



JACOBS SCHOOL OF MUSIC

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

Bloomington

Two Hundred Eighty-Eighth Program of the 2020-21 Season

Indiana University Jacobs School of Music

Opera Theater

presents

as its 473rd production

Xerxes

An opera seria in three acts

Music by George Frideric Handel

Libretto by Silvio Stampiglia

Kevin Murphy, *Conductor & Piano*

Michael Shell, *Stage Director*

Mark F. Smith, *Set Designer*

Dana Tzvetkov, *Costume Designer*

Ken Phillips, *Lighting Designer*

Christian Claessens, *Choreographer*

Walter Huff, *Chorus Master*

Andrew Voelker, *Harpsichord Continuo*

Cori Ellison, *Supertitle Author*

Xerxes premiered on April 15, 1738,
at the King's Theatre, London.

Musical Arts Center
Friday Evening, March Fifth
Saturday Evening, March Sixth
Seven-Thirty O'Clock

*Indiana University prohibits the unauthorized recording, publication,
and streaming of live performances. Please silence all electronic devices.*

Cast of Characters

Friday, March 5

Xerxes	Liz Culpepper
Arsamene	Shir Ordo
Amastre	Geneil Perkins
Romilda	Olivia Prendergast
Atalanta	Adriana N Torres-Díaz
Ariodate	Edmund Brown
Elviro	Bryan McClary

Saturday, March 6

Deepa Johnny
Tal Heller Kaplan
Ashlyn Brown
Hayley Abramowitz
Kate Johnson
Michael Colman
Anthony Josep

Dancers

Alexis Breen
Colin Canavan
Jack Grohmann
Morgan Jankowski
Murray McCormack
Mairead Moore
Keith Newman
Cameron Pelton
Brandon Silverman
Daisy Ye

Opera Chorus

Rebecca Achtenberg
Jack Adkins
Marvin Allen
Elijah Bowen
Joseph Canter
Caroline Goodwin
Libby Goodwin
Olivia Gronenthal
Maggie Kinabrew
Regan Poarch
Jake Spino
Steven Warnock

The Georgina Joshi Foundation, Inc. Handel Underwriting

Through the vision of Georgina's mother, Louise Addicott-Joshi, the Georgina Joshi Foundation, Inc., was established in 2007 as a 501(c)(3) charitable foundation to provide, among other things, educational and career development opportunities for young musicians and to encourage and support the public performance of music.

– let music flow and surround the world
let humanity be drowned in beautiful music –

George Frideric Handel, a German-English baroque composer, was famous for his operas, oratorios, and concerti grossi. He was strongly influenced by the techniques of the great composers of the Italian Baroque period and English composer Henry Purcell. Handel's music was well known to many composers, including Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. His body of work includes 42 operas, 29 oratorios, more than 120 cantatas, trios, and duets, numerous arias, chamber music, and 16 organ concerti. His most well-known works include *Messiah*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Water Music*, and *Music for the Royal Fireworks*.

Because of the variety of musical styles, vocal ranges, and musical instruments used in Handel's works, it is important for students preparing for a career in opera performance to be well versed in, and comfortable with, singing his music. The Georgina Joshi Fund, administered by the Georgina Joshi Foundation, Inc., and the Indiana University Foundation, was established to encourage and support the student performance of Handel's operas and oratorios, as well as works by Handel's contemporaries, such as Joseph Haydn. It is the goal of the Georgina Joshi Foundation, Inc., that Jacobs students be able to study and perform major works of the Baroque and Classic eras every year.

Through the generosity of the Georgina Joshi Foundation, Inc., the Jacobs School of Music has been able to produce six fully staged Handel operas—*Giulio Cesare* in 2009 and 2019, *Xerxes* in 2013 and now in 2021, *Alcina* in 2015, and *Rodelinda* in 2017—as well as four Handel oratorios—*Judas Maccabaeus* in 2011, *Esther* in 2013, *Messiah* in 2016, and *Alexander's Feast* in 2018—and Joseph Haydn's *The Seasons* in 2020.

The IU Jacobs School of Music remains grateful to the Georgina Joshi Foundation, Inc., for its friendship and continued support.



A native of Indiana, **Georgina Joshi** had earned her Bachelor of Music degree from the Royal College of Music, London, where she studied with Harry. Notably, Joshi sang for the gala opera night at the Beaumaris Festival with the Welsh Chamber Orchestra conducted by Anthony Hose. She also performed the role of the first Harlot in Handel's *Solomon* conducted by William Jon Gray for the Bloomington Early Music Festival. Joshi was pursuing her Master of Music in Voice Performance at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, where she studied with Alan Bennett. Her first role at IU was Clorinda in *La Cenerentola*.

Synopsis

by Elizabeth Elmi

with additions by Michael Shell

Act I

Act I opens on a pastoral scene with Xerxes, king of Persia, singing a charming but ridiculous love aria to a tree (“Ombra mai fu”). Xerxes’ song is overheard by the beautiful Romilda, the beloved of the king’s brother Arsamene, who responds with an ironic song of her own. In hearing the sweet tones of Romilda’s voice, Xerxes falls in love with her and vows to take her as his wife. He tells the dismayed Arsamene of his plan and orders him to go to Romilda to convey his hopes and affections. When Arsamene tells Romilda of this development, both lovers swear fidelity to each other, while Atalanta, Romilda’s cunning sister, mocks her sister’s infatuation and plots to win over Arsamene in the wake of her sister’s impending misfortune. When Xerxes comes to propose to Romilda, he realizes that his brother stands in his way and banishes him into exile unless he promises to renounce his love for Romilda, which he refuses to do.

Ariodate, military general and father of Romilda and Atalanta, reports his victories. Congratulating him, Xerxes coyly reveals that his daughter Romilda is to have a spouse of royal blood, equal to Xerxes himself. Meanwhile, Amastre, a princess who is betrothed to Xerxes, disguises herself as a man and becomes enraged when she hears Xerxes singing about his new love.

The act ends with Arsamene asking his servant Elviro to deliver a letter to his beloved Romilda upon his departure into exile. Romilda remains faithful to Arsamene even while her sister plots to steal him away.

Act II

In a piazza, Amastre laments Xerxes’ betrayal. Meanwhile, a disguised Elviro attempts to deliver Arsamene’s letter to Romilda in secret. Amastre encounters Elviro in this state and is further enraged when he explains to her the situation between Romilda, the King, and his brother. Elviro then comes across Atalanta and gives her the letter to deliver to Romilda; however, she deceives him by saying that Romilda is in her room writing about her love for the king. After Elviro has left in upset, Atalanta encounters Xerxes while in the midst of reading Arsamene’s letter to Romilda. In her cunning, she lies to the king, saying that his brother’s amorous words are meant for her and not her sister. Xerxes is overjoyed by this news and promises that she will have Arsamene as her husband. He reveals this letter to Romilda, who laments her beloved’s betrayal but still vows to love and be faithful to him.

Elviro happens upon Amastre, preventing her suicide attempt. She decides, instead, to confront the king and his betrayal. Arsamene finds Elviro and is told the erroneous “truth”—that Romilda loves the king. In despair, he wanders away.

Xerxes, along with Ariodate, presides over a celebration of the bridge at Hellepont that connects Asia and Europe. Afterwards, he sees Arsamene and tells him that he

has permission to marry his beloved Atalanta. Arsamene takes this offer as an insult and sings of his determination to have Romilda.

All the while, Amastre has suffered over Xerxes' betrayal and confronts him in disguise about his wrongdoing. Romilda steps in to protect her, reigniting her desire to stay resolute in her pursuit of true love.

Act III

The final act begins with Romilda and Arsamene fighting about the letter. Atalanta reveals that she was dishonest about the true recipient of the letter, and the two lovers reconcile. Xerxes then seeks out Romilda and insists that she accept him as her husband. Feeling the pull between duty and passion, she buys time by insisting that Xerxes first seek her father's approval. Only then will she comply with his wishes. After Xerxes leaves, Arsamene comes out of hiding, and the two lovers argue over Romilda's promise to obey her king if her father approves the marriage. Xerxes goes to ask for Ariodate's approval without, once again, revealing that Romilda will marry one of royal blood—without saying that this man is Xerxes himself. Ariodate misunderstands, assuming that Xerxes means for his brother, Arsamene, to marry Romilda, and the general rejoices at the news. Romilda and Arsamene continue to do everything in their power to avoid the marriage, but ultimately, Arsamene is sentenced to death and Romilda's wedding moment arrives. When Romilda enters for the ceremony, Xerxes is not yet there, but Arsamene is, and Ariodate explains that the king has decreed that she marry Arsamene. The two are wed immediately much to their astonished delight. Xerxes arrives and is horrified that the two lovers have been joined against his orders and without his knowledge. He confronts a bewildered Ariodate, but then receives a letter from Amastre, written in anger at his betrayal. He realizes that he has strayed from his betrothed when Amastre reveals her disguise. Xerxes repents and the two reconcile.

They all ask for a return to the state of peace and joy they began their journey with.

Artistic Staff

Conductor/Piano



Pianist **Kevin Murphy** is professor of music in collaborative piano and director of coaching and music administration for Indiana University Jacobs School of Music Opera Theater at the IU Jacobs School of Music. A leading figure in the world of classical vocal music, he has served as Jacobs faculty since 2011. He recently joined Professor Anne Epperson at the Jacobs School in creating a new collaborative piano program. In

2011, he was appointed director of the program for singers at Ravinia's Steans Music Institute, and 2013-14 marked his first season as artistic consultant for the Tucson Desert Song Festival. Previously, he was director of music administration and casting advisor at the New York City Opera (2008-12) and director of musical studies at the Opéra National de Paris (2006-08). Murphy was the first pianist and vocal coach invited by Maestro James Levine to join the prestigious Lindemann Young Artist Program at the Metropolitan Opera, and from 1993 to 2006 Murphy was an assistant conductor at the Met. In addition to his on- and off-stage partnership with his wife, soprano Heidi Grant Murphy, Murphy has collaborated in concert and recital with numerous world-renowned artists. He is sought after and respected for his work as a private vocal coach and teacher and has guest taught at San Francisco Opera's Merola Program, the International Vocal Arts Institute in Israel and Italy, Glimmerglass Opera, Tanglewood, Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, and the Juilliard School. In addition to playing and teaching, Murphy has added conducting to his musical activities and is a frequent adjudicator for competitions, including the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, where he has also served as official accompanist on stage at the Met. A native of Syracuse, New York, Murphy earned a Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance degree from Indiana University and a Master of Music in Piano Accompanying degree from the Curtis Institute of Music. He resides in Bloomington, Indiana, with his wife, Heidi, and their four children.

Stage Director



Michael Shell is visiting lecturer in voice at the IU Jacobs School of Music, where he teaches acting and opera workshops, as well as directs mainstage productions. His philosophy is to inform, excite, and empower his students to be the most authentic singing actors possible. Over the past two years, he has created the new core of Jacobs dramatic training courses. His productions have been praised by critics across the nation.

A *Broadway World* reviewer recently commented on Shell's new production of Leonard Bernstein's *Candide*: "This production was one I could watch over and over again." Shell has directed productions for Atlanta Opera, Pittsburgh Opera, Michigan Opera Theater, Opera Omaha, Opera San José, Opera Tampa, Opera North, Virginia Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Wexford Festival Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, and Houston Grand Opera. He made his international directing debut at the Wexford Festival Opera in 2010 with a production of *Winners* by American composer Richard Wargo and returned the next fall to direct *Double Trouble—Trouble in Tahiti* and *The Telephone*. He has written and directed three cabarets, including *All About Love* and *The Glamorous Life—A group therapy session for Opera Singers*, both for Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. Shell earned a B.M. and an M.M. in Music/Vocal Performance from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts.

He was a Corbett Scholar at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and studied acting and scene study at H. B. Studios on an H. B. Studios merit scholarship. He has been guest faculty and director at University of North Carolina School of the Arts, Florida State University, Oklahoma University, A. J. Fletcher Opera Institute, and Webster University–St. Louis, teaching opera workshops and directing full productions and workshop performances. He is also on the faculty of the International Vocal Arts Institute Summer Opera Program in Tel Aviv.

Set Designer



A Bloomington-based designer and scenic artist, **Mark F. Smith** is director of scenic painting and properties for IU Jacobs School of Music Opera and Ballet Theater, where he has worked on more than 100 hundred productions during the past 25 years. Design work for Jacobs School projects includes 2016's *Florenca en el Amazonas*, *Don Giovanni*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Hansel and Gretel*, and Bernstein's *Mass*. His design for *Florenca en el Amazonas* was featured in San Diego Opera's 2017-18 season. In addition to work for Indianapolis Civic Theater, Butler Ballet, and Indianapolis Ballet's company premiere production of *The Firebird*, area theatergoers will recognize his designs for more than a dozen Cardinal Stage Company shows, including *Les Misérables*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *My Fair Lady*, *Big River*, and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Smith earned a Master of Fine Arts in Scenic Design from the IU Department of Theatre and Drama and was a student of former Jacobs faculty C. David Higgins and Robert O'Hearn. Upcoming productions include *Swan Lake* for Indianapolis Ballet.

Costume Designer



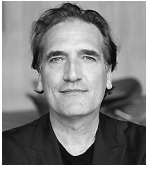
Dana Tzvetkov designs and constructs costumes for opera, ballet, and theater. Her work has recently been featured in Central City Opera's *Tosca* (2016) and *Carmen* (2017), and the National Opera Association's *Hagar* (2016). Her designs have appeared on Indiana University's Musical Arts Center stage in *Saudade*, *Carmen*, *Peter Grimes*, and *Le Nozze di Figaro*. She has designed rentals for Ball State Opera Theater, Mississippi Opera, DePauw University, and Butler University. She worked alongside Linda Pisano for Opera San Antonio to build costumes for a cast including Patricia Racette and Michelle DeYoung. She has been commissioned to create concert gowns for DeYoung and Sylvia McNair. Tzvetkov served as the costume shop supervisor for IU Opera and Ballet Theater from 2013 until recently, when she was promoted to shop manager. She returned to Central City Opera in summer 2018 to coordinate its production of *Il Trovatore*.

Lighting Designer



Ken Phillips has been the lighting designer and supervisor for the IU Jacobs School of Music's Musical Arts Center since 2019. He earned an M.F.A. in Lighting Design from the University of Arizona and previously worked around the country as a freelance designer for musical theatre and opera. Samples of his work may be seen at KGPhillips.com.

Choreographer



Christian Claessens is lecturer in ballet at the IU Jacobs School of Music. He began his ballet training at the Conservatoire de la Monnaie. In 1978, he came to New York on scholarship to the School of American Ballet and the American Ballet Theatre School. After graduating, he performed with the Kansas City Ballet and Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre. In 1984, he returned to Europe as a member of the Dutch National Ballet. As a soloist, Claessens toured internationally with Stars of the American Ballet, Stars of the New York City Ballet, Stars of the Hong Kong Ballet, and Kozlov and Friends. In 1991, he cofounded the Scarsdale Ballet Studio with Diana White. In 1999, he codirected the International Ballet Project with Valentina Kozlova and White, both of New York City Ballet. In 1998, he took over the directorship of the Purchase Youth Ballet. He was the director of La Leçon: Christian Claessens School of Ballet in Westchester, New York.

Chorus Master



Walter Huff is professor of choral conducting and faculty director of opera choruses at the IU Jacobs School of Music. He served as chorus master for the Atlanta Opera for more than two decades, leading the renowned ensemble in more than 125 productions, with critical acclaim in the United States and abroad. He earned a Bachelor of Music degree from the Oberlin Conservatory and a Master of Music degree from Peabody Conservatory (Johns Hopkins). He studied piano with Sarah Martin, Peter Takács, and Lillian Freundlich, and voice with Flore Wend. After serving as a fellow at Tanglewood Music Center, he received Tanglewood's C. D. Jackson Master Award for Excellence. Huff served as coach with the Peabody Opera Theatre and Washington Opera, and has been musical director for The Atlanta Opera Studio, Georgia State University Opera, and Actor's Express (Atlanta). He also has worked as chorus master with San Diego Opera. He served on the faculty at Georgia State University for four years as assistant professor, guest lecturer, and conductor for the Georgia State University Choral Society. He has served as chorus master for many IU Jacobs School of Music Opera and Ballet Theater productions, most recently, *L'Étoile*, *It's a Wonderful Life*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *West Side Story*, *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs*, *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, *The Elixir of Love*, Bernstein's *Mass*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Parsifal*, *Suor Angelica*, *La Traviata*, *Little Women*, and *The Barber of Seville*. For four years, Huff has served as choral instructor and conductor for the Jacobs School's Sacred Music Intensive. He has conducted the Jacobs Summer Music series productions of Arthur Honegger's *King David* and Stephen Paulus's *The Three Hermits*. This summer, Huff will return for his third year as faculty member at Ravinia Festival's Steans Music Institute. Huff also maintains a busy vocal coaching studio in Atlanta. Huff and Jacobs faculty choral colleague Chris Albanese have been invited to present at the ACDA National Virtual Convention, in March 2021.

Cast

Xerxes



Mezzo-soprano **Liz Culpepper**, from Austin, Texas, is in the final year of her doctorate in voice at the IU Jacobs School of Music, where she studies with Patricia Havranek. Culpepper earned degrees in voice performance from the University of Texas at Austin (B.A., 2015) (M.M., 2017). She has performed several previous roles at Indiana University, including Suzuki, *Madama Butterfly*; Mrs. Sedley, *Peter Grimes*; Madame de Croissy, *Dialogues of the Carmelites*; La Zia Principessa, *Suor Angelica*; and Cecelia March, *Little Women*. She has also performed in operas at summer music festivals across the country, including First Secretary, *Nixon in China*, Princeton Festival; Suzuki, *Madama Butterfly*, Brevard Music Center; and Mercedes, *Carmen*, Bay View Music Festival.



Mezzo-soprano **Deepa Johnny**, from Muscat, Oman, is a second-year master's student in the voice performance program at Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music, currently studying with Carlos Montané. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Music at Burman University in Alberta, Canada, under the tutelage of Wendolin Pazitka Munroe. Most recently, Deepa was a winner in the Western Canada District of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. In October 2020, Johnny was selected as one of nine finalists from across the United States for the Opera Grand Rapid's Collegiate Vocal Competition. In the 2019-20 season, she sang the roles of Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi* for IU Opera Theater and Carmen in Arden Opera's production of *The Tragedy of Carmen*. Next summer, she will attend the Lyric Opera Studio of Weimar to sing the role of Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro*. Johnny serves as an associate instructor of voice at the Jacobs School.

Arsamene



Mezzo-soprano **Tal Heller Kaplan**, from Boston, Massachusetts, was last seen with IU Jacobs School of Music Opera Theater as Meg in *Little Women*. She also appeared at Jacobs as La Badessa in *Suor Angelica* and as a featured Blumenmädchen in *Parsifal*. She sang as mezzo-soprano soloist with David Neely and the University Orchestra in De Falla's *Tres Picos* and sang in the Collaborative Piano Department's performance of Brahms' *Liebeslieder Waltzer*. She is currently completing her Performer Diploma under the tutelage of Heidi Grant Murphy.



Shir Ordo is a mezzo-soprano born and raised in Israel. Under the tutelage of Heidi Grant Murphy, she is now in her first year at IU working toward a Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance. Prior to her arrival, Shir served as an Outstanding Musician representing the Israeli Defense Forces, performing as both a vocalist and a violinist. As a classical singer, she has performed solos with Ensemble PHOENIX and the Ludovice Ensemble, as well as a duet with countertenor Andreas Scholl. She was a finalist in the Ben Haim Competition, an Israeli competition for outstanding young musicians. Shir's non-classical

performances include the leading role in the play *Hakuzari* at the Temuna Theater in Tel-Aviv and numerous solo appearances before various Israeli dignitaries, including the Israeli president. She has been featured at many international venues, including the Palais des Congrès de Paris (with the Prague National Symphony Orchestra) and the Saban Theatre at the Beverly Hills Temple of the Arts. In 2017, she released an original pop album in Israel. As a violinist, Shir has participated in master classes and played with the Young Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, the Tel-Aviv Soloists Ensemble, and the Galilee Chamber Orchestra, traveling to perform in Germany, Austria, and South Korea. In her first semester at Jacobs, she was in the Opera Chorus for the IUOT production of *Little Women* by Mark Adamo. *Xerxes* marks Shir's operatic debut in a principal role.

Amastre



Mezzo-soprano **Ashlyn Brown** is a second-year master's student studying voice performance in the studio of Carol Vaness. Born in Palm Springs, California, she has had roles as Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel*, Berta in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* by Rossini, and Aloés in Chabrier's *L'Étoile* at the IU Opera Theater. She also has made role debuts as Third Lady in the Chicago Summer Opera's production of *Die Zauberflöte*, and as Mad Margaret in the University Gilbert and Sullivan Society's *Ruddigore*. Brown has also sung partial roles, including Sesto from *La Clemenza di Tito* and Marcellina in *Le Nozze di Figaro* in the Chicago Summer Opera's scene program. In 2019, she was recognized with an Encouragement Award in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and was also featured as the alto soloist in the Carmel Symphony's performance of Mozart's Requiem at the Palladium in Carmel, Indiana. Last year, Brown received the Bonnie Bell Encouragement Award from the James Toland Vocal Arts Competition. Brown would have made her role debut as Dorabella in *Così fan tutte* at Opera Aquilon in Oregon this previous summer; however, the performance was canceled on account of COVID-19. She has also appeared in six IU Opera Theater choruses, most recently *La Traviata* by Giuseppe Verdi. She is currently working on a new production, *The Jungle*, based on Upton Sinclair's novel, as Marija Berczynskas with the New Voices Opera scheduled for its film premiere in the fall of 2021.



Born and raised in Moreno Valley, California, **Geneil Perkins** is a second-year doctoral student. She is currently an associate instructor of voice and a student of Jane Dutton. She was most recently seen as Alma March in the IU Opera Theater production of *Little Women* this past fall. Perkins earned a master's degree in voice performance from Brigham Young University, where she appeared in *Die Fledermaus* (Prinz Orlofsky) and *Suor Angelica* (La Zia Principessa). She earned her Bachelor of Music degree from Southern Utah University, where she was seen in *Gianni Schicchi* (Zita), *The Old Maid and the Thief* (Miss Todd), *The Mikado* (Katisha), and *Die Zauberflöte* (Second Lady).

Romilda



Hayley Abramowitz is in their final semester at IU, studying with Carol Vaness. They earned their M.M. in May 2020 and are currently pursuing a P.D. In the 2019-20 season, Abramowitz appeared with IUOBT as Nella (*Gianni Schicchi*) and a Principal Flowermaiden (*Parsifal*). Previous Handel roles include Erato (*Terpsicore*; American Bach Soloists Academy) and Clio (*Parnasso in festa*; IU Historical Performance Institute).

Abramowitz's 2019-20 season was set to close out with their professional debut, singing Mahler's Symphony No. 4 with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. They had also been contracted to sing Steve Reich's *Tehillim* at the Ojai Music Festival, and were looking forward to performing at the World Choral Symposium in New Zealand with NOTUS. Originally from Olney, Maryland, Abramowitz earned their B.M. from the University of Maryland, where they studied with Delores Ziegler. Favorite roles with UMD include Lucy (*The Telephone*), The Defendant (*Trial by Jury*), Madame Herz (*Die Schauspieldirektor*), and Quiteria (Telemann's *Don Quichotte*).



A native of suburban Philadelphia, soprano **Olivia Prendergast** is a first-year master's student studying under Timothy Noble. Prendergast has performed many roles with her alma mater, Northwestern University, including Adele in Strauss' comedy *Die Fledermaus* (2020), Lisa in David T. Little's visceral operatic tragedy *Dog Days* (2019), and Flora in Britten's adaptation of Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw* (2018). An avid modern

music enthusiast, she has also appeared as the soloist with the Bienen Contemporary Music Ensemble in Shawn Jaeger's *Letters Made with Gold* (2019) and Steve Reich's *Tehillim* (2018). She was also a finalist of the American Prize for Art Song (2020) and a Schubert fellow at SongFest (2017). Prendergast recently sang in master classes with Lisette Oropesa and Michael Fabiano, and this past January was recognized with an Encouragement Award from the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. After *Xerxes*, Prendergast will be performing Cipullo's *Late Summer* and Rachmaninoff songs in recital with collaborative pianist Sandy Lin.

Atalanta



Soprano **Kate Johnson**, from Omaha, Nebraska, is thrilled to be performing Atalanta in IU Opera Theater's *Xerxes*. Johnson has previously performed with IUOT as Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro* and as a chorus member in *La Traviata*. A student of Heidi Grant Murphy, she is pursuing her Master of Music degree at the Jacobs School of Music. She will graduate with her master's degree this May and shortly after will begin

her engagement with Des Moines Metro Opera as an apprentice artist in their 2021 Summer Festival. Through the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Johnson has received the Opera Omaha Guild Award at the Nebraska District (2016, 2018) and an Encouragement Award at the Iowa District (2020).



Soprano **Adriana N Torres Díaz** is pursuing her Master of Music in Voice Performance degree at Jacobs School of Music. Hailing from Puerto Rico, she earned undergraduate degrees in voice at the Conservatory of Music of Puerto Rico and biology at the University of Puerto Rico. Before coming to IU, she studied with Zoraida López and Diana Alvarado. She has been part of the cast of *Suor Angelica* (Cercatrice) under the direction of Antonio Barasorda and Roselín Pabón and the cast of *Così fan tutte* (Despina) in the Third San Luis Opera Festival under the baton of Linus Lerner. She has also participated in master classes with Justino Díaz, Kristin Dauphinais, Joel Prieto, Taylor Stilson, and Marilyn Taylor. She will be heard on the inaugural episode of Song for Skeptics on WIUX this month.

Ariodate



Bass-baritone **Edmund Brown** is a first-year master's student under the tutelage of Brian Horne. He earned his bachelor's degree in vocal performance from the Lionel Hampton School of Music at the University of Idaho, where he appeared in such roles as Escamillo in *Carmen* and Simone in *Gianni Schicchi*. He has also performed the role of Sarastro (*Die Zauberflöte*) for the Aquilon Music Festival, Aaron Blunder (*The Toy Shop*) for the Inland Northwest Opera, and as a young artist for Respiro Opera in New York. In concert, he has performed as bass soloist in Durufle's Requiem for the Palouse Choral Society and was featured in the 2018 LHSoM Bach Festival faculty concert. This will mark his debut with IU Jacobs School of Music Opera Theater.



Hailing from Adrian, Michigan, lyric bass **Michael Colman** made his professional debut as an apprentice artist with the Lyric Opera of Kansas City and went on to perform leading or supporting roles with the Indiana University Opera Theater (Doctor Grenvil, *La Traviata*), Virginia Opera (Basilio, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*), Chautauqua Opera (Basilio, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*), Dayton Opera (Sergeant of Police, *The Pirates of Penzance*), Opera Grand Rapids (Guglielmo, *Così fan tutti*; The Commentator, *Scalia/Ginsburg*), Opera Carolina (The Commentator, *Scalia/Ginsburg*), Toledo Opera (Ceprano, *Rigoletto*), Charlottesville Opera (Alfonso, *Così fan tutti*), Indianapolis Opera, Opera on the James, Utah Festival Opera and Musical Theatre, and Fayetteville Opera. He has earned degrees from Baylor University and the University of Kansas and is currently pursuing a Performer Diploma under Peter Volpe. Upcoming engagements include The Commentator (*Scalia/Ginsburg*) with Opera in the Rock, The King of Egypt (*Aida*) with Toledo Opera, and Colline (*La Bohème*) with IU Opera Theater.

Elviro



Baritone **Anthony Josep**, from Miami, Florida, is in his sophomore year at the IU Jacobs School of Music, where he is pursuing a B.M. in Voice Performance. He was most recently heard in Opera Chorus for the IU Opera Theater productions of *The Barber of Seville*, *La Traviata*, and *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and will appear with Opera Chorus again in the upcoming IUOT production of *La Bohème*. This production of *Xerxes* marks his

IUOT role debut. He has attended such summer programs as the Schmidt Vocal Institute, where he studied with renowned performers Nathan Gunn, Sylvia McNair, and Brian Zeger. He actively competes and has been successful in such vocal competitions as the Schmidt Vocal Competition, National Association of Teachers of Singing, Classical Singer, and the New York Lyric Opera Competition. Most recently, he competed and was named a finalist in the National YoungArts Foundation Competition. In addition to his activities as a soloist, Josep is also a pianist and composer, often collaborating with organizations and singers at the Jacobs School in an effort to usher new works into the modern opera repertoire. He is a student of Timothy Noble.



Bryan McClary is a first-year master's student studying with Peter Volpe. Originally from Robbinsville, New Jersey, he earned his undergraduate degree from Westminster Choir College under the tutelage of soprano Sharon Sweet. McClary This production of *Xerxes* marks his role debut with the IU Jacobs Opera Theater. Outside of IU he has appeared as in Westminster Opera Theatre productions of Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites* (Thierry/Jailor), Grétry's *Zémire et Azor* (Sander), Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* (Second Armored Man), Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti* (Sam), and Massenet's *Cendrillon* (Le Roi); the Milnes Voice Studio production of Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* (Father); and Opera Steamboat's production of Robert Xavier Rodriguez's *Frida* (Diego Rivera). He

has also performed in the Westminster Opera Workshop, Lindsey Christiansen Annual Art Song Festival, The Westminster Symphonic Choir, and participated in master classes with baritone Sherrill Milnes and mezzo-soprano Denyce Graves.

Orchestra

Kevin Murphy, *Piano*
Andrew Voelker, *Harpsichord Continuo*

Student Production Staff

Assistant Conductor Jee Won Yang
Assistant Chorus Master Anthony Ferreira
Coach/Accompanist Claudia Santana Núñez
Andrew Voelker
Supertitle Operator Emma Shelton
Head Audio Engineer Ian Miller
Second Audio Engineer Alec Lubin
Assistant Audio Engineer Gabbie Walker

Indiana University Jacobs School of Music Opera Theater Production Staff

General Manager and David H. Jacobs

Bicentennial Dean (Interim)	Jeremy Allen
Ted Jones Executive Director of Production	Timothy Stebbins
Director of Coaching and Music Administration	Kevin Murphy
Director of Opera Choruses	Walter Huff
Executive Administrator of Instrumental Ensembles	Thomas Wieligman
Coordinating Opera Coach	Kimberly Carballo
Coach Accompanists	Allan Armstrong, Charles Prestinari Shuichi Umeyama
Production Stage Manager	Trevor Regars
Administrative Production Assistant	Catherine Compton
Technical Director	Robert Brown
Assistant Technical Director	Jeffrey Porter
Director of Paint and Props.	Mark F. Smith
Costume Shop Manager	Dana Tzvetkov
Costume Shop Projects Manager	Soraya Noorzad
Wardrobe Supervisor	Sarah Akemon
Lighting Supervisor.	Ken Phillips
Master Electrician.	Jacob Lish
Stage Carpenters	Ken D'Eliso, Steve Wilson
Director of Audio Engineering and Sound Production	Konrad Strauss
Manager of Audio Operations	Haley Strong
Chief Digital Officer	Philip Ponella
IUMusic <i>Live!</i> Streaming Technician	Tony Tadey
Executive Director of External Affairs.	Melissa Dickson
Assistant Director of Communications	Linda Cajigas
Graphic Designer and Web Manager	Trevor Rood
Digital Communications Manager	Hallie Geyh
Program and Calendar Editor.	Jonathan Shull
Communications Assistant	Kaylee Davis
Ticketing, Sales, and House Manager.	John Christopher Porter
Graphic Designers	Kaye Lee Johnston, Michelle Moss
Web Designer.	Michelle Moss
Electrics Assistants	Blake Christ, Betsy Wray



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