Musetta

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 Orchestre Symphonique de Laval in Quebec this past December as the soprano soloist in Handel’s *Messiah*. Rus is currently a resident young artist at the Atelier Lyrique at the Opéra de Montreal and will appear as Frasquita in *Carmen* with the ensemble at Opera de Montreal in May. Her 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).



Andrew Derynck—Rodolfo

Tenor Andrew Derynck hails from the small farming community of Jeanettes Creek, Ontario. Currently a member of the Emerging Artist program at Calgary Opera, Andrew completed both his Opera diploma and his Bachelor of Music at Wilfrid Laurier University, under the tutelage of soprano, Leslie Fagan. Coming up

this season with Calgary Opera Andrew is excited to be performing as Borsa in *Rigoletto* and Father in the world premiere of Veronika Krausas’ *Ghost Opera*. He will make his Brott Opera debut this summer as Rodolfo in *La Bohème*. Other highlights from his time on stage include: Benvolio in *Roméo et Juliette* (Calgary Opera), Ernesto in *Don Pasquale* (Vera Causa Opera), Hoffmann in *Les contes d’Hoffmann* (Opera Laurier), and Mayor Upfold in *Albert Herring* (Halifax Summer Opera Festival). Andrew was a winner of an encouragement award from the Buffalo/ Toronto District Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions in 2018. When not singing, Andrew can be found canoeing, camping or working on the family farm.



Kyle Lehman, Marcello

Recently Kyle was heard singing the baritone solo in Saint-Saëns’ Oratorio de Noël with the Northumberland Orchestra & Choir; Rodolfo in the rarely produced *La bohème* by Ruggero Leoncavallo with Opera by Request, and Alfio in *Cavalleria Rusticana* with Oshawa Opera. A graduate from the

University of British Columbia, Kyle earned a Master of Music (2016) and a Bachelor of Music (2014) in Opera Performance where he was heard in many fully staged operas. Roles of note include: Escamillo in *Carmen*, Masetto in *Don Giovanni*, Harasta in *The Cunning Little Vixen*, and Germont Père in *La Traviata*. Kyle is continuing his vocal development under the guidance of international baritone, Jason Howard.

**Cesar Bello—Schaunard**

Cesar Bello is a Mexican -Canadian baritone who started his vocal training with the professor Enrique Jaso at the Conservatory of Music of Mexico. In 2009 he was chosen by the prestigious Accademia d'Arte Lirica Osimo in Italy where he has studied with Raina Kabaivanska, William Mateuzzi, Alla Simoni, Sergio Segalini and Vincenzo de

Vivo. In Italy he sang at Teatro dell'opera di Roma on 2013 the production of *NOS* (The nose) by Shostakovich with the direction of Peter Stein, *L'elisir d'Amore* by Donizetti as Belocore, *La Passione secondo Marco* by Perosi, *Choral Fantasy* by Beethoven and other numerous concerts. In Mexico he sang *Cavalleria Rusticana* by Mascagni as Alfio, *Pagliacci* by Leoncavallo as Tonio, *Barbiere di Siviglia* by Rossini as Figaro and Fiorello, *Carmen* by Bizet as Morales, *Don Giovanni* by Mozart as Masetto, *Rigoletto* by Verdi as Ceprano, *Carmina Burana* by Orff, Symphony No. 9 by Beethoven, *Requiem* by Fauré, *Requiem* by Mozart. In Canada he sang *La Serva Padrona* by Pergolesi in 2018.

**Simon Chalifoux—Colline**

French-Canadian bass-baritone Simon Chalifoux completed his master's degree at Université de Montréal. In 2016-2017 he was part of Calgary Opera Emerging Artist Program. His most recent performances include *Quince*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; Colline, *La Bohème*; Figaro, *Le Nozze di Figaro*; *Harasta and Farar*, *Cunning*

Little Vixen; Georges Benton, *Dead Man Walking*; Dr. Gibbs, *Our Town*. He also sang the bass and Jesus in *Bach St. John Passion*, and the bass in *Bach Coffee Cantata*. Upcoming engagements include the title role in Michel Gonneville new opera *l'Hypothèse Caïn* in February 2019 in Montreal, a recital at Café d'Art Vocal in March 2019, and Colline in July 2019 in Hamilton.

**John Fanning—Benoît/Alcindoro**

A Member of the Order of Canada, John Fanning has enjoyed a wide-ranging career over the past 40 years. He has appeared frequently with all major Canadian orchestras and opera companies. Internationally, he has sung a great deal throughout the United States including nine seasons at the

Metropolitan Opera, and has performed in Europe, Asia and South America. He was featured as Firmin in *The Phantom of the Opera* both on the national tour and at the Pantages Theatre in Toronto, has been the operatic voice of many commercials, starred in CBC's *Wind At My Back* and was featured in Norman Jewison's film, *Moonstruck*. John loves teaching and frequently gives masterclasses and mentors at summer opera programs across Canada. He has recently retired from his position as voice professor at the University of Montreal and is very happy to be home and close to family.

**Jessica Derventzis—Director**

Jessica Derventzis is a proud Canadian stage director, based in Toronto. Her most recent directing credits include: *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Opera 5), *Die Zauberflöte*, *La Bohème* (Opera Kelowna), *The Medium*, *L'Heure Espagnole* (Stu&Jess Productions), *Cinderella* (Calgary Opera School Tour), *Dido*

and *Aeneas* (Opera McGill), and *La Voix Humaine* (Little Opera on the Prairie). Jessica had the privilege of directing the Canadian premiere of Ned Rorem's *Our Town* with Opera Nuova in 2015. She has also assisted for many internationally acclaimed directors at the major opera companies in Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, and Vancouver as well for Canadian Stage/Tapestry Opera/Vancouver Opera's co-production of *The Overcoat: a Musical Tailoring*. Jessica is also very active in the indie opera scene. Championing new Canadian works and female-driven projects are at the heart of her fiercest endeavours. She is the Artistic Director of Opera 5. Most recently, she was awarded the Metcalf Foundation Performing Arts Internship grant for 2018 to work with Tapestry Opera on directing, dramaturgy, and artistic direction.