VANCOUVER OPERA ANNOUNCES SIX EMERGING TALENTS FOR THE 2024-2025 YULANDA M. FARIS YOUNG ARTISTS PROGRAM

SEPTEMBER 20, 2024, VANCOUVER, B.C./ / Traditional territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations – Vancouver Opera is thrilled to welcome new and returning participants of the Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists Program for 2024–2025. Lyndon Ladeur, Tayte Mitchell and Derek Stanyer will join returning artists Danlie Rae Acebuque, Simran Claire, and Heidi Duncan for a year of mentorship and training with leading Vancouver Opera artists and facilitators.

Launched in 2012—and made possible through a generous donation by the family of Yulanda M. Faris—this residency functions as a bridge between formal education and the professional opera world. Emerging singers, pianists, and stage directors receive one-on-one coaching, attend masterclasses, and are offered performance opportunities. In fact, all six of our Yulanda M. Faris Young Artist Program artists-in-residence will take the mainstage in the boisterous, 65th anniversary season-opening production of Strauss' *Die Fledermaus*, which runs Oct 26 to Nov 3.

"Our 2024-2025 participants are an exceptional group of artists who have already demonstrated their talents and are poised to become world-class opera professionals in the coming years," says Tom Wright, Vancouver Opera General Director. "Participants in our Young Artists Program are provided with exciting live performance opportunities throughout our season whether it is for our community events or our large-scale productions. Members of our company provide these artists with advantageous insights into a career in opera."

Adds Leslie Dala, Program Director, "the experience participants receive through our residency program is instrumental in preparing them for a successful professional career in opera. Our goal has been to provide high-calibre training and mentorship in addition to performance experience. Each year we are encouraged and inspired by the commitment of these artists to refining their operatic craft."

Annually, Vancouver Opera selects program participants who are poised to take their opera career to the next level. Those interested in the program are encouraged to visit Vancouver Opera's website, where tickets for *Die Fledermaus* and the entire 2024-2025 season are also available now.

Participants in the Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists Program for 2024–2025 are:

Danlie Rae Acebuque, Baritone (returning)
Filipino-Canadian baritone Danlie Rae Acebuque is described to "possess a beautiful, warm baritone voice with enviable flexibility and an easy top" (Claudia Friedlander), and a "fresh, suave baritone" (Opera Canada). Danlie Rae holds a Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance and Masters of Music in Opera Performance at the University of Toronto under the tutelage of Frédérique Vézina.



Simran Claire, Mezzo-Soprano (returning)
Simran Claire is a mezzo-soprano from Surrey, BC. She is a graduate of Calgary Opera's McPhee Artist development program, performing as Flora in *La traviata* and the Teacher in *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs*. An alumnus of UBC, the Glimmerglass Festival, The Banff Centre, and Pacific Opera Victoria's CEAR, Simran is also interested in creating original work. Her "utterly moving" (Opera Canada) narrative recital film *Dadima* was featured by CBC Music and Global TV.



Heidi Duncan, Soprano (returning)
Hailing from Calgary, Alberta, soprano Heidi Duncan is a recent graduate of The University of Toronto where she earned both her Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance and Master's of Music in Opera Performance. Recent opera credits include Annina (*La Traviata*), Laurie Moss (*The Tender Land*), Berta (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*), Despina (*Così fan tutte*) and Madame Herz (*Der Schauspieldirektor*). As an avid recitalist, Heidi has performed solo recitals and concert programs in Toronto and across Alberta, including as a soloist with the University of Toronto Wind Ensemble.



Lyndon Ladeur, Tenor (new)
Lyndon Ladeur's favourite performances include Fedinard in *Il cappello di paglia di Firenze*, and Nemorino in *L'elisir d'amore*. Internationally, Lyndon debuted at the Gilbert and Sullivan Festival in the UK, playing Marco in *The Gondoliers*, winning Best Male Vocalist. Lyndon completed his Masters of Opera at the University of Toronto in 2024. He studies with famed soprano Wendy Nielsen.



Tayte Mitchell, Stage Director (new)
Hailing from Vulcan, AB, stage director and tenor Tayte Mitchell most recently launched Ammolite Opera as its founding Artistic Director. He is an alumnus of the McPhee Artist Program with Calgary Opera, the Music Academy of the West, and the Wolf Trap Opera Studio. Tayte holds degrees from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and the Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music.



Derek Stanyer, Pianist (new)



Dr. Stanyer has worked as a pianist/coach with UBC opera since 2019, and as an Adjunct Professor in 2023. He has recently performed both opera and art song with the Vancouver Fringe Festival, VO, Opera Unbound, Canadian Opera Company, York Place Concerts, and many others. His doctoral research (and passion!) relates to the art songs of Nikolai Medtner, which are a largely ignored part of the art song repertoire.

ABOUT THE YULANDA M. FARIS YOUNG ARTISTS PROGRAM

In 2012, Vancouver Opera launched the Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists Program. Made possible through a gift from the family of Yulanda M. Faris, the program engages, enriches, mentors and trains rising young Canadian opera artists and offers a bridge between formal academic educational programs and the professional world in a supportive and encouraging environment. It is led by Program Director Leslie Dala and Principal Coach Tina Chang, with invited guest opera professionals like Judith Forst OC OBC, Carol Isaac and Daniel Okulitch providing exceptional mentorship to participants. The Young Artists Program provides singers, pianists, and stage directors the opportunity to train with industry leaders through master classes, one-on-one coaching, and performance opportunities as part of a residency program.

ABOUT VANCOUVER OPERA

Vancouver Opera creates extraordinary experiences that engage, inspire and entertain through voice, music and theatre. Vancouver Opera is the second-largest professional opera company in Canada and is regarded worldwide for its fine mainstage productions, country-leading education programs, and innovative community programs. Learn more at www.vancouveropera.ca. Vancouver Opera has the continuing support of The Canada Council for the Arts, Government of Canada, the BC Arts Council and BC Provincial Government, the City of Vancouver Cultural Services and Vancouver Civic Theatres. Vancouver Opera's season sponsors are BMO, Mission Hill Family Estate, and the Alan and Gwendoline Pyatt Foundation.

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