CU > PRESENTS

2023-24 Season



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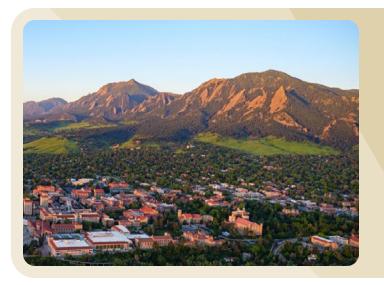


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CU NOW

CU New Opera Workshop

Polly Peachum

A Musical Play in Two Acts

7:30 p.m. Friday, June 14, 2024 2 p.m., Sunday, June 16, 2024

Composer Fellows' Initiative (CFI)

7:30 p.m., Saturday, June 15, 2024

Music Theatre

Artistic Team

General/Artistic Director, CU NOW

Stage Director, Polly Peachum

Stage Director, CFI

Music Director, CU NOW

Music Director, CFI

Costume Designer

Production Director

Stage Managers

Leigh Holman

Bill Van Horn

Bud Coleman

Nicholas Carthy

Nathália Kato

Ann Piano

Ron Mueller

Alysha Perrin

Caitlyn Fuller

Polly Peachum

A Musical Play in Two Acts

Book and lyrics by **Gene Scheer** and **Bill Van Horn**Music by **Gene Scheer**Musical arrangements and supplemental material by **Gary Fry**

ROLE CAST

John Gay Thomas Bocchi

John Wilde Samuel Wetzel

Polly Peachum Kailyn Martino

Jonathan Swift Miguel Ángel Ortega Bañales

Mr. Clark

Alexander Pope Reese Phillips

Harry

John Arbuthnot Benaiah W Axlund

Officer

Sir Robert Walpole Marcus Schaller

Mr. Pennington Lily Valdez

Reverend Moore

The Duchess Melissa Lubecke

Mrs. Ditchit

Maggie

Princess Caroline Rebecca Seifert

(later queen)

Lavinia Fenton

Composer Fellows' Initiative

The Earthworm Problem by Holly McMahon

ROLE CAST

Esmeralda Kristina Butler

Rue Katiann Nelson

Bill the Earthworm Simeon Wallace

Miles Max Vann

Heart of the Antarctic by Alan Mackwell

ROLE CAST

Adams Kristina Butler

Brocklehurst Katiann Nelson

Shackleton Simeon Wallace

Wild **Max Vann**

Songs of a Soldier by JC Maynard

ROLE CAST

The Lover Kristina Butler

The Mother Katiann Nelson

The Soldier Simeon Wallace

The Father Max Vann

Personnel

BENAIAH AXLUND is a baritone from Bellingham, Washington. He graduated from Pacific Lutheran University in 2021 with a Bachelor of Music degree in vocal performance. At Pacific Lutheran University, Axlund had roles in many productions, notably The Parson in Leoš Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen* and Bartolo in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*. At Vashon Opera, he has taken part in several performances—most recently as Bogdanovitch in Franz Lehár's *The Merry Widow*, and Lakai in Richard Strauss's *Ariadne*. Currently, Axlund is studying under Andrew Garland while working towards his Master of Music at the University of Colorado Boulder.

THOMAS BOCCHI is a versatile artist, equally versed in opera, concert/oratorio, musical theatre and art song. He is also an aspiring composer. Concert soloist roles include Mozart's C Minor Mass, Tippett's *A Child of Our Time* and Faure's *Requiem*. He performs regularly with Colorado Bach Ensemble as soloist/chorus member (B Minor Mass, *St Matthew Passion*, Handel's *Messiah*, numerous cantatas) and was a finalist in their Young Artist Competition. Opera credits include Miles (*Proving Up*), premiering Ben Morris' opera (*The Fall of Man*), Joe (Robert Paterson's *Companion*), Lesbus (*Agrippina*), the Witch (*Hänsel & Gretel*) and Basilio/Curzio (*Le Nozze di Figaro*). He is currently pursuing a DMA, studying with Matthew Chellis.

KRISTINA BUTLER has performed with Journey North Opera Company, Dakota Valley Symphony, St. Olaf Band, Minnesota Symphonic Winds and the Sinfónica de Guayaquil. Her roles include Ida in *Die Fledermaus*, Littler Daughter in *Proving Up*, Billie Jean King in *Balls* and Lady Valerie in *Cabildo*. Butler's training includes the Minnesota Source Song Festival, Opera Reading Project and, this summer, the Berlin Opera Academy. She was a graduate division finalist for the 2024 Concerto Competition at CU Boulder. Butler is a 2021 recipient of the Fulbright Grant to Ecuador where she recorded an album titled *Sueños de Zazá*. Butler studies with Professor Jennifer Bird-Arvidsson.

MELISSA LUBECKE SARABIA is thrilled to be helping to debut this new work with CU NOW. A former student of John Seesholtz, Lubecke Sarabia has contributed to many exciting performances with Eklund Opera in the roles of Lady with a Cake Box in *Postcard from Morocco*, Mimi in *La Bohème*, and Alice Ford in *Falstaff*. She counts herself blessed to be starting her teaching career this Fall at Texas Lutheran University as Professor of voice.

ALAN MACKWELL: Described as "an original composer with new ideas and a command of complex symphonic writing" (BroadStreet Journal), New Zealander-American Alan Mackwell (b. 1998) is a BMI award-winning young composer and banjo-player based in Boulder. In his work, Mackwell seeks to explore a unique blend of atmospheres inspired by his experiences in the Permian Basin, northern New Mexico and Appalachian North Carolina using a highly resonant and bluegrass-influenced musical language. He earned his BM at the Boston Conservatory and his MA at Tufts University. Mackwell is currently pursuing his DMA at the University of Colorado Boulder where he teaches an Intro to Music Technology course.

KAILYN MARTINO is a soprano from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She is a DMA student at CU Boulder, studying with soprano Jennifer Bird-Arvidsson. She received her MM in voice performance and pedagogy from CU Boulder and a BM in voice performance from Baldwin Wallace Conservatory of Music. Martino is honored to originate the role of Polly with CU NOW. Some of her recent appearances include Littler Daughter in Mazzoli's *Proving Up*, Amor in *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, Nannetta in *Falstaff*, Elle in Poulenc's *La Voix Humaine*, and Younger Alyce in Tom Cipullo's *Glory Denied*. She performs with Boulder Opera, Art Song Colorado, Longmont Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Opera Theater, Eklund Opera and more.

JOSHUA CARTER MAYNARD is a composer and conductor from Colorado Springs currently studying a Bachelor of Music in composition at CU Boulder. Maynard never allows himself to be confined to one artistic box—instead, blending genres and new collaborations all his works. In addition to producing many awarded compositions for choir and orchestra to electronics and jazz combos, Maynard is the founder and conductor of the Renova New Music Ensemble—CU Boulder's premier contemporary choir. He has conducted and

had pieces performed by groups such as the Colorado Vocal Arts Ensemble, the University of Wyoming Bel Canto Choir, the CU Boulder Chamber Singers, Lírios String Quartet, the Denver Playground Ensemble and more.

KATIANN NELSON, originally from Waterford, Wisconsin, is currently an MM student at the University of Colorado Boulder, studying under Abigail Nims. Having finished her undergraduate degree in vocal music education and instrumental performance (piano and clarinet), Nelson moved to Colorado to continue her performance education in voice. In her voice career, Nelson has sung the role of Meg in *Falstaff* with the Eklund Opera program at CU Boulder, Taller Daughter in *Proving Up*, and looks forward to her role as Hansel in *Hansel und Gretel*. In addition to this, Nelson has worked with the Boulder Bach Ensemble in their production of Handel's *Messiah*.

MIGUEL ANGEL ORTEGA BAÑALES, tenor, pianist and conductor born in Tijuana, Baja California, México. Ortega pursues a doctoral degree in vocal performance and pedagogy at CU Boulder, where he serves as teaching assistant for the voice department as well as assistant conductor for the Eklund Opera program. His current studies in voice are guided by professor Matthew Chellis. Recent appearances include Fenton in Verdi's *Falstaff*, Rodolfo in Puccini's *La Bohème*, Alfredo in Verdi's *La Traviata*, as well as tenor soloist in Bach's *Weihnachts Oratorium*. Ortega has also been distinguished with the First Prize in the Denver Lyric Opera Guild's vocal competition this 2024.

REESE PHILLIPS is a tenor originally from Norman, Oklahoma. He is currently working towards a Master of Music in voice performance and pedagogy at CU Boulder and studies with Matthew Chellis. He holds a Bachelor of Music in voice performance from the University of Oklahoma. Performance credits include Dr. Caius in *Falstaff*, Little Bat in *Susannah*, Tamino in *The Magic Flute*, and Frederic in *Pirates of Penzance*.

MARCUS SCHALLER (Walpole) is an undergraduate in the College of Music, pursuing a Bachelor of Music in vocal performance under the instruction of Professor Andrew Garland, and plans to pursue vocal performance, particularly within contemporary opera and theater, in graduate school and beyond. Previous roles with Eklund Opera include Sodbuster in Mazzoli's *Proving Up*,

Pistola in Verdi's *Falstaff* an Le Surintendent in Massenet's *Cendrillon*. When not singing, they can be found engaging in improvised theater, composing digital sound paintings and spending every possible moment outside.

REBECCA SEIFERT is a mezzo soprano from Phoenix, Arizona. She holds a bachelor's degree in vocal performance from the University of Oregon, where she graduated *cum laude* and with an Achievement Award in recognition of Outstanding Vocal Performer in her graduating class. Some of her recent roles include Isabella in Gioachino Rossini's *L'Italiana in Algeri*, Desiree Armfeldt in Stephen Sondheim's *A Little Night Music*, Fuego in Antonio de Literes' *Los Elementos* and Meg Page in Verdi's *Falstaff*. Seifert is a second year Master of Music student majoring in vocal performance under Professor Abigail Nims.

LILY VALDEZ, a soprano from Arvada, recently graduated from the Bachelor of Music in musical theatre program at CU Boulder. Recent named performances include Quartermaster Hitchens in *Titanic*, the Musical with Eklund Opera, Judy Bernly in 9 to 5, the Musical with CU Boulder College of Music and Sarah Brown in Guys and Dolls with Eklund Opera. She is so thankful to her friends, family, and mentors for their support and love. "¡Cantar y luchar!" @lilyjvaldez

MAX VANN is a first-year graduate student studying vocal pedagogy and performance with Andrew Garland. Vann received his undergraduate degree from Georgia Southern University in performance and music education. When not singing opera, Vann also likes to sing a variety of genres such as jazz, choral and barbershop music.

SIMEON WALLACE is from the foothills of North Carolina. He has a passion for exploring the compositions of Black composers who intricately crafted idiomatic classical compositions through the lens of African American culture. Recently he portrayed Miles in Missy Mazzoli's *Proving Up* and Fenton in Verdi's *Falstaff* with Eklund Opera. He holds a BM in music education from Appalachian State and is pursuing an MM in vocal performance and pedagogy from CU Boulder under Nicholas Perna.

SAM WETZEL is a recent graduate from CU Boulder, where he studied with Andrew Garland. His voice has been described as "moving the chi in the room" and has been seen most recently as Pa in Missy Mazoli's *Proving Up*, Ford in Verdi's *Falstaff*, in the 2023 CU New Opera Workshop, as Pandolphe in *Cendrillon* and Marcello in *La Bohème*, all with Eklund Opera Theater. He also recently performed Brundibar in Brundibar with Opera. Wetzel received an undergraduate degree from the Baldwin Wallace Conservatory of Music. In the fall Wetzel is attending Indiana University Bloomington to get his PDSP in voice performance.

NICHOLAS CARTHY (Music Director/Conductor) is now in his 19th season with Eklund Opera. He studied at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria. He served as musical assistant to Bernard Haitink and Sir Georg Solti at the Salzburg Festival and to Daniel Barenboim in Paris, Chicago and Bayreuth. Carthy has conducted opera productions in Vienna, Salzburg, Oslo, Stockholm, Winterthur, Milan, Rome, Naples, Bonn, Eugene and Tel Aviv. He has conducted orchestras, including the Colorado Symphony, Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie, Orchestra RAI di Torino, Orchestra San Carlo di Napoli and the Accademia Filarmonica Roma. As a collaborative pianist he has performed in many of the world's great halls, including Carnegie Hall, Suntory Hall, Wigmore Hall, the Bolshoi Theatre and the Musikverein Vienna. He is music director of the Helgeland Sinfonietta and the Toppen International Summer School in Norway. He is well known for his public lectures at the University of Colorado and beyond, and is occasionally heard on the radio, spreading around his uncurbable enthusiasm for music and history.

BUD COLEMAN is honored to work again with Eklund Opera, having directed the CFI student operas every summer for CU NOW since 2015. Other Eklund credits include appearing as Frosch in *Die Fledermaus* and directing *Red Hot and Cole* and *A Grand Night for Singing*. Now professor emeritus, Coleman was the inaugural Roe Green Professor of Theatre at the University of Colorado Boulder and former chair of the Department of Theatre & Dance. Coleman has directed and choreographed many musicals and operas, including the musical Company in Vladivostok, Russia, and the Thai premiere of *Fiddler on the Roof*.

CHRISTIE CONOVER (Production Assistant) wears many hats, having returned to her alma mater as production assistant for Eklund Opera. In her active solo career she will sing Rose in Weill's *Street Scene* at Central City Opera this summer. She has performed lead roles with Komische Oper Berlin, Minnesota Opera, Opera Colorado and concerts with the Colorado Symphony, Colorado Music Festival and Colorado Springs Philharmonic, among others. Conover fondly remembers her many roles with Eklund Opera and singing in the inaugural CU NOW.

CAITLYN FULLER (CFI Stage Manager) is a current graduate student at CU Boulder pursuing a master's in voice performance and pedagogy. Fuller can typically be found on the stage as a lyric soprano. However, she is excited to step back into the management role. Fuller was the stage manager for the 2022 fall opera scenes production and then went on to be an assistant stage manager for CU Boulder's 2023 spring production of *Cendrillon*. Fuller will be making her role debut as Poppea in Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* and as Mutter in Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel* this fall with Eklund Opera at CU Boulder.

LEIGH HOLMAN (Stage Director) 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 *West Side Story, 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 (CU NOW), she continues to passionately promote the creation, collaboration and production of new American works.

NATHÁLIA KATO (CFI Music Director) Since August 2022, pianist Nathália Kato has been based in Pittsburgh, PA where she has been highly sought after for her expertise in collaborative piano. Kato is an adjunct professor of voice at Duquesne University, where she serves as a vocal coach and music director of Opera Workshop. Further recent projects include collaborations with the

Carnegie Mellon Opera, Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh and Chamber Music Pittsburgh. KAto received a Doctor of Musical Arts in collaborative piano from the University of Colorado Boulder, studying with Margaret McDonald and Alexandra Nguyen. From 2015 to 2020, she held a teaching assistantship through which she served as a rehearsal and orchestra pianist, harpsichordist and coach for the Eklund Opera Program working with maestro Nicholas Carthy. Additionally, she earned music degrees in her home country of Brazil.

JENN MELCHER GALVIN (Properties Designer and Scenic Artist), MFA, joined Eklund Opera at CU Boulder in 2007, and she has considered it her professional home ever since. Galvin has painted for prestigious summer companies including the Colorado Shakespeare Festival and Ohio Light Opera. Locally, Galvin has worked for Macky Auditorium, BDT Stage, Chatauqua Auditorium and BETC. Her hobbies include fiction, needlecraft and hiking. In 2010, Galvin walked 400 miles of an ancient pilgrimage road across Northern Spain called the Camino de Santiago. She thanks her cat Nutmeg, husband Peter and son Dominic for their love and support.

RON MUELLER (Production Director) has served Eklund Opera as technical director and now production director for more than a quarter of a century. He has also designed scenery and/or lighting for many Eklund productions in that time, most recently *Titanic* and *Drowsy Chaperone*. Also a BETC ensemble member, he designed scenery for last season's *The Children*, and a dozen others over the last decade. He has also designed scenery or lighting for productions at Crested Butte Music Festival, Skylight Opera Theatre, Colorado Shakespeare Festival, Boulder's Dinner Theatre, Theatre X, Milwaukee Chamber Theater, Boulder Broadway Company, CU Theatre and Dance and the University of Denver's Lamont School of Music.

BARBIE NOYES (Assistant Music Director) has performed at renowned venues such as Carnegie's Weill Hall, the Granada Theater and Boettcher Concert Hall. Noyes holds graduate degrees from the University of Colorado Boulder where she studied with Margaret McDonald and Alexandra Nguyen. Previously the collaborative pianist for Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Noyes now serves as postdoctoral lecturer in collaborative piano at CU Boulder and collaborative pianist at Meadowmount School of Music.

Alongside mezzo-soprano Claire McCahan, Noyes co-founded Horizon Duo, a voice-piano duo dedicated to the celebration and creative programming of contemporary and classic repertoire. Horizon Duo has been a finalist and prizewinner at competitions such as the National Association of Teachers of Singing Artist Awards (NATSAA), Franz Schubert & Modern Music Lied Duo competition, and the Federation of Art Song Fellowship.

ALYSHA PERRIN (*Polly Peachum* Stage Manager) hails from Lake Tahoe, Nevada, where she began dancing at age 4. She later earned her BFA in contemporary dance from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. Her journey in the arts led to a career teaching and performing a variety of dance styles, aerial disciplines and stilts. She began her professional production work while serving as the education director of Frequent Flyers Aerial Dance. Perrin has stage managed for Hannah Kahn, Mi Chantli, the Mariposa Collective and Boulder Ballet. She is excited to add opera to her repertoire of stage work!

ANN PIANO (Costume Designer): As the costume coordinator for Opera Colorado since 2003, she has designed costumes for *Don Giovanni* (2013), *Carmen* (2014) and *The Magic Flute* (2015). She has designed more than 100 shows for Denver area opera, theater and dance companies. In 2012, she won a True West "Best Costume Design" Award for The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity at Curious Theatre. Most recently, she designed *Tosca* at Bravo! Vail Music Festival and *La Bohème* and *Cendrillon* for Eklund Opera at CU Boulder. Piano has a BFA in Fashion Design from Stephens College in Columbia, Missouri, with a minor in fine art.

ALLEIGH WATSON (Assistant Stage Manager/Hospitality Coordinator) is a second year master's student in vocal pedagogy and performance at CU Boulder. She studies under mezzo soprano faculty member Abigail Nims.

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Technical Director

Jeff Rusnak

Assistant Music Director

Barbara Noyes

Artist Professional

Development Advisor

Laura Lee Everett

ATD and Light Board

Operator

Ben Smith

Hand Properties

Jennifer Melcher Galvin

Hospitality/ASM

Alleigh Watson

Scenic Artists

Jennifer Melcher Galvin

Lelah Radostis

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CU > PRESENTS

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* Deceased

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As of Jan. 10, 2024

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