

# LA BOHÈME

PRESENTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS OPERA



APRIL  
**21**  
7:30 PM

APRIL  
**23**  
3 PM



Rudi E. Scheidt  
School of Music

# LA BOHÈME CAST

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**Mimi**

Shannon Jongema

**Musetta**

Desiree Howe

**Rodolfo**

Philip Himebook

**Marcello**

Nathaniel McBride

**Schaunard**

Carlos Romero

**Colline**

John W. Faulconbridge, II

**Benoit/Alcindoro**

Bill Andrews

**Parpignol**

Camden Kegley

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## **Shannon Jongema (Mimi)**

With her warm, expressive voice, dynamic stage presence, and conscientious attention to musical detail, soprano Shannon Jongema is a mesmerizing storyteller on opera and concert stages alike. Shannon's upcoming engagements include the roles of Mme. Silberklang in *Der Schauspieldirektor*, Suor Dolcina and Suor Osmina in *Suor Angelica*, and soprano cover in Mozart's *Requiem* with Varna International Music Academy.

Shannon has most recently been seen on stage as Lucy (*The Telephone*) and Mrs. Gobineau (*The Medium*) with Musical Traditions, Inc., soprano cover (*Verdi's Messa da Requiem* and *Mozart's Requiem*) with Rhodes MasterSingers, soprano soloist (*Bach's Mass in B minor*) with the Bach Festival Society of Winter Park, and in the chorus of *Tosca* with Opera Memphis and of *Amahl and the Night Visitors* with Memphis Light Opera. Shannon is currently pursuing her Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees in Vocal Performance at the University of Memphis, studying under Professor Mary Wilson. She also holds a Bachelor of Arts in Music from Rollins College where she studied under Dr. Caitlin Mohr and Professor Amy Gifford.

## **Philip Himebook (Rodolfo)**



Philip Andrew Himebook is a DMA student at the University of Memphis. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Toccoa Falls College and a Master of Music in vocal performance from the University of Memphis. He has performed in multiple shows and operas in the Memphis area, and serves as the full-time music director at Grace Community Church in Cordova, TN.

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## Desiree Howe (Musetta)



Desiree Howe, soprano, is a doctoral candidate at the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music under the tutelage of Dr. Randal Rushing. Hailing from Texas, Desiree earned her Bachelor of Music degree in vocal performance from Texas Tech University. As a stage director and singer, Desiree is passionate about communicating relevant and important messages through music. Her favorite roles include Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro* (University of Memphis), Pamina in *The Mini Magic Flute* (Opera Memphis), Lay Sister in *Suor Angelica*, Miles in *The Turn of the Screw* (Texas Tech Opera Theatre), Gretel in *Hänsel und Gretel*, and Carrie in *Carousel* (Moonlight Musicals) and now, the powerhouse that is Musetta! Desiree has received performance awards from several competitions including Opera Memphis's inaugural *Nuevas Canciones Competition* (First Place, 2022); Memphis Beethoven Club's 2022 *Savell Vocal Competition* (First Place, Young Artists Division); University of Memphis's 2021 *Concerto Competition* (Winner) and the 2020 *Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions* (Encouragement Award, Regional). Desiree maintains a private vocal studio, and also is a voice teacher for Ballet Memphis's *Dance for Parkinson's Disease*. She would like to thank her husband for his unwavering support and love.

## Nathaniel McBride (Marcello)



Baritone Nathaniel McBride's repertoire spans from early classical to contemporary, as well as musical theater. Recent performances include *Boy 2 in Trouble in Tahiti* with University of Memphis and covering the role of Jupiter in *Orphée aux enfers* with Opera Company of Middlebury, along with roles such as Pangloss from *Candide* and Duparquet from Hahn's *Ciboulette* under the direction of Catherine Malfitano and Shostakovich's *Moscow*, Cheryomushki as Drebednev and Mr. Milkin under the direction of Dona D. Vaughn. Musical theater experience include performances as Chip from *On the Town* and Shrek in *Shrek, the Musical* directed by Carolyn Marlow.

Appearances in the concert arena include performances with the New York Philharmonic, the Manhattan School of Music Symphony Orchestra and the Mostly Mozart Festival. Nathaniel earned his Bachelor of Music degree at the Manhattan School of Music studying with Mark Oswald and a Master of Music degree from Carnegie Mellon University. He is currently studying with Matthew Burns as a doctoral student at University of Memphis. Feeling at home in both metropolitan areas, as well as at his family's dairy farm, Nathaniel is a native of Enon Valley, Pennsylvania.

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## **Carlos Romero (Schaunard)**



Mexican-American baritone Carlos Romero has been praised for his exceptional performance abilities in both the operatic and musical theater traditions.

A graduate of Centenary College of Louisiana, Carlos has taken on various roles ranging from Schaunard in Puccini's *La bohème*, the Pirate King in Gilbert & Sullivan's *Pirates of Penzance*, Guglielmo in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, Figaro in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, and Melchior in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*.

Concert credits include Elijah in Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and Judas in J.S. Bach's *Matthäus-Passion* with the Shreveport Symphony, and scenes from Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. In addition to opera, Carlos has also worked in musical theater with performances as Robert in *Sondheim's Company* and the roles of Sonny and Kevin in *Lin-Manuel Miranda's In the Heights*. During his time at Centenary, Carlos was named the NATS Southern Region winner and was a recipient of *Spotlight on Opera's* full scholarship two years in a row. Most recently, Carlos was a finalist in *Opera Memphis's* inaugural *Nuevas Canciones* vocal competition. Carlos recently graduated with his Master of Music degree in vocal performance from the University of Memphis Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music.

## **John W. Faulconbridge, II (Colline)**



John W. Faulconbridge, II is an alumnus of the University of Memphis, where he received both his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Music Performance from the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music. He has performed various roles with the University of Memphis Opera, *Opera Memphis*, and *Theatre Memphis*. This is his first role since returning to Memphis in early 2022, and he will be performing in *Mary Poppins* at *Theatre Memphis* this summer.

# LA BOHÈME CAST

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## Bill Andrews (Benoit/Alcindoro)



Bill has been working in and around theater his entire adult life. Thanks to Benjamin Wayne Smith for the invitation to dive into a new artform; to Dr. Stephen Karr and many others for enough coaching to be of some service to this story; and to the beautiful voices and welcoming singers in this powerful production!!

Bill is particularly proud of appearing at Theatre Memphis in: *Ragtime, 1776, Hamlet, Cyrano, To Kill a Mockingbird and A Christmas Carol*; and at Playhouse on the Square in: *The Rocky Horror Show, Spamalot!, Sunset Boulevard, Frost/ Nixon, Urinetown the Musical, Saucy Jack and the Space Vixens, Peter and the Starcatcher, The Book of Will, and for many years as Captain Hook in Peter Pan.*

2023 will mark Bill's 27th year as designer and director for the National Civil Rights Museum Freedom Award, an annual benefit that has brought to Memphis honorees and performers including Nelson Mandela, the Dalai Lama, Oprah, Bill Clinton, Bono, Stevie Wonder, Faith Hill, and John Legend. It has been an honor to serve such a valuable organization, and to help build the Beloved Community.

Thanks always to Susan. Her love and support make all this work this possible.

## Camden Kegley (Parpignol)



Camden Kegley, tenor, was born and raised in Fairbanks, Alaska and is a senior Voice Performance major and Italian minor at the University of Memphis. Last year he had the opportunity to perform the role of Despard in the University of Memphis's production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Ruddigore and Antonio in Le nozze di Figaro.*

This winter he performed in the chorus of Opera Memphis' *Tosca* and the role of the Page in *Amahl and the Night Visitors* with Memphis Light Opera. He is excited to be performing the role of Monostatos in the Hawaii Performing Arts Festival's production of *Die Zauberflöte* this summer.

# LA BOHÈME DIRECTORS

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## Ben Smith, Stage Director & Producer



Ben has directed for Opera Memphis, Indianapolis Opera, Seattle Opera's Young Artist Program, Intermountain Opera Bozeman, Mobile Opera, Tacoma Opera, Asheville Lyric Opera, Opera Theatre of Pittsburgh, the Young Artist Program at Pittsburgh Opera, the University of Cincinnati/CCM, Baldwin Wallace University and The Opera Theater of Lucca, Italy.

In 2013 Ben was appointed Artistic Director of the Accademia Vocale Lorenzo Malfatti, a summer training program for young singers in Lucca, Italy.

Ben joined the faculty at Baldwin Wallace University in 2010 as their first full time Director of Opera. Since 2015, he has been the Opera Stage Director at the University of Memphis. He has taught master classes for singing actors across the U.S. and in China.

He began his career in opera as a singer, performing twenty-one leading roles in opera, operetta and musical theater. He has logged over 250 performances in the U.S. and Italy.

## Stephen Karr, Conductor & Music Director



Born in Greenville, South Carolina, Stephen Karr is a compelling interpreter of opera and orchestral works. This spring, he debuts with Opera Memphis, leading a revival production of the company's co-commission *The Falling and the Rising* at the newly-opened Scheidt Family Performing Arts Center in Memphis. In recent seasons, he has appeared with Anchorage Opera, the Sacramento Philharmonic and Opera, and the Parnassus Chamber Orchestra. As Associate Conductor and Artistic Administrator for Long Beach Opera, he was cover conductor and prompter for 2019's world premiere

production of *The Central Park Five* by Anthony Davis and Richard Wesley, which went on to win the 2020 Pulitzer Prize in Music. In 2011, he co-founded Pacific Opera Project, for which he was music director until 2016. With POP, he led productions of *Trouble in Tahiti*, *Così fan tutte*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *La Calisto* (LA premiere), *Ariadne auf Naxos* and *The Rake's Progress* (LA professional premiere), among others. The Los Angeles Times praised his performance of the Stravinsky as having kept orchestra, cast and chorus on "well-articulated rhythmic track." He has also been on staff with the OPERA Iowa tour, the Glimmerglass Festival, Opera New Jersey and Palm Beach Opera.

Stephen Karr has taught at Chapman University, Michigan State University, USC and UCLA. His schooling includes degrees in organ performance (Mercer University and Westminster Choir College) and orchestral conducting (UCLA). He is an Assistant Professor of Music and Opera Music Director at the University of Memphis.

# PRODUCTION TEAM

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**Stage Director & Producer**  
Ben Smith

**Conductor & Music Director**  
Stephen Karr

**Lighting Designer & Technical Director**  
Jeremy Fisher

**Scenic Designer**  
Amy Healey

**Projection Designer**  
Brandon Bell

**Rehearsal Pianists**  
Alex Benford and Jacob Kerzner

**Musical Preparation**  
Alex Benford

**Italian Diction Coach**  
Matthew Burns

**Assistant Conductor**  
Fabian Schneider

**Costume Coordinator**  
Alexandria Perel

**Properties Master**  
Clare Kelly

**Chorus Master**  
Ryan Fisher

**Stage Manager**  
Jasmine Simmers

**Costumes Courtesy of Opera Memphis**



# UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS CHAMBER CHOIR

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## **SOPRANO**

Amanda Bolaños  
Caroline Davis  
Karoline Larsen  
Sarah McGinnis  
Lindsay Reeves  
Rachel Young  
Emily Woelke

## **TENOR**

Sam Johnson  
Nick Kroboth-Larsen  
Brody Melton  
Timothy Webster  
Kane Bradley  
Andrew Heady

## **ALTO**

Sarah Froncek  
Cait Mocan  
Caroline Phillips-  
Burk  
Stephanie Rolfe  
Bella Grace Valente  
Evann Velasquez  
Morgan Williams  
Ia White

## **Bass**

Merritt Hanemann  
Benjamin Nguyen  
Micah Loftis  
Alex Perez-Afanador  
SirLatimore Wilson  
Garrett Heady  
Shawn Campbell

# SUPERNUMERARIES

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Maître d' - Kevin Neace  
Waiter - Edlyn Jarquin

# CHILDREN'S CHORUS

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Evin Aldridge  
Bambi Boywid  
Lakeisha Cole  
Christopher Curry  
Evelyn Hart  
Clara Hedge  
Lillian Hardison  
Lila LoSicco  
Grace Russotto  
Cire Savage  
Leonard Waldman-Karr\*

*\*denotes soloist*

# UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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## **FLUTE**

Catie Balsamo, principal  
Mackenzie Saylor

## **PICCOLO**

Samuel Jesuyemi

## **OBOE**

Ty Matthews, principal  
Michelle Vigneau

## **ENGLISH HORN**

Victoria Hoffman

## **CLARINET**

Kendall Howard, principal  
Fernando Martinez

## **BASS CLARINET**

Adam Alter

## **BASSOON**

Tina Hazell, principal  
Julian Rice

## **HORN**

Eric Sorensen, principal  
Steven Groff  
Madeline Miller  
Nathan Olusemire

## **TRUMPET**

Lacey Peschel, principal  
Oliver Buckley  
Yiming Zhang

## **TROMBONE**

Nathan Hiers, principal  
Colin Woods

## **BASS TROMBONE**

Jasmine Lockwood

## **CIMBASSO**

Bryson Harding

## **TIMPANI**

Susannah Clabough

## **PERCUSSION**

Katie Bingham  
Daniel Hoepf  
Mario Shaw

## **HARP**

Frances Cobb

## **VIOLIN I**

Keiber Utrera, concertmaster  
Sofia Alvarado  
Lindsay Keck  
Idil Kucukdogan  
Noel Medford  
Alanna North  
Isabella Palmer

## **VIOLIN II**

Elizabeth Betrous, principal  
Michael Brennan  
Emily Cooley  
Anne Reeman  
Lucian Sever  
Langston Suggs

## **VIOLA**

Matthew Finley, principal  
Svetlana Choumiatsky  
Vivian McDermott  
Dane Perugini-Cripps

## **CELLO**

Christine Sears, principal  
Claire Fletcher  
Bryan Edward Henderson  
Abigail Powell  
Roberta dos Santos  
Jacob Saunders  
Ina Torres-O'Ryan  
Nazira Wali

## **CONTRABASS**

Liam O'Dell, principal  
Kedrick Cottrell  
Garrett Kirk  
Joshua Sheperd  
Grace Williams

# CREW

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**Charge Artist**

Andy Jurcovic

**Assistant Charge Artist**

Amy Forester

**Student Publicity Liaison**

Cayce Murphy

**Costume Assistant**

Meg Burroughs

**Production Assistants**

Camden Kegley

Ina Torres O’Ryan

**Master Electrician & Projection Technician**

Brandon Kitson

**Electrician**

Micki McCormick

**Carpenter**

Lauren Tobin

**Supertitle Operator**

Bradley Sowell

# SPECIAL THANKS

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Ryan Fisher

Kevin Sanders

Opera Memphis

Ned Canty

Harvey Felder

Mary Wilson

Paulina Villareal

Randall Rushing

Matthew Burns

Brian Ruggaber

Anthony Pellechia

Elicia Curry

Zack Corpus

Clifton Jackson

Lizzie Fudge

Memphis Botanic Gardens

Zoë Perrock

Robin Shuford Frank



THE

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