

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Jennifer Colgan
Director of Marketing and Communications
303.468.2025 | jcolgan@operacolorado.org



Opera Colorado Announces Singers Selected for the 2020-21 Artists in Residence Program

Seven emerging artists will join the prestigious program after a nation-wide audition process

Denver, CO (June 15, 2020)—Opera Colorado is pleased to announce that soprano **Catherine Swindle**, mezzo-soprano **Kendra Broom**, tenor **Devin Eatmon**, baritones **Isaiah Feken** and **Thomas Lynch**, bass-baritone **Timothy Madden**, and coach/accompanist **Stephen Variames** have been accepted into the acclaimed Opera Colorado Artists in Residence Program for the 2020-21 Season.

Each year, Opera Colorado receives over 400 applications for the season-long residency, which are carefully pre-screened by Cherity Koepke, Director of the Opera Colorado Artist in Residence Program. Koepke is then joined by Music Director Ari Pelto and General & Artistic Director Greg Carpenter to audition finalists in Denver and New York City.

The highly-competitive program provides singers with training, coaching, and myriad performance opportunities, both at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House and throughout the community. “The program is unique in that it’s focused on performance. While the Artists in Residence will receive ongoing training and feedback as part of this program, our goal is to provide them with as many performance opportunities as possible to help them hone and expand their performance skills. Our belief is that you learn best by doing,” says Koepke.

“Opera Colorado’s Artist in Residence Program is an important thread in the artistic fabric of our company. Artists in Residence are ambassadors for opera through our education and community engagement activities, their talents are showcased in supporting roles in our mainstage productions, and they represent our commitment to nurturing a new generation of opera artists,” says Greg Carpenter.

The 2020-21 Artists in Residence Program runs through the closing of Opera Colorado’s production of *The Shining* in June 2021. “We’re tremendously excited about the group that will be joining us. Their voices and talents will help us bring opera to thousands of people across Colorado.”

The Artist in Residence Program is sponsored by Ken and Donna Barrow, with additional support from Patrick Spieles.

2020-21 Opera Colorado Artists in Residence



Catherine Swindle (soprano) is from Lubbock, Texas, and is a graduate of Manhattan School of Music with a master's degree in Classical Voice. She holds bachelor's degrees in Vocal Performance and French from Texas Tech University. She was recently awarded second place in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions New England Regional competition after winning the Connecticut District competition. Some concert highlights include performing Respighi's *Il Tramonto* with the American String Quartet and participating in artist Lee Mingwei's *Sonic Blossom* installation at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Other previous credits include *Die Zauberflöte* (First Lady), Bloch's *Macbeth* (Première sorcière), Mozart's *Così fan tutte* (Fiordiligi), and Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (Poppea). She is delighted to be part of the Opera Colorado Artist in Residence program for the 2020-21 Season. She will perform in the touring productions of *The Barber of Seville* (Berta) and *The Pirates of Penzance* (Mabel), and in the mainstage productions of *Cavalleria Rusticana* (chorus), *Carmen* (Frasquita), and *The Shining* (Mrs. Grady).



Kendra Broom (mezzo-soprano) grew up in the California Bay Area and studied at Manhattan School of Music on the Birgit Nilsson Scholarship and at the Curtis Institute of Music as a Shaun F. O' Malley Fellow. She is a recipient of the Shoshana Foundation's Richard F. Gold Career Grant. Her recent appearances include title roles in *Pelléas et Mélisande*, *L'enfant et les sortilèges*, and *The Rape of Lucretia*, with other credits in *Le nozze di Figaro* (Cherubino), *Hänsel und Gretel* (Hänsel), and *Lakme* (Mallika). She was a featured guest with Curtis Institute's 20/21 Ensemble, OPERA America's New Works Forum, WWFM's Celebrating Our Musical Future, and Opera Philadelphia's Double Exposure. This season, she will perform in the touring productions of *The Barber of Seville* (Rosina) and *The Pirates of Penzance* (Ruth), in the mainstage production (Mercedes) and student matinee performance (Carmen) of *Carmen*, and in the mainstage production of *The Shining* (Mrs. Massey).



Devin Eatmon (tenor) is from Ocala, Florida. His performance history includes summers at Opera in the Ozarks (2015) and Aspen Music Festival (2018 and 2019). He holds master's and bachelor's degrees from Florida State University, where he studied with bass-baritone David Okerlund and performed in Bolcom's *Lucrezia* (Lorenzo), Carlisle Floyd's *Prince of Players* (George Villiers), Puccini's *La bohème* (Rodolfo), Floyd's *Of Mice and Men* (Curley), and Heinrich Marschner's *Der Vampyr* (Edgar Aubrey). Having just completed his master's degree as a graduate teaching assistant, Devin is excited to be one of Opera Colorado's 2020-21 Artists in Residence. He will perform in the touring productions of *The Barber of Seville* (Count Almaviva) and *The Pirates of Penzance* (Frederic), in the mainstage production (Dancaïre) and student matinee

performance (Don José) of *Carmen*, and in the mainstage production of *The Shining* (Lloyd the Bartender and Bill Watson).



Isaiah Feken (baritone) returns for his second season as an Opera Colorado Artist in Residence. Last season, he performed in the mainstage production (Police Sergeant) and student matinee performance (Figaro) of *The Barber of Seville*. Originally from Tulsa, Oklahoma, Isaiah received his bachelor's degree from the University of Tulsa and his master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Georgia. Performances with UGA Opera Theatre include *Don Pasquale* (Malatesta), *Così fan tutte* (Guglielmo), *The Marriage of Figaro* (Count Almaviva), and the title role in *Don Giovanni*. Other credits include *Falstaff* (Ford) with the Crested Butte Music Festival, as well as *Kiss Me, Kate!* (Fred Graham) and the world premiere of *A New Kind of Fallout* (Harry Stritch) with Pittsburgh Festival Opera. As an Artist in Residence for Opera Colorado's 2020-21 Season, he will perform in the touring productions of *The Barber of Seville* (Figaro) and *The Pirates of Penzance* (Pirate King), in the mainstage production (Remendado) and student matinee performance (Escamillo) of *Carmen*, and in the mainstage production of *The Shining* (Horace Derwent).



Thomas Lynch (baritone) is from Long Island. He received his bachelor's degree from Westminster Choir College at Rider University and his master's degree from The Boston Conservatory at Berklee. He has participated in young artists programs such as Bel Canto at Caramoor, Seagle Music Colony, and Hawaii Opera Theater. His recent performances include *The Great Gatsby* (Nick Caraway), *Così fan tutte* (Guglielmo), *Eugene Onegin* (Commander/Officer), *Dialogues of the Carmelites* (Marquis de la Force), *The Consul* (John Sorel), *The Manchurian Candidate* (Sgt. Raymond Shaw), and *Salome* (2nd Soldier/John the Baptist cover). Other performances include soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Princeton Symphony Orchestra under Rossen Milanov and baritone soloist for Goodall's *Eternal Light: Requiem* with the MIT Cambridge Chinese Choral Society. Tom is excited to be joining the Opera Colorado Artist in Residence Program, during which he will perform in the touring productions of *The Barber of Seville* (Ambrogio/ Figaro cover) and *The Pirates of Penzance* (The Major General), and in the mainstage productions of *Cavalleria Rusticana* (chorus), *Carmen* (Morales), and *The Shining* (Crooner).



Timothy Madden (bass-baritone) is from Kosciusko, Mississippi, and studied at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He received acclaim for performances in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Nick Bottom), Gilbert and Sullivan's *Ruddigore* (Despard), and *Gianni Schicchi* (Simone). He was recently seen in *Forever Plaid* (Smudge) with Musical Theater Heritage. In 2020, he was scheduled to perform in Britten's *Albert Herring* (Superintendent Budd) as a guest artist with the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Other scheduled performances included *The Pirates of Penzance* (Samuel) and *Sky on Swings* (Elder 4/Administrator cover) with Opera Saratoga and *Platée* (Jupiter) with Opera NEO. Timothy joins Opera Colorado as an Artist in Residence for the 2020-21 Season, during which he will perform in the touring productions of *The Barber of Seville* (Dr. Bartolo) and *The Pirates of Penzance* (The Sergeant of Police), and in the mainstage productions of *Carmen* (Zuniga) and *The Shining* (The Senator).



Stephen Variames (coach/accompanist) is a freelance pianist and composer from Allen, Texas. He holds a bachelor's degree in Composition from Baylor University, a master's degree in Vocal Coaching from Oklahoma City University, and an Artist Diploma in Opera Coaching from the Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati. Former companies include Cincinnati Opera, Nashville Opera (Young Artist), Pensacola (Young Artist), Roundabout Opera for Kids in Cincinnati, Opera in the Ozarks, and Pittsburgh Festival Opera. His opera, *Leaving Vaughan Behind*, is the recipient of multiple grants. Other works have been premiered with Cincinnati Soundbox, The Lynx Project, and Salon 21. This season, Stephen will act as the primary coach and accompanist for the company's touring productions of *The Barber of Seville* and *The Pirates of Penzance*. He will also work on additional repertoire throughout the season, including mainstage works of *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Carmen*, and *The Shining*, and serve as featured pianist for school and community performances across Colorado.

###

ABOUT OPERA COLORADO

Opera Colorado has served as a cornerstone of Denver's cultural community since 1981. In addition to its mainstage performances at the Ellie Caulkins Opera House each season, the company affirms its commitment to the future of the art form by annually presenting new works; with its nationally recognized Artist in Residence Program that trains the next generation of opera performers; and by each year reaching more than 45,000 students and adults through its many education and community engagement programs throughout the Rocky Mountain region. For more information, visit operacolorado.org.