

# DEAD MAN WALKING

Music by **Jake Heggie**Libretto by **Terrence McNally**Based on the novel by **Sister Helen Prejean** 

This Opera was commissioned by the San Francisco Opera



Oct. 24 and 26





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### CU \* PRESENTS

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Designer: Sabrina Green

**Contributors**: Kathryn Bistodeau, Adam Goldstein, Lisa Kennedy

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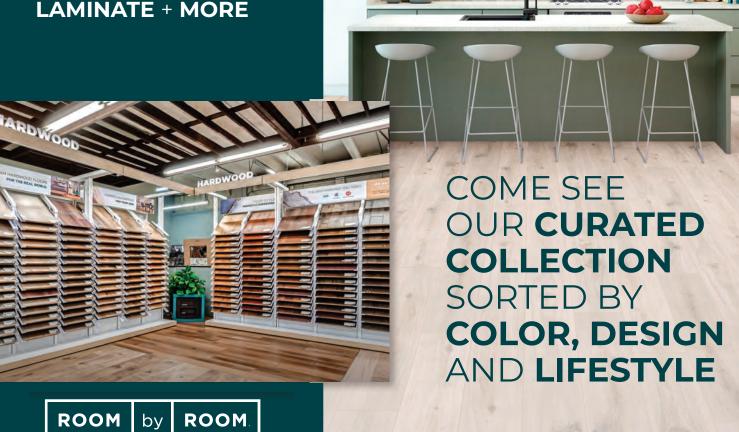


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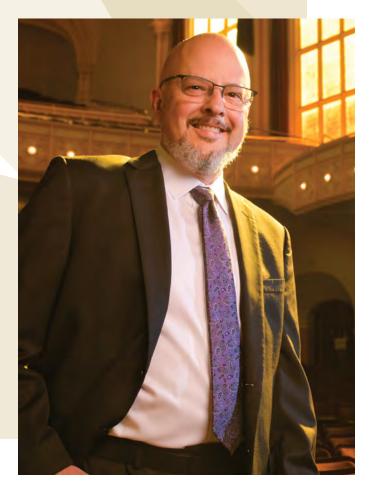
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-Ted Gioia

Friends,

For almost 90 years, the Artist Series has been a beacon for global artistry at Macky Auditorium, enriching our cultural landscape. As director and curator of the series now entering a second season, I am thrilled to bring you our 2025-26 season—one that celebrates the cultural fabric of Boulder and our university community.

The season begins with **Aristo Sham**, this year's Cliburn Piano Competition Gold Medal winner, followed by **Ballet Hispánico**'s *CARMEN.maquia* on Oct. 9, a powerful reimagining of the classic tale through Latin and flamenco culture. On Nov. 7, **Cirque Kalabanté** presents *Afrique en Cirque*, a stunning blend of acrobatics, West African rhythms and dance. The holiday season heats up with the **Bria Skonberg** Sextet's *Jingle Bell Swing* on Dec. 11, bringing jazz joy to Boulder.

In 2026, we welcome Baroque ensemble **Ruckus** on Jan. 23 performing *The Edinburgh Rollick* with violinist **Keir GoGwilt** and featuring folk music from the Niel Gow Collections. **Versa-Style Street Dance** from Los Angeles pays tribute to the guardians of street dance on Feb. 11. On March 11, by popular demand, **Danú** returns to share the traditional music of Ireland.

On March 28, **Bang on a Can All-Stars** perform Ryuichi Sakamoto's *1996*, a rare live performance of the legendary composer's works for film. The season concludes on April 11 with **Michael Feinstein and the Carnegie Hall Ensemble** in *Big Band Broadway* celebrating the *Great American Songbook*.

I invite you to join us and be part of these transformative experiences this season. Please consider becoming a subscriber or supporting the Artist Series with an additional gift as ticket sales cover only a portion of the costs of bringing these world-class artists to Boulder.

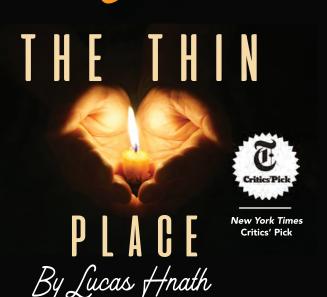
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Rudy Betancourt Director, CU Artist Series and Macky Auditorium



# Are we all met?

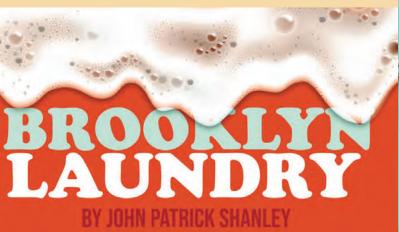






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New York Times
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By Amy Herozog

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Sept. 26: Aristo Sham, piano
Oct. 9: Ballet Hispánico
Nov. 7: Cirque Kalabanté
Dec. 11: Bria Skonberg

Jan. 23: Ruckus Early Music and Keir GoGwilt
Feb. 11: Versa-Style Street Dance Company

March 11: Danú

March 28: Bang on a Can All-Stars

April 11: Michael Feinstein in Big Band Broadway





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Fall 2025 · Macky Auditorium and the Music Theatre

Oct. 24 and 26: **Dead Man Walking**Music by Jake Heggie, Libretto by Terrence McNally

Nov. 13-16: Cabaret

Book by Joe Masteroff, Music by John Kander, Lyrics by Fred Ebb

DEAD MAN WALKING: Based on the novel by Sister Helen Prejean; commissioned by the San Francisco Opera. CABARET: Based on the play by John Van Druten and Stories by Christopher Isherwood; presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Tams-Witmark LLC. concordtheatricals.com.





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Fall 2025 · University Theatre Building

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MFA Thesis Works

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# Cabaret

### to Examine Questions of Creative Expression



By Adam Goldstein

The power of art, expression and self-acceptance underlies the historical cues in Cabaret.

The 1951 musical by John Kander, Fred Ebb and Joe Masteroff is set in Berlin in the waning days of the Weimar Republic as the Nazi party rose to power and violently shifted the course of German culture and world history. Many of the show's main characters are the final refugees of the Jazz Age, artists condemned and crushed under the weight of authoritarianism and fascism.

It's a very specific moment in time, one brought to life by Masteroff's richly drawn character—the cabaret performer Sally Bowles, the American writer Clifford Bradshaw and the anonymous Master of Ceremonies of the Kit Kat Club—a larger-than-life narrator whose arc in the show neatly sums up the tragic arc of German history in late 1929 and early 1930.

While the musical operates in a distinct historical moment, its timeless themes have made it a mainstay of the musical theatre genre. The story captures important questions about the value of self-expression and art's importance in the face of censorship, brutality and iron-fisted rule. Cabaret is about Germany in the throes of a violent transformation, but it's also about artists who stay committed to their craft—no matter the price.

"The artist raises a mirror to society, the arts have power," says Kristel Jelinek Brown, who is directing the University of Colorado Boulder Musical Theatre Program's production of Cabaret Nov. 13 to 16. "It's a show that's very on the nose about fascismand what that does to artists. It's also about a

freewheeling, wild, hedonistic celebration of self and sexuality and identity."

The show explores the underground cabaret culture that flourished in Berlin at the end of the Jazz Age, an environment full of experimentation, expression and creativity. It's a setting that offers stark comparisons during a time when creative expression in the United States is facing its own defining moment as venues and media outlets face seismic shifts in funding and creative control.

The students' choice to stage Cabaret in this modern moment seemed purposeful, says Jelinek Brown, who'll bring her training in "guerrilla theatre" to bear in a production set to feature experimentation.

"This show will explore questions like, what happens when we take art away? What happens when students take art into their own hands? We're going to play a lot with found material. It won't look like a traditional Cabaret staging," she says, adding that the cast will number in the dozens. "Universities are an excellent place to be experimental and try different things."

The score, the book and the characters won't change from the 1951 original, she adds. Cabaret will still feature the beloved tunes and familiar plot points that have long delighted audiences. Even so, present-day realities may make the 70-plus-year-old musical take on a new relevance.

The CU Boulder College of Music Musical Theatre Program presents Cabaret in the Music Theatre from Nov. 13 through 16, 2025.





# Spoiler Alert: She Dies.

By Lisa Kennedy

At a time when classics continue to be reimagined, renovated, downright torn down and rebuilt, this may come as something of a surprise: In Ballet Hispanico's CARMEN.maquia, choreographer Gustavo Ramirez Sansano's take on Georges Bizet's opera, the woman who riled the besotted soldier Don José and pursued the matador Escamillo still meets a brutal end.

"I went to see a Carmen where Carmen is not the one who dies. And I'm like umm, okay ..." Eduardo Vilaro, the company's artistic director and CEO, shared during a video call. "It's improbable because we have a world that's dominated by men. It's misogynistic, mostly. You know, sometimes stories are meant to be told the way they were crafted to teach us lessons. We just have to show it and have people talk about it and say, 'Wow, that was wrong."

Carmen is in the midst of its sesquicentennial. Before Bizet made the heroine indelible 150 years ago, she appeared in Prosper Mérimée's novella, the basis for Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy's libretto. In the 20th century, a Spaniard who likened himself to a bull began evoking Carmen in his paintings. Ironically, Pablo Picasso lived in France at the time.

From the start, Carmen has embodied the tensions between cultural appropriation and embrace. How could anything but intriguing happen when the nation's preeminent Latiné dance company presents Carmen?

"It's not just a ballet that's performed externally or gesturally—it's something we feel in our bodies," Vilaro has said. "That level of authenticity gives our version a unique, nuanced energy that's distinctly ours."

And this production comes with its own feints, its own Veronicas, to borrow a bit of bullfighting patois. "There's no flamenco, no castanets," says Vilaro. "There is no" ... cue a gasp ... "red." As for Carmen, well, "This Carmen is very demure," Vilaro says. And yet, she is more aware of exploring her power and her passion. As if thinking, "Yeah, I know the danger I'm living in, but I'm still going to play with it," he says. "And that's empowering in its own way."

Set designer Luis Crespo and costume designer Delfin lean into Picasso's white, black and gray palette and his abstractions. But, "There's a moment of color," Vilaro promises, with a knowing smile.

For years, he would tell Sansano that he had to find a way to connect Carmen's passion to both men. Now, he thinks, the choreographer has.

How? "I won't tell you," he says—and then relents. But you'll get no spoiler here.

Photo credit: Laura Fuchs

Ballet Hispánico performs on the Artist Series at Macky Auditorium on Oct. 9, 2025.



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# Cirque of the Diaspora

By Lisa Kennedy

As a boy, multidisciplinary performer Yamoussa Bangoura didn't have to run away from home to join the circus. At least not initially. Home—the West African nation of Guinea-has a tradition of acrobatics and a legendary circus of its own: Circus Baobab. After Sundays spent captivated by television broadcasts of European circus acts, Bangoura and other kids would head to the nearby beach in the capital city of Conakry to emulate what they'd witnessed. There, acrobatics were being performed and taught, and it's where Bangoura landed his first coaches.

As a teenager, Bangoura auditioned for a film about Circus Baobab, got the role and stayed on. While performing and traveling with the troupe in Spain, he was recruited by Cirque Éloize which led him to the capital of the circus arts world: Montreal.

In 2007, Bangoura founded Cirque Kalabanté (before launching his own troupe, he also performed with Cirque du Soleil, the equestrian troupe Cavalia and ArtCira).

For years, the Kalabanté and its founder have been delivering a mix of African-infused storytelling, acrobatic feats and more to the beats and rhythms of Afro-Jazz music. In 2023, Bangoura received Canada's inaugural Circus Arts Recognition Award. In Afrique en Cirque, Bangoura-along with some of his siblings who are part of his company of artists—return home by immersing audiences in a vision of daily village life in Guinea. The show captures "the strength, agility and life's joys of young Africans," Cirque Kalabanté promises. In addition to performing, the company has a studio dedicated to teaching African and circus arts.

"The circus reminds us that it takes a community to make something truly beautiful," wrote the late fantasy writer and circus aficionado Terry Pratchett. Afrique en Cirque honors the community that fed Bangoura's circus dreams and, not to be understated, its discipline.

The physical rigor required of the circus is irrepressible: From performers drumming djembes to contortionists pretzeling to acrobats constructing pyramids of sinew and muscle. In addition to his other roles, Bangoura drums and plays the tall, hybrid, 21-string instrument known as the kora. A few injuries—a strained meniscus in his shoulder and a torn Achilles - attest to the risks of the work and underline the focus required to consistently deliver joy and bravado.

"When I do circus, all the bad things go away, you're just living in the present moment," Bangoura says in Circus Without Borders, a 2015 documentary detailing the work Kalabanté and Guillaume Saladin's ArtCirq were doing to bring circus arts to their communities of origin: Guinean and Inuit. "It's like when I'm drumming, all the energy changes. It becomes positive," he adds. It's an energy Cirque Kalabanté shares show after show.

Cirque Kalabanté performs on the Artist Series at Macky Auditorium on Nov. 7, 2025.





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### **EKLUND OPERA**

### **Dead Man Walking**

Music by Jake Heggie
Libretto by Terrence McNally
Based on the novel by Sister Helen Prejean
This Opera was commissioned by the San Francisco Opera

Oct. 24 | 26 2025 Macky Auditorium

Director

Music Director

Scenic Design

Costume Design

Costume Coordinator

Leigh Holman

Nicholas Carthy

Peter Dean Beck

Wardrobe Witchery

Ann Piano

Lighting Design
Hair/Wig and Makeup Design
Props Manager
Technical Director
Production Director
Fight Coordinator
Intimacy Director
Program Manager

Jon Dunkle
Jason Estrada
Jenn Melcher
Jeff Rusnak
Ron Mueller
Stephen Weitz
Ellie Griffin
Christie Conover

Production Stage Manager

Deck Stage Manager

Assistant Stage Manager

Lexi Holtzer

Joseph Whitney

Camden Hornor

Scheduler Mae Harrell
Supertitles Michael Chadwick

### **Special Thanks to:**

Sister Helen Prejean and The Ministry Against the Death Penalty (MADP) for her inspiring presence at our production and community events.

For more information on Sister Helen's work and the MADP, please visit sisterhelen.org.

Jake Heggie for generously giving his time to our students and his compelling voice at our supporting events.

Michael Radalet, CU Boulder Sociology Professor Emeritus for his guidance.

Chief Trial Deputy District Attorney Kelsey Waldorf from the Boulder County DA Office.

John Packard, original cast member Joseph DeRocher, for working with our students.

The Roser Visiting Artist Program supporting our community events and guests.

Edie Snyder Gilboy for use of the classic MG Midget.

This production contains graphic depictions of sexual assault, murder, execution by lethal injection and intense emotional distress as well as gunshot sounds and strong language.

### **CAST**

Sister Helen Prejean
Joseph De Rocher (Friday)
Joseph De Rocher (Sunday)
Mrs. Patrick De Rocher

Sister Rose

George Benton, Warden Brandon

Father Grenville Kitty Hart Owen Hart Jade Boucher Howard Boucher

Motorcycle Cop/Solo Inmate

Older Brother/Inmate Younger Brother Sister Catherine Sister Lillianne Prison Guard 1 Prison Guard 2 Teenage Boy Teenage Girl Anthony De Rocher

Anthony De Roche
A Paralegal

Jimmy

Sister Helen Prejean (Cover)
Mrs. Patrick De Rocher (Cover)
Sister Rose (Cover)
Father Grenville (Cover)
Kitty Hart (Cover)
Owen Hart (Cover)
Jade Boucher (Cover)

Hannah Benson
Tyler Middleton
Andrew Konopak
Carrina Macaluso
Stephanie Ann Ball
Brandon Tyler Padgett

Miguel Ángel Ortega Bañales

Isaiah Utto-Galarneau
Whitney Robinson
Davian Raggio
Benjamin South
Noah Strube
Oliver Kilpatrick
Annabella Cox
Kaitlyn Markus
Noah Nussbaum
Elizabeth Healy
Connor George
Simone Thursby
Ayush Ghosh
Charli Brunette

Alice Del Simone

Kelly Riordan
Kaitlyn Markus
Mae Harrell
Benjamin South
Annabella Cox
Noah Nussbaum
Kaitlyn Markus

AJ Rojas

### **Prison Inmate Chorus**

Benjamin South, Teddy Spachman, Lingyi Wang, Noah Strube, Paul Stuber, Derek Demarah, Danny Thompson, Kevin Woram, James Battersby, Remy Deparis, Christian Greer, Samuel Kennedy

### **Mothers/Nuns Chorus**

Charli Brunette, Charis Cumings Battersby, Halle Harrington, Abby DeMarce, Magdalene Triplett, Mae Harrell, Allison Williamson, Annabella Cox, Kaitlyn Markus, Lily Velapoldi, Reagan Hinze, Lily Kraus

### Children's Chorus

Members of the Boulder Children's Chorale Nathan Wubbena, director Eileen Krenzel Rojas, manager

Alina Beard, Allie Davis, Audrey Deinert, Avery Deinert, Alden Fitzgerald, Elora Fitzgerald, Adeline Harper, Ellen Hildreth, Elsa Hollenbach, Natalia Lucani, Evelyn MacQuarrie, Alexandra Nicolella, AJ Rojas, Irene Wildenberg

### **SYNOPSIS**

Prologue: a depiction of the double murder of two teenagers by Joseph De Rocher and his brother.

Dead Man Walking tells the compelling story of Sister Helen, a devoted Catholic nun who becomes the spiritual advisor to Joseph De Rocher, a man sentenced to death for the brutal murder of a teenage couple in Louisiana. Moved by his humanity, yet confronted with the severity of his crimes, Helen agrees to guide De Rocher through the final stages of his life, offering compassion, counsel, and a chance for reflection.

As their relationship develops, De Rocher is forced to confront the reality of his actions and the pain he has caused, while Sister Helen navigates the emotional and moral challenges of supporting someone condemned to die. The story also follows Sister Helen as she meets the families of the victims, witnessing their grief, anger and desire for justice. These encounters highlight the stark emotional contrast between the suffering of those left behind and the condemned man's struggle for understanding and redemption.

Throughout the narrative, Sister Helen faces difficult ethical questions, balancing her desire to show mercy with the realities of justice. She works to help De Rocher recognize the weight of his actions, encouraging him to take responsibility and seek forgiveness, even as she experiences her own moral and spiritual challenges. Meanwhile, the victims' families wrestle with anger, sorrow and the need for closure, providing a powerful counterpoint to Sister Helen's efforts to foster reflection and compassion in De Rocher.

The story builds to its inevitable climax as De Rocher's execution approaches. In these final moments, the emotional and moral complexities explored throughout the narrative come to a head, showing the profound human consequences of crime, punishment, and forgiveness. Sister Helen's steadfast presence and dedication underscore the story's central tension between justice and mercy, leaving audiences with a deep reflection on accountability, human frailty and the capacity for compassion in even the most tragic circumstances.

Dead Man Walking ultimately portrays a harrowing yet humanizing exploration of crime, punishment, and moral courage, illustrating how one person's compassion can shine a light on the profound ethical and emotional dilemmas surrounding life, death and justice.

### **DIRECTOR'S NOTE**

We are living in what many in my profession believe is "The Golden Age of American Opera," and I would argue it was the 2000 premiere of *Dead Man Walking* that served as the catalyst for this golden age. As a director who has dedicated my career to this art form, I saw how this opera changed everything. It proved that a raw, contemporary American story could fill an opera house and launched a new wave of creativity that we are all still riding.

The history of this piece is personal to us; in 2007, CU Boulder was the very first university to produce it. In the professional world, its journey has been just as astonishing, from our neighbors at Central City Opera to the pinnacle of our art form: in 2023, it opened the season at the Metropolitan Opera. This 25th anniversary has spurred productions worldwide, and after our Sunday performance, Jake Heggie will fly to London for the English National Opera's rehearsals. The work is as alive and urgent as ever.

At CU Boulder, we are an active part of this golden age. Our summer CU New Opera Workshop (CU NOW) gives students a direct role in the future of the art form. Our relationship with Jake Heggie is particularly deep; through CU NOW, our students have helped develop three of his other operas, and his presence with us for this production is a testament to that treasured collaboration.

I must warn you: the opera opens with a prologue that is stark and disturbing. The violence you will see, staged with immense care by a professional fight and intimacy director, is necessary. It shows you that Joseph De Rocher is guilty. This opera is not a "whodunnit." The powerful story by the late Terrence McNally is not about whether he did it; it's about what we do after the worst has happened. It is about Sister Helen's search for humanity in a condemned man, even as we are asked to sit with the victims' families in their unimaginable grief and rage. It asks if redemption is possible, and what forgiveness truly costs.

We have been incredibly fortunate to have Sister Helen Prejean herself with us this week in Boulder. Her presence has inspired our students and community, grounding this powerful story in a reality that is both humbling and profound. To watch our students meet the demands of this opera has been nothing short of inspiring. It requires more than magnificent singing; it requires immense emotional courage.

This opera doesn't give you easy answers. It asks you to sit in the uncomfortable space between vengeance and forgiveness, to listen and to feel. Thank you for having the courage to join us.

# MUSIC DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Opera composing is difficult; it is easily the most challenging of all the musical art forms. Choosing the right subject, the right librettist and finding the right dramatic musical voice needed to express character and move the drama forward, are just a few of the challenges that opera composers face.

It is therefore no wonder that most composers take a long time to hit their stride. Verdi wrote 16 operas before *Rigoletto*, widely considered to be his first mature triumph. Puccini's first opera, *Edgar*, was an unmitigated disaster. Even Mozart's first attempts, though showing small signs of latent genius, are far, far away from masterpieces like *Figaro*. (Although this might be due to the fact that he was about 10 years old when he wrote them.) And Wagner and R. Strauss similarly took many attempts to find their distinctive voice. To say nothing of the fact that many of the operas that we consider to be masterworks also underwent substantial revision before arriving in the form that we know them.

There are, however, a small handful of operas that seem to have arrived fully formed: *Wozzeck* by Alban Berg, *Peter Grimes* by Benjamin Britten (which I consider to be the two great operatic masterpieces of the 20th century) and Jake Heggie's masterwork, *Dead Man Walking*.

Interestingly, all three of these operas deal in their different ways with the role of the outsider in society; of death, murder (or possible murder in the case of *Grimes*), of the psychopathy of society and the wilfulness of human nature and how they can lead people down different destructive paths.

Wozzeck (1925) tells the story of a destitute soldier driven to madness and murder by societal oppression and exploitation. *Peter Grimes* (1945) explores a similar path; the fisherman Grimes, driven to his death after his apprentice dies at sea.

Both operas depict characters at the mercy of larger systems—the military and pseudo-scientific experimentation in *Wozzeck* and *Grimes*, ostracized

and judged by a bigoted and uncaring community.

With Joseph De Rocher, the protagonist of *Dead Man Walking*, we are also dealing with an outsider, and somebody who is also up against the volition of public opinion and the helplessness of an individual against a collective judgment. But De Rocher is guilty of a terrible crime, and we are dealing with its aftermath. There are some hints as to what might have driven him to do such a terrible thing, but this is a story of redemption, of a sort of spiritual reckoning, set against a justice system which has little room for anything but punishment. Sister Helen asks whether we should kill those who kill, and in that, seems to wish to comfort the murderer more than the families of the victims. Her actions, and the reactions to it, neatly encapsulate the awful moral dilemma of those who wish to see good in everyone.

Sister Helen, like Ellen Orford in *Grimes* and Marie in *Wozzeck*, attempts to understand and sympathize with a deeply troubled persona. Each of them deals with differing forms of isolation and madness, and ultimately death.

There are also musical parallels between these great works. Heggie's glorious interludes, Alban Berg-like in grandeur, but much more harmonically accessible, propel the music and drama forward, blending musical genres such as gospel, jazz, rock and hymn tunes in a symphonic blaze of colour. He draws a wonderful thematic thread through the opera, reiterating musical motifs in different ways, highlighting both the action and the inner thoughts of the characters.

Heggie, in partnership with his librettist Terrence McNally, has produced a seminal work in the history of opera, the first great operatic masterpiece of the 21st century.

### **PERSONNEL**

STEPHANIE ANN BALL (Sister Rose) is a lyric soprano and healing artist whose work bridges classical performance with the science of well-being. Known for her rich, resonant voice and magnetic stage presence, she has performed with ensembles including the Chamber Orchestra of Colorado Springs and the Bach Society of St. Louis, and at iconic venues like Red Rocks Amphitheatre. Committed to delivering emotional healing through music, she curates transformative experiences that support stress relief, recovery, and rejuvenation. Her repertoire spans opera, oratorio, art song and original meditation music. Whether on stage or in the studio, Ball's music reconnects us to what matters most.

HANNAH BENSON (Sister Helen Prejean) is a mezzo soprano in her second year of studies for an Artist Diploma in opera and solo voice under the private instruction of Abigail Nims. She holds vocal performance degrees from Wheaton College Conservatory (BM) and Indiana University Jacobs School of Music (MM). Benson has portrayed roles including die Hexe in Humperdinck's Hänsel und Gretel, Ruth in Gilbert and Sullivan's The Pirates of Penzance, Der Trommler in the concert version of Ullmann's Der Kaiser von Atlantis with Colorado MahlerFest 38 and Sarah Caldwell in Mark Adamo's workshop of Sarah in the Theatre with CU NOW.

ANNABELLA COX (Sister Catherine/Kitty Hart Cover) is so excited to be joining Elkund Opera for another production! She was last seen singing the role of Serpetta in Mozart's *Die Gärtnerin aus Liebe* in Middlebury German for Singers program. With Eklund Opera, she's been seen as Mabel in Gilbert and Sullivan's *Pirates of Penzance* and as Judith Stein in Mark Adamo's workshop of *Sarah in the Theatre*. She currently is pursuing a master's in vocal performance and pedagogy and studies with Abigail Nims.

ALICE DEL SIMONE (Kitty Hart) an Oakland, CA native, holds a BA in vocal performance from UC Davis and an MM in voice pedagogy and Performance from CU Boulder, where she is a DMA candidate studying with Andrew Garland and Jennifer Bird-Arvidsson. Recent performance highlights include Bubikopf in *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* (Ullmann) with Colorado MahlerFest, and numerous other operatic and concert roles. Del Simone has been fortunate to perform in two CU NOW workshops and is thrilled to return in her fifth performance with Eklund Opera. She also maintains a private voice studio and conducts research exploring registration and nasalance.

**CONNOR GEORGE** (Teenage Boy) is a senior psychology major and theatre minor at CU Boulder. He is extremely excited to have the opportunity to dip his toes into the world of opera. He has always wanted to perform in the beautiful Macky Auditorium and is grateful for this show and crew.

**REAGAN HINZE** (she/her/hers) (Mrs. Charlton) is a first year master's student studying under Professor Jennifer Bird-Arvidsson. Her recent roles include Blanche de la Force in *Dialogues of the Carmelites* and Amahl in *Amahl and the Night Visitors* with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* with SOO Opera Theatre, and Gretel in *Hänsel und Gretel* with Chicago Summer Opera.

OLIVER KILPATRICK (Younger Brother) is excited to make his opera debut with the Eklund Opera in *Dead Man Walking*! He began acting in 2021 with the Actors Academy for the Performing Arts (AAPA) in Boulder. Favorite stage roles include Young Macduff in *Macbeth* (Colorado Shakespeare Festival), Alexei/Young Dmitry in *Anastasia* (The Arts Hub), and the Cat in the Hat in *Seussical Jr.* (Rocky Mountain Theater for Kids). When he's not performing, Kilpatrick enjoys skiing, downhill mountain biking, making stop-motion films and drawing.

ANDREW KONOPAK (Joseph De Rocher) is working toward an MM in vocal performance and pedagogy, studying with Professor Andrew Garland. Before starting at CU Boulder, Konopak graduated with a BM from CSU Long Beach, and then worked professionally around Southern California for seven years where he became known for his "rich clarion baritone" (San Diego Story). Since coming to Colorado, Konopak has sung bass solos in both Handel's *Messiah* and Bach's *B minor Mass* with Longmont Symphony Orchestra, the Pirate King in Gilbert & Sullivan's *Pirates of Penzance*, and Der Lautsprecher in Ullmann's *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* with Colorado MahlerFest.

CARRINA MACALUSO (Mrs. Patrick De Rocher) is a mezzo soprano from Asheville, North Carolina, pursuing a Master of Music degree at the University of Colorado Boulder where she studies with Abigail Nims. She earned a Bachelor of Music degree with distinction from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill under the mentorship of Jeanne Fischer. A versatile artist, Macaluso performs across concert, opera, musical theatre and chamber music repertoire. Recent roles include Ruth (*The Pirates of Penzance*) and Der Sandmann (*Hänsel und Gretel*) with Eklund Opera. She is honored to portray the vulnerable and nuanced Mrs. Patrick De Rocher in *Dead Man Walking*. She would like to thank her mother, Teresa, and her sister, Rachel, for their unwavering support.

KAITLYN MARKUS (Sister Lillianne/Jade Boucher cover/ Mrs. De Rocher cover), mezzo soprano, is a first-year master's student in vocal performance and pedagogy at the University of Colorado Boulder, where she studies with Abigail Nims. She recently made her professional debut as Big Stone in Matthew Aucoin's *Eurydice* with Opera Grand Rapids. Markus has performed internationally at the Trentino Music Festival in Italy and was a young artist and administrator at Taos Opera Institute. Favorite roles include Second Lady (*Die Zauberflöte*) and Rona Lisa Peretti (*The 25th Annual* 

Putnam County Spelling Bee). In addition to teaching voice and piano, she enjoys baking and singing everything from opera to jazz.

TYLER MIDDLETON (Joseph De Rocher), from Knoxville, Tennessee, is a lyric baritone beginning his Artist Diploma at CU Boulder under the tutelage of baritone Andrew Garland. Middleton holds a master's degree from the University of Michigan ('24), where he performed as Inspector Kildare in Kevin Putz's Elizabeth Cree and Leporello in Mozart's Don Giovanni under the baton of the legendary Martin Katz. He also holds a bachelor's degree from Middle Tennessee State University ('22). Middleton is an active performer in the Midwest, having sung with companies such as Motor City Lyric Opera, South Bend Lyric Opera, No-Fly Productions and the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra in the 2024-25 season. He is proud to be making his debut with the Eklund Opera program singing the nuanced and tragic Joseph De Rocher.

NOAH NUSSBAUM (First Prison Guard) is a master's student in voice performance and pedagogy. Nussbaum has recently performed baritone roles and solos in Menotti's Amahl and the Night Visitors (King Balthazar), Mozart's Don Giovanni (Masetto/II Commendatore), and Handel's Messiah ("Thus Saith the Lord"). Now a student of Andrew Garland at the University of Colorado Boulder, Nussbaum will be singing First Prison Guard in Eklund Opera's Dead Man Walking. He holds a Bachelor of Music in voice performance from Furman University.

MIGUEL ANGEL ORTEGA BAÑALES (Father Grenville) is a tenor, pianist and conductor born in Tijuana, Baja California, México. Ortega pursues a doctoral degree in vocal performance and pedagogy at CU Boulder, studying voice with Professor Matthew Chellis. He currently serves as teaching assistant for CU Boulder's vocal pedagogy department. Recent performances include collaborations with CU Boulder's Eklund Opera program as Capt. Smith in Yeston's *Titanic*, Fenton in Verdi's *Falstaff* and Rodolfo in Puccini's *La Bohème*, as well as tenor soloist in Bach's *Weihnachts Oratorium* with the Kentucky Bach Choir. Distinguished with the First Prize in the Denver Lyric Opera Guild's vocal competition, 2024 edition.

BRANDON TYLER PADGETT (Warden) is a graduate of CU Boulder's Master of Music and Artist Diploma programs. His recent credits include Geppetto in Jonathan Dove's *Pinocchio* and Lescaut in Jules Massenet's *Manon*, both of which were productions of the Boulder Opera. Padgett's past roles with Eklund Opera include Germont in Verdi's *La traviata*, Claudio in Handel's *Agrippina*, and the titular character in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*. Padgett is so excited to work with Eklund Opera on this galvanizing work which awakens for some and greatly redefines for most the debate of capital punishment in society.

**DAVIAN RAGGIO** (Howard Boucher) was last seen with Eklund Opera debuting the role of Frederic in Gilbert and Sullivan's *Pirates of Penzance*. This summer, he sang in a workshop of Mark Adamo's new opera *Sarah in the Theatre* with CU NOW. After, Raggio joined the Middlebury German for Singers program to sing II Contino Belfiore in Mozart's *Die Gärtnerin aus Liebe* in Scharbeutz, Germany. In 2025-26, he can be seen with Central City Opera, Boulder Opera Company, Operativo Houston and Eklund Opera. Raggio is pursuing an MM in voice performance and pedagogy under the tutelage of Matthew Chellis and Nicholas Perna.

KELLY RIORDAN (Sister Helen Prejean cover) is an American mezzo soprano, praised for her "exuberant honesty" onstage and her "beautiful vibrancy and warmth" of tone. Based in Denver, she enjoys a diverse career performing, teaching and conducting research internationally. In 2022-23, Riordan collaborated with Exilarte: Center for Banned Music and the Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Wien under the prestigious Fulbright scholarship in Vienna, Austria. Riordan is also a member of the Alexander Alliance school where she is training to teach Alexander Technique. She integrates this training into her thriving private voice studio.

WHITNEY ROBINSON (Jade Boucher) Praised for her "vivid stage presence and voice," mezzo soprano Whitney Robinson earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Houston and master's degree and Artist Diploma candidacy from the New England Conservatory. She is thrilled to join the University of Colorado Boulder, pursuing a Doctor of Music in vocal performance and pedagogy. Most recently Robinson appeared in the American premiere of Sibelius's *The Maiden in the Tower*. She has also sung with esteemed companies such as Opera Saratoga, Central City Opera, Virginia Opera, CLOC, Odyssey Opera, Opera Cecilia, Operativo, Opera Louisiane and Virginia Arts Festival.

BENJAMIN SOUTH (Motorcycle Cop/Solo Inmate/Father Grenville cover) is a versatile crossover artist and teacher from Muscle Shoals, Alabama. Most recently, he has performed as a teaching and touring artist with Central City Opera and an emerging artist with the Seagle Festival. Recent roles include Teague (Cold Mountain), Charlie (Brigadoon), Sam Polk (Susannah), Eddie Birdlace (Dogfight), and Theodore Lawrence (Adamo's Little Women). Additionally, He frequently performs as a concert soloist and music director. South is pursing a DMA studying with Matthew Chellis and Nicholas Perna.

**ISAIAH UTTO-GALARNEAU** (Owen Hart) is a first year graduate student studying under the esteemed Andrew Garland. Utto-Galarneau is excited to be in a production of this magnitude both musically and emotionally. Having done roles as Leporello in *Don Giovanni* and Balthazar in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, he is thrilled to perform the role of Owen Hart and be in an Eklund Opera production.

PETER DEAN BECK (Scenic Designer) has designed for Eklund Opera since 1994, as well as 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 Romeo et Juliette for such companies as Atlanta Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, Virginia Opera and Chautaugua Opera, He has designed productions of Andrea Chenier, L'Italiana in Algeri, Macbeth, Elektra and Tristan and Isolde for Hawaii Opera Theatre, where he has been designing for more than 30 seasons. His musical theatre credits include Fiddler on the Roof, Sound of Music, Music Man, Les Misérables and Annie for Skylight Music Theatre. His work for dance includes The Indigo Girls Project for Atlanta Ballet and Nutcracker for Ballet Hawaii.

ALAINA de BELLEVUE (Chorus Master/vocal coach) is a freelance pianist, vocal coach and music director based in Boulder. She currently serves as the pianist for Colorado Ballet's pre-professional division as well as chorus master for Anchorage Opera and Opera Steamboat. Previous music staff positions include Portland Opera, Sarasota Opera, Opera Colorado, Central City Opera, Mittelsächsisches Theater Freiberg, Opera Et Cetera (Wiesbaden, Germany) and Opera Fort Collins, among others. She has played for Oregon Ballet Theatre, Peninsula Ballet Theatre, Boulder Ballet, and is music director for Centennial State Ballet. From 2021-23 she served on the faculty at Colorado State University as vocal coach and opera music director. de Bellevue is the principal pianist for Fort Collins Symphony and appears regularly with other Front Range orchestras. She holds an Artist Diploma in vocal coaching and a master's in collaborative piano from CU Boulder.

NICHOLAS CARTHY (Music Director/Conductor) is in his 20th 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.

CHRISTIE CONOVER (Program Manager) wears many hats, having returned to her alma mater as program manager for Eklund Opera. In her active solo career she has performed lead roles with Komische Oper Berlin, Minnesota Opera, Opera Colorado, Central City Opera 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.

JON DUNKLE (lighting design) is a Colorado-based designer, manager and educator. Recent local: Dead Man Walking, Pirates of Penzance, Hansel and Gretel, Falstaff, Cendrillon, La Bohème, Postcard from Morocco (Eklund Opera at CU Boulder); Waitress, ...Great Comet..., Cinderella, Our Town, Disney's Beauty and the Beast (Arvada Center for the Arts and Humanities); Nice Work if You Can Get It, Million Dollar Quartet, The Mousetrap, Dreamgirls (Lone Tree Arts Center); The Merry Wives of Windsor, Macbeth (Colorado Shakespeare Festival). Dunkle is the production manager at Colorado Shakespeare Festival and assistant lighting designer at Opera Colorado.

JASON KYLE ESTRADA (he/him/his) (Wig and Makeup Designer) is a hair and makeup artist and costume designer currently based out of Winston-Salem, North Carolina. He is a graduate of the UNC School of the Arts with an MFA in wig and makeup design. Estrada has worked in many arenas of the entertainment industry from the stage to the screen. He builds custom wigs from his studio and loves to garden. He is also a proud member of IATSE local 322. Estrada is an alum of CU Boulder and is happy to be back collaborating with the creative team at Eklund Opera.

**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.

**LEXI HOLTZER** (Production Stage Manager) has been unseen in Colorado theatre for the last decade ... and that's how she likes it. Selected stage management credits include *The Conversation: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Dairy Arts, Buntport), *Pirates of Penzance*,

Hansel und Gretel (Eklund Opera), Pagliacci (Opera Colorado), The Merry Widow (Loveland Opera), Elf (Arvada Center), Misery, School of Rock and The Great American Trailer Park Musical (Miners Alley). Thanks to Doc, Maestro, the production team, my other stage managers, and the singers who make me smile and laugh every day.

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, Chataqua 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 designed scenery and/or lighting for many Eklund productions in that time, most recently *Titanic*, *Postcard from Morocco* and *Agrippina*. Also a BETC ensemble member, he designed scenery for *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 Boulder Theatre and Dance and the University of Denver's Lamont School of Music.

ANN PIANO (Costume Coordinator): 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.

JOSEPH WHITNEY (he/him) (Deck Stage Manager) is a stage manager working out of Boulder. He has worked on productions with many local organizations including Boulder Opera Company (*Puccini Double Bill*), Boulder Ballet Company (*Queen of Hearts*), and Local Theater Company (*Raised on Ronstadt*). Whitney has also been the resident stage manager for all of Parlando School for the Arts' youth/all-age summer productions for the last four years, including their New Musical Project. Whitney has previously worked on the College of Music's productions of *Pirates of Penzance* and *Big Fish* and is excited to be returning.

### **ORCHESTRA**

### Violin 1

BB Seidenburg Shai Wexler Ellie Lim Lindsay Harenberg Ryannah Blackman Alex Sabiers River Juarez Charles Hutchings

### Violin 2

Eli Pouliot Alex Earle Anna Cummings Milan Forrester David Schwartz Ellie Kaszycki

### Viola

Taylor Sapanera Becky Donoho Jane Hanselman Julia Cowell

### Cello

Thea Dardanis Logan Moser Marti Flickenger Lance Johnson

### **Double Bass**

Carson Fast Willem Rohwer

### **Flute**

Corva Graham Alex Westervelt

### Oboe

Laura Lambrech Riley Stone

### Clarinet

Ben Rathje Caden Craig

### Bassoon

Larissa Harrison David Guy

### Horn

Danielle York Danielle Richard

### **Trumpet**

Elise Ehlert Toshiro Chun

### **Trombone**

Abby Burford Jackson Franco

### Timpani

Jack Arman

### **Percussion**

Lily Manzanares Alex Yang

### Keyboard

Kathy Liu

### **PRODUCTION**

### **Assistant Director**

Kaitlyn Markus

### **Technical Director** Jeff Rusnak

### **Assistant Lighting Designer** Ayana Glass

### Hair/Wig and Makeup Assistants

Phoenix Gayles Ammon Swofford

### **Assistant Technical Director** Ben Smith

### Macky Production Manager Scott Wickham

### **Opera Master Electrician** Andrea Mackey

### **Light Board Operator** Andrea Mackey

### **Light Board Programmer**

Brandi Lopez

### **Spot Operators**

Ursula Mains Brendan Terry

### Rail Operator

Alex White

### **Deck Crew**

Sophie Wills Pearl Enssle Tim Falin

### **Titles Operator**

William Shi

### **Wardrobe Supervisor**

Carolyn Miller

### **Dressers**

Gabrielle Johnson Nia Quan

### **Costume Shop Assistants**

Janis Anderson Laura Vorester

### **Head Vocal Coach**

Jeremy Reger

### **Vocal Coach**

Nicole Cloutier Alaina de Bellevue

### **Pianists**

William Shi

Anastasiia Pavlenko

### **Chorus Master**

Alaina de Bellevue

### **Orchestral Librarians**

Anna Cummings Ben Rathje

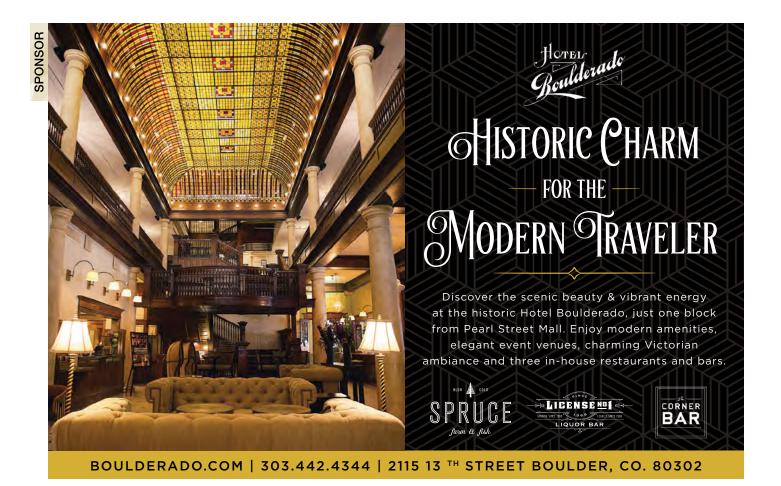






















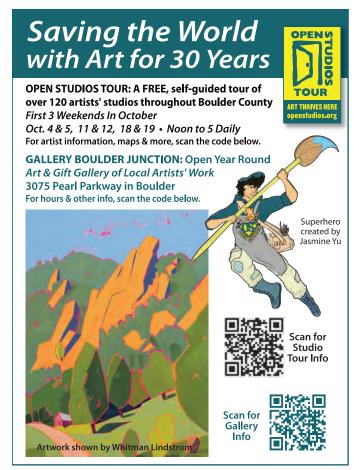
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### This Fall at the Andrew J. Macky Gallery: Joy Redstone How Does Sorrow Find a Home? | Aug 22 - Nov 21

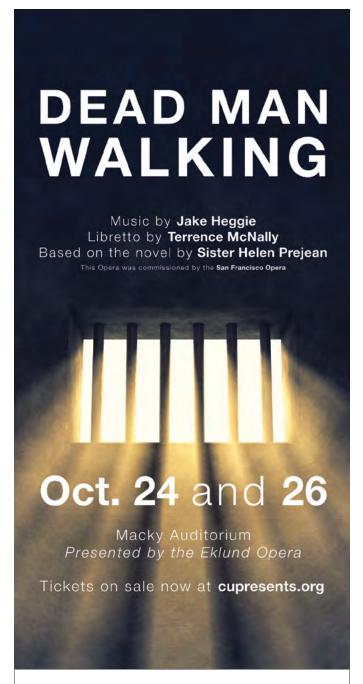
Joy Redstone's exhibit, How Does Sorrow Find a Home? is a powerful exploration of trauma, memory, and healing through assemblage art. Working with found, broken, and discarded objects, Joy creates intricate, emotionally resonant compositions that honor the fragmented nature of grief while revealing moments of beauty and transformation. Rooted in her own experiences and her work as a clinical social worker with individuals facing mental health challenges, addiction, and homelessness, her art invites viewers into a reflective and restorative space. Joy's intuitive process draws on nature, personal story, and metaphor to express what often can't be said in words.

Joy Redstone is a licensed therapist, a member of Denver's D'art 360 Gallery, and serves on the boards of both Next Gallery and the Colorado Women's Art Museum. This exhibition is an invitation to witness healing in visual form.



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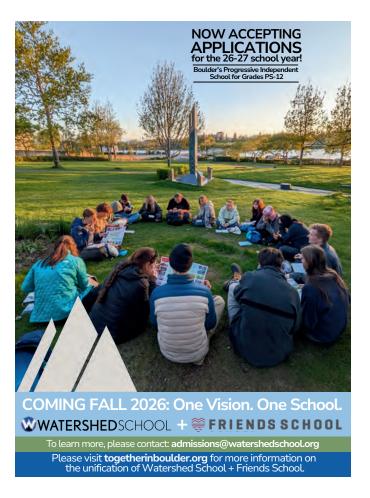


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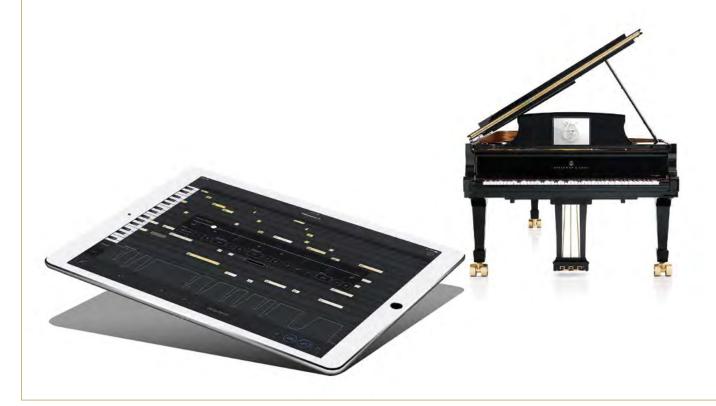
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# Global Seminar livecasts piano recital from Paris to Denver



### By Kathryn Bistodeau

Professor of Piano Andrew Cooperstock loves all things French—the art, music, food and language and this summer he combined that passion with his love for teaching and performing.

In partnership with CU Boulder Education Abroad, a brand new Global Seminar-Chamber Music Performance—engaged a dozen student participants in Aix-en-Provence, Marseille and Paris, France. From July 24 to Aug. 7, the seminar offered students opportunities to perform chamber music across France—including a unique occasion for a local audience to experience the performers from half a world away.

"One of the concerts in Paris is going to be at the new Steinway & Sons gallery there," explained Cooperstock before the group's departure. "The students will perform chamber music and then—in the second half of the program—just the pianists will each play a short piece on the Spirio Steinway.

"A signal will be livecast from Paris to the Spirio piano in the new Steinway & Sons Denver location where audience members can hear the sound actually coming out of another Spirio piano, like a player piano - not from a speaker like a Webcast or Zoomcast or something."



He added, "The sound is extremely accurate, so it should sound pretty much exactly like the Paris concert."

In addition to the technologically remarkable Steinway recital, participating students performed in a Baroque church in Aix-en-Provence and the American Church in Paris, among other venues, and rehearsed great chamber music by American and French composers with talented peers. Students also engaged in guest master classes, studio classes and private lessons.

The students' cultural immersion further included French language lessons, a boat ride along the Seine, a trip to Notre Dame, a tour of the Institute for Research and Coordination in Acoustics/ Music (IRCAM) and more.

Photos: Steinway & Sons Spirio, "the world's highest resolution player piano." Photo credit: Steinway & Sons; College of Music students Juhyun Hwang (MM '26, piano) and James Morris (DMA '25, piano) rehearse for their Spirio piano duet at CU Boulder before traveling to France for a two-week Global Seminar. Photo credit: Andrew Cooperstock

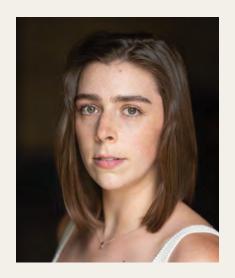
# **Lynn-Craig Living Music** Award recipients announced

By Kathryn Bistodeau

The American Music Research Center (AMRC) awarded the 2025 Alex Craig and Christina Lynn-Craig Living Music Award to Kristina Butler (MM '25, voice) and Katiann Nelson (MM '25, voice). The awardees each received a \$1,000 scholarship.



Nelson's project—"Making a Composer: Alex Craig" involves presenting a recital of Craig's works alongside works by composers that Craig found inspirational. "I'm really looking forward to diving into the music itself," says Nelson. "For me, getting to know a new composer through their work is like getting to know a new friend-I'm excited to start this process with a composer who is completely new to me."



Butler will also be organizing a recital and hopes to record the music she prepares. Her project—"Seasons of Life: Music of Alex Craig"—will explore the seasons of life in the context of the four weather seasons.

"I'm most excited to work artistically from a relatively blank slate as there isn't a wealth of recordings of Professor Craig's music," explains Butler. "Learning music without a recording is an exciting challenge that frequently comes with learning contemporary works."

The Lynn-Craig Living Music Award is open to both undergraduate and graduate students and supports the performance of works by the late composer Alex Craig, housed in the Rare and Distinctive Collections at the CU Boulder Libraries.

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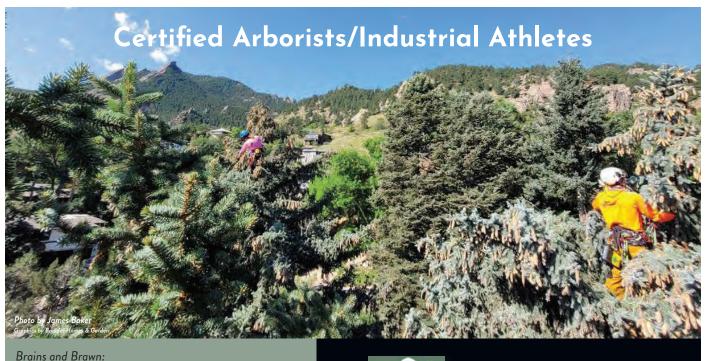
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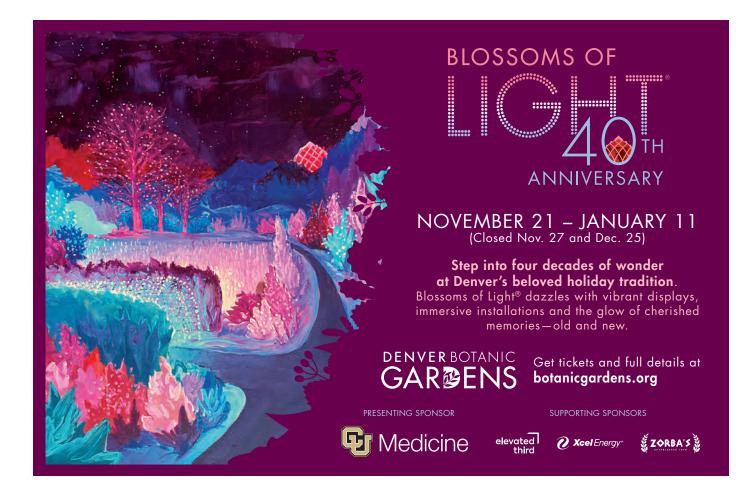
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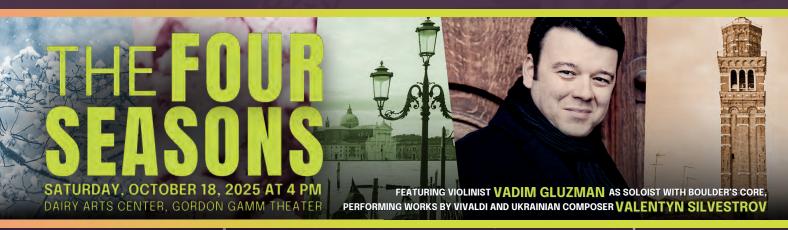




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