



THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS OPERA PRESENTS

Gilbert & Sullivan's

RUDDIGORE

OR

THE WITCH'S CURSE

November 19 & 20

RUDI E. SCHEIDT SCHOOL OF MUSIC
HARRIS CONCERT HALL

7:30 PM



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MEMPHIS

Rudi E. Scheidt
School of Music

Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music

Kevin Sanders, Director

College of Communication and Fine Arts

Anne Hogan, Dean

RUDDIGORE

Act I: A Seaside Town

65 minutes

Intermission

20 minutes

Act II: A Cursed Castle

40 minutes

CAST

Rose Maybud
Mad Margaret
Dame Hannah
Zorah
Ruth

Holly Thiemann
Shelbi Sellers
Brianna Reilly
Clara Norell
Desiree Soto

Sir Ruthven Murgatroyd
Richard Dauntless
Sir Despard Murgatroyd

Sullivan Ojala-Helmbolt
Christopher Rose
Ethan Baskin (Friday)
Camden Kegley (Saturday)
Bradley Sowell
Carlos Romero

Sir Roderic Murgatroyd
Old Adam Goodheart

ENSEMBLE

BRIDESMAIDS

Lindsay Ferreira
Avery Hall
Ily Jeanniton
Clara Norell
Emily Seatvet
Desiree Soto
Hannah Wilkerson

GHOSTLY ANCESTORS

Ethan Baskin
Jacob Hesselbein
Philip Himebook
Camden Kegley
Lane Pippin
Carlos Romero
T.J. Turner
Justin Wills

PRODUCTION TEAM

STAGE DIRECTOR & PRODUCER

Benjamin Wayne Smith

MUSIC DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR

Dror Baitel

ASSISTANT STAGE DIRECTOR

Desiree Soto

CHOREOGRAPHER

Shelbi Sellers

SCENIC DESIGNER

Amy Healey

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Jeremy Fisher

COSTUME DESIGNER

Charlene Gross

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Paul Cartwright

CHARGE SCENIC ARTIST

Amy Forester

PROPERTIES MASTER

Mollie West

STAGE MANAGER

Cassie Warthen

REHEARSAL PIANIST AND SUPERTITLE OPERATOR

Alex Benford

ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER

James Baker

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

Sullivan Ojala-Helmbolt (Sir Ruthven Murgatroyd)

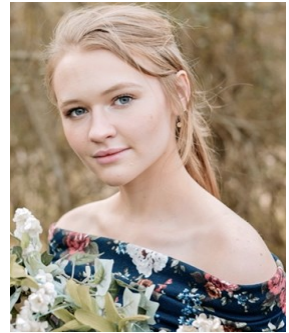
Having called Washington State, Minnesota and Madrid home, Baritone Sullivan Ojala-Helmbolt is excited to be in Memphis working towards his Master of Music degree in vocal performance under the tutelage of Dr. Christopher Besch. Sullivan earned his Bachelor's in voice from the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. As an avid performer of 20th century music, Sullivan has enjoyed interpreting the characters of Britten, such as Sid in *Albert Herring*, and both Junius and Tarquinius in *The Rape of Lucretia*. Another favorite role is Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus*. Sullivan is also passionate about the power of opera to empower as well as entertain and hopes to be able to continue interpreting impactful roles such as Hans Scholl in Udo Zimmermann's *Die Weisse Rose*.



Sullivan Ojala-Helmbolt

Holly Thiemann (Rose Maybud)

A Nashville native, Holly Thiemann is pursuing her Bachelor of Music in vocal performance with a minor in violin performance at the University of Memphis. She has prepared the roles of Barbarina in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Fanchette in *Le Mariage aux Lanternes*, and Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*. Most recently, she made her live debut as Celia in the Chicago Summer Opera's production of *Lucio Silla*. Opera scenes she has performed include Gretel from *Hansel and Gretel*, Yum Yum from the *Mikado*, and Mrs. Jones from *Street Scene*. She is an active participant of the honors college, a student advisor to music students, and the section leader of Chamber choir. Other accolades include winning the Presser Award, the Dean's Outstanding Achievement Award, 1st place in NATS in the second year treble division, the Ethel Maxwell Scholarship, as was a Collabfest finalist. She looks forward to continuing her education at the Master's level.



Holly Thiemann

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

Christopher Rose (Richard Dauntless)

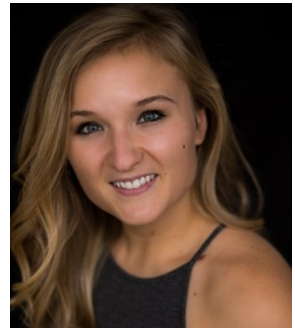
Christopher Rose, tenor, is a Master's voice performance student at the University of Memphis, studying under Dr. Christopher Besch. Originally from Texas, Christopher acquired his Bachelor's at the University of Texas at Arlington, under the guidance of Professor Kwan Kyun Joo. Some of his roles include Tito from *La Clemenza di Tito*, Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi*, Eisenstein from *Die Fledermaus*, and more recently Ottavio from *Don Giovanni*. His performance work has ranged from the selection of the Torggler Summer Vocal Institute in 2013 at Christopher Newport University in Virginia, guided by artists such as Brian Stokes Mitchell, Janis Siegel, and Ben Heppner, to lead performance with the symphony orchestra at the Irving Arts Center, 2018, in Arlington, Texas.



Christopher Rose

Shelbi Sellers (Mad Margaret)

Shelbi Sellers is an actress, singer, dancer, and choreographer from Memphis, TN. She holds a Bachelor of Music with a minor in theatre from right here at the University of Memphis, where she is currently pursuing her MM under the teaching of Mary Wilson. She often performs as a guest artist with the U of M Southern Comfort Jazz Orchestra. On the stage, Shelbi has performed in *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Oklahoma! (U of M)*, *Mamma Mia! (Theatre Memphis)*, *Head Over Heels* (regional premiere at Circuit Playhouse), *Bye Bye Birdie (DFT)* and many more. Shelbi will be seen next in the regional premiere of *Something Rotten!* at Playhouse on the Square (Summer 2022). She is a choreographer for Tipton-Rosemark Academy where she has done a total of 10 productions. She expresses her deepest gratitude to her family, Whitney Branan, and Lalanía Vaughn for the support that keeps her going! *Micah 6:8



Shelbi Sellers

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

Ethan Baskin (Sir Despard Murgatroyd—Friday)

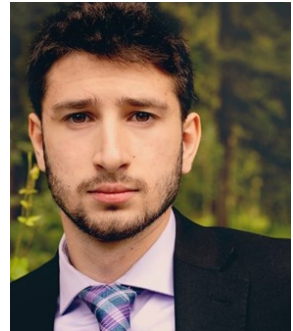
Ethan Baskin, tenor, is a senior voice performance major at the University of Memphis. He currently studies under Dr. Paulina Villareal. Ethan is delighted for the opportunity to play the dastardly Despard in this production of *Ruddigore*. He shares his love of comic opera with his passion for art song. He has a particular passion for the French language and the beauties of French music, and is extremely excited to work in collaboration with the University of Memphis Opera Program to present Massinet's *Werther* in the coming spring.



Ethan Baskin

Camden Kegley (Sir Despard Murgatroyd—Saturday)

Camden Kegley, tenor, was born and raised in Fairbanks, Alaska and is currently a junior voice performance major at the University of Memphis. He studies with Dr. Randal Rushing. During Camden's time at University of Memphis, he has learned the roles of Antonio in *The Marriage of Figaro* and Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*, but this will be his first in person full stage production at University of Memphis. When Camden is not singing, he enjoys rock climbing, playing board games, and learning Italian.



Camden Kegley

Carlos Romero (Old Adam Goodheart)

Mexican-American Baritone Carlos Romero has been praised for his exceptional performance abilities in both the operatic and musical theater traditions. A recent graduate of Centenary College of Louisiana, Carlos has taken on various roles ranging from Schaunard in Puccini's *La bohème*, Pirate King in Gilbert & Sullivan's *Pirates of Penzance*, and Guglielmo in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. 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. Concert credits include Elijah in Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and Judas in J.S. Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* with the Shreveport Symphony, and scenes from Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra.



Carlos Romero

ABOUT THE PERFORMERS

Dame Hannah

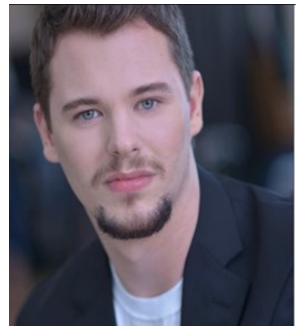
Brianna Reilly is a mezzo-soprano based in Memphis, TN where she is pursuing both a Master of Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degree in vocal performance at the University of Memphis. Her past operatic engagements include Erda and Flosshilde (*Das Rheingold*); Carmen (*Carmen*); Ježibaba (*Rusalka*); Hänsel und Gretel; Alidoro (*La Cenerentola*) and Mrs. Nolan (*The Medium*). Brianna has been selected as a finalist in competitions such as the University of Memphis Soloist Competition (Honorable Mention), Music International Grand Prix U.S. Central Region (3rd place), and the National Association of Teachers of Singing Southeast Regionals (2nd place). As an up-and-coming singer, Brianna's mission is to use her vibrant and energetic performances to instill her love of classical music into anyone and everyone that she can. She is a strong advocate of performing different types of works and has found much success in being a flexible and diverse singer.



Brianna Reilly

Sir Roderic Murgatroyd

Bradley Sowell, baritone, is a second-year doctoral student at the University of Memphis, where he studies with Dr. Randal Rushing. In his time at the university, he has studied the roles of Masetto and Il Commendatore in *Don Giovanni*, and Escamillo in *Carmen*, and Publio from *La clemenza di Tito*. Before his time in Memphis, his past roles include one of the speed daters in Michael Ching's opera *Zoom Speed Dating Tonight!*, Dr. Blind/Ivan/Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus*, Doganiere in *La bohème*, Bartolo in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Belcore in *L'elisir d'amore*, and Golaud in *Pelléas et Mélisande*. Currently, Mr. Sowell is on faculty at Rhodes College, where he teaches voice lessons. Mr. Sowell earned a Master of Music in vocal performance from the University of South Dakota and a Bachelor of Music Education from Georgia College.



Bradley Sowell

Zorah

Clara Norell is currently working towards a Bachelor of Music degree in vocal performance at the University of Memphis. Originally from Jackson, TN, she is excited for her final year of opera as an undergrad at the University of Memphis. With the University, she has played Denise from Offenbach's *Le Mariage aux Lanternes* and Zerlina from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. Clara has loved working on this project and cannot wait to start working on *Werther* in the spring!

ABOUT THE DIRECTORS

Ben Smith, stage director and 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.

Dror Baitel, music director and conductor

Visiting Assistant Professor of Opera and Conducting Dror Baitel brings a wealth of knowledge and experience as a collaborative artist to his new position with The Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music. Baitel was born in Israel and comes to The University of Memphis by way of New York City, where he spent years honing his craft working with various Broadway, Off-Broadway, and regional theater productions. Baitel was on the original music team of Lin Manuel Miranda's *Hamilton*, as well as a pianist-conductor for the hit *Dear Evan Hansen*. Additional credits include *Mary Poppins* (debut), *Matilda*, and *The King and I*. Baitel currently pursues his doctorate at The Juilliard School, where he is expected to graduate this coming spring.

Desiree Soto, assistant stage director

Desiree Soto, soprano, is a doctoral student at the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music at the University of Memphis, under the tutelage of Dr. Randal Rushing. Hailing from Texas, Desiree earned her Bachelor of Music degree in vocal performance from Texas Tech University. Some of her favorite roles include Pamina in *The Mini Magic Flute* (Opera Memphis), Lay Sister in *Suor Angelica* (Opera Memphis), Miles in *The Turn of the Screw* (Texas Tech Opera Theatre), Gretel in *Hansel und Gretel*, and Carrie in *Carousel* (Moonlight Musicals). She recently won the University of Memphis's 2021 Soloist Competition and gave a victory performance with the university orchestra. In 2020, Desiree competed in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and was awarded an Encouragement Award at regionals. Desiree was an assistant director for the UofM's fall opera and is proud to assist direct Ruddigore!

UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN I

Frank Lakatos, concertmaster
Mitchell Cloutier
Maria Sofia
Alanna North
Elizabeth Betrous

VIOLIN II

Vivian McDermott, Principal
Keiber Utrera
Anne Rieh Reeman
Madeline Bundy

VIOLA

Alejandro Gallagher, Principal
Clarence Golden
Svetlana Choumiatsky

CELLO

Rong Cao, Principal
Caroline Ver Mulm
Nazia Wali

BASS

Liam O'Dell

FLUTE I

Chen-Yu Lee

FLUTE II/PICCOLO

Mari Kamikura

OBOE I

Victoria Hoffman

CLARINET I

Mark Allen

CLARINET II

James Cutter

BASSOON I

Hannah Dickerson

HORN I

Tyler Bjerke

HORN II

Eric Sorensen

TRUMPET I

Alexander Schuettrumpf

TRUMPET II

Joseph Moore

TROMBONE I

Gus Bradbury

TROMBONE II

Jasmine Lockwood

PERCUSSION

Dwight Vandevate
Marvin Shaw

REHEARSAL PIANIST

Alex Benford

CREW MEMBERS

MASTER ELECTRICIAN
Brandon Kitson

ELECTRICIAN
Gabe Skinner

CARPENTERS
Erica Causi
Malena Vogt
Natalie Ervolino
Aaron Chang

ASSOCIATE COSTUME DESIGNER & WARDROBE HEAD
Heather Duzan

STITCHERS
Marrissa Cherry
Corinne Fann
Ali Filipovich
Haley Grannon

Holiday CONCERT

— *featuring* —

**UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
UNIVERSITY SINGERS | COLLEGIUM ORCHESTRA
JAZZ SINGERS | MAZI CHOIR | TIGERCHOR CHOIR
UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS WIND ENSEMBLE**

RESERVE TICKETS



TUES., NOV. 30 | 7:30 PM | HARRIS CONCERT HALL

SPECIAL THANKS

Dr. Harvey Felder
Mary Wilson
Dr. Paulina Villareal
Dr. Randall Rushing
Dr. Christopher Besch
Dr. Robert Fant
Theresa Winklemann
Jacob Allen
Tracy Thomas
Mike Onele
Rick Mayfield
Anthony Pellechia
Jennifer Gillette
Holly Derr
Ned Canty
Becky Casperson
Kathy Kovarick



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MEMPHIS.

Rudi E. Scheidt
School of Music

J U L E S M A S S E N E T
WERTHER

Thrilling, tuneful, and one of the most
moving operas ever composed.

SAVE
THE
DATE

APRIL 8 | 7:30 PM

APRIL 10 | 3 PM

HARRIS CONCERT HALL

SCHEIDT FAMILY MUSIC CENTER

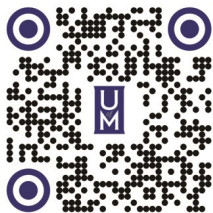
OPENING 2022



Support the Future of Music in Memphis

With the opening of the new Scheidt Family Music Center in 2022, the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music will be equipped with world-class facilities that can support its role as the largest and most comprehensive school of music in the region.

As the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music expands, students need professional-level instruments and equipment to fine-tune their artistry. Make a Gift to the Strike a Chord: Scheidt School of Music Drive for Excellence, to ensure that the School of Music can continue to create trailblazers that impact music in Memphis and around the world.



momentum.memphis.edu/music