



Opera Huntsville presents

Cabaret *Romanza*

Trinity UMC April
607 Airport Rd
Huntsville, AL 35802 4-5 | 7p



www.operahuntsville.org
(256) 417-9572

Program

Willkommen • *Cabaret*

Ladies Who Lunch • *Company*

Summertime • *Porgy and Bess*

Flower Duet • *Lakmé*

Oh What a Beautiful Mornin' • *Oklahoma!*

Modern Major-General • *The Pirates of Penzance*

Aprite un po' quegli occhi • *Le Nozze di Figaro*

I Can Cook Too • *On the Town*

Hold On • *The Secret Garden*

Happy/Sad • *The Addams Family*

Gimme Gimme • *Thoroughly Modern Millie*

Bella siccome un angelo • *Don Pasquale*

Come Paride vezzoso • *L'Elixir d'Amore*

Klänge der heimat • *Die Fledermaus*

Ding-Dong! The Witch Is Dead • *Fifth Estate*

Habenera • *Carmen*

Una Furtiva Lagrima • *L'Elisir d'Amore*

Memory • *Cats*

Chacun à son goût • *Die Fledermaus*

Champagne Chorus • *Die Fledermaus*

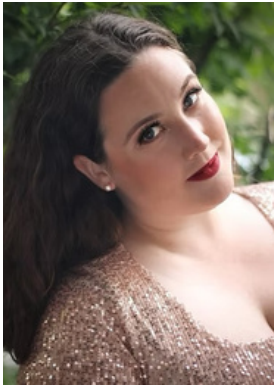
Cast



Shane Kennedy • Master of Ceremonies

Shane Kennedy holds a Master of Music degree (2008) in vocal performance and church music from Belmont University in Nashville TN. Mr. Kennedy's operatic roles include Tamino in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* (2006), Camille de Rosillon in Lehar's *The Merry Widow* (2007) with Belmont Opera Theater, Sheriff Bill in *Georgia Bottoms* (2015) with Huntsville Symphony Orchestra, Major General in *Pirates of Penzance* (2015) with Theatre Huntsville, Rodolfo in *La Boheme* (2016), The Lamplighter in *The Little Prince* (2017), Gherardo in *Gianni Schicchi* (2018) with Ars Nova Huntsville, Alfred in *Die Fledermaus* (2023) and King Kaspar in *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (2023-24) with Opera Huntsville. In 2022, Mr Kennedy served as music director for Opera Huntsville's presentation of Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'amore*. His musical theater roles include Frankie Cavalier in *Pageant* (2004, 2015), Officer Lockstock in *Urinetown* (2009) with Renaissance Theater, Max Detweiler in *The Sound of Music* (2010) and Sir Robin in *Spamalot* (2023) with Theatre Huntsville, Gomez in *Addams Family* (2014) with Independent Musical Productions. Mr. Kennedy has also performed numerous oratorio and classical solos from Handel (*Messiah, Chandos Anthems*), Bach (*Magnificat, Cantatas*), Mozart (*Requiem, Solemn Mass, Mass in C*), Beethoven (*Symphony 9*) Dubois (*Seven Last Words of Christ*), and Schumann (*Dichterliebe*).

Mr. Kennedy serves as Worship and Fine Arts Associate at Trinity UMC in Huntsville, since 2002, directing handbells, the Trinity Handbell Quartet, youth choir and youth praise band. He is the artistic director of the Heritage Ringers of Huntsville, and the current president of the board at Opera Huntsville. Mr. Kennedy was a member of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Chorus 1997-2002.



Shannon Rose McAuliffe • mezzosoprano

Shannon Rose McAuliffe maintains an active freelance schedule spanning opera, musical theatre, and vocal chamber music; she is also a trained voiceover actor and improv artist. Recent and upcoming appearances include engagements with Arpeggione Ensemble, Odyssey Opera, Opera Huntsville, the MIT Symphony Orchestra, the Henry Purcell Society of Boston, Tallahassee Bach Parley, and both the Hans Zimmer Live and Final Fantasy VII: Rebirth tours. She has recorded for a number of independent projects in popular genres, with the Vox Futura recording choir, and on the Naxos label. Ms. McAuliffe is also an active scholar, and her research interests include femicide in opera and audience reception spanning several centuries. She holds Affiliated Faculty/adjunct positions at Emerson College, Boston University, and Northeastern University. She earned her Bachelor of Music degree in Music History and Voice from the University of Massachusetts, and completed graduate studies (Master of Music and Master of Science) in Historical Performance, Musicology, and Arts Administration at Boston University.



Erica Hansen • soprano

Erica is excited to be back onstage with Opera Huntsville!!! Erica has been performing professionally for over a decade and has recently returned from playing Madame de la Grand Bouche at Olney Theater Center in Washington DC. She was seen in Rocktopia on Broadway and traveled across North America as Jennyanydots in the national tour of Cats. She has been a featured singer for Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines and she performed in the regional premiere of Mary Poppins at Merry Go Round Playhouse. She will be playing Bea in Something Rotten with Theatre Huntsville in June!!! Favorite credits include: Marian (The Music Man), Lady of the Lake (Spamalot), Queenie (Andrew Lipka's The Wild Party), Petra (A Little Night Music), Ado Annie (Oklahoma!), Paulette (Legally Blonde), Olive Ostrovsky (Spelling Bee), Martha (The Secret Garden), and Diana Goodman (Next to Normal).



Sierra Hammond • soprano

Sierra Hammond is a native Soprano from Dallas, Texas. She received her Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance and Pedagogy from the illustrious HBCU, Oakwood University in 2014. She continued her educational pursuits at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville where she received her Masters of Music. During her time in Knoxville, she was actively involved in the University of Tennessee Opera Theatre and Knoxville Opera companies. Here, she participated in *La Boheme* (Puccini), *The Crucible* (Ward), *Don Giovanni* (Mozart), *The Consul* (Menotti), *Mefistofele* (Boito), and *Il ritorno d'ulisse in patria* (Monteverdi).

Sierra has been actively involved with Opera Huntsville since 2018 where she currently serves as the company Production Manager, previously as the Board President. In the Fall of 2019, Sierra made her stage directorial debut with Opera Huntsville directing Menotti's *The Old Maid and the Thief*. Sierra has participated in various productions with Opera Huntsville since the company's inception such as *The True Story of Cinderella* (Warren) as *The Queen and Step Sister Two*, *Gilbert and Sullivan in Rocket City* as *Tart 2*, *Bremen Town Musicians* as *Barcolle*.

Sierra has supported an active stage director career. Recently, she participated as the assistant director in the world premiere of Leslie Burrs newest opera, *I Can't Breathe* at Marble City Opera. This was such a success that she was invited to co-direct the west coast premiere at Pacific Opera Project in Los Angeles.

Currently she is faculty at Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University (Normal, Alabama) in the Vocal Studies Area. Sierra resides in Huntsville, AL.



Paul Houghtaling • bass-baritone

Bass-baritone PAUL HOUGHTALING has been praised by critics for his versatility in a diverse repertoire spanning the 12th through the 21st centuries . Career highlights include a highly lauded debut with the Central City Opera as the comic lead in Friml's *Rose Marie* ("Houghtaling gets a chance to steal the show and almost does." *The Denver Post*) , the title role in *Don Pasquale* for Tacoma Opera , the Philip Glass soundtrack to Reggio's film *Naqoyqatsi* for SONY, on which he is a featured vocalist, a debut with the Bard Music Festival in Haydn's *L'Infedeltá Delusa* ("Paul Houghtaling revealed a striking and flexible baritone." *Opera News*) , European tours as Papageno with Teatro Lirico d'Europa ("...not only a solid singer, but one who has a sense of presence, displays a full range of emotions and who plays excellent comedy." *France Ovest*) , " *Opera Buffa : Comedy On Stage* " on Lincoln Center's "Meet the Artists" series, and the Major General in *The Pirates of Penzance* with Knoxville Opera ("tour-de-force performance ..." Knoxville News Sentinel), an acclaimed portrayal which he has also brought to Anchorage Opera , and the Colorado and Gulf Coast Symphonies . He has appeared in numerous Gilbert & Sullivan reviews to critical acclaim with the Abilene Philharmonic, Erie Philharmonic, National Savoyards, Opera Mississippi , and others. Recent seasons included Benoit and Alcindoro in *La bohème* with First Coast Opera and Opera Las Vegas , Elder McLean in *Susannah* with Marble City Opera , and Angelotti in *Tosca* with Mobile Opera and Opera Las Vegas . The New York native has multiple Carnegie Hall credits including appearances with the American Composer's Orchestra and Cecelia Chorus of New York.

Additional credits include Ko-Ko in *The Mikado* with Anchorage Opera and Opera Saratoga ("... a total, integrated performance – part Harold Lloyd, part patter-singer extraordinaire, all scintillating." *The Record*, Troy, NY) In 2008, he made his debut with Nashville Opera as Sir Joseph in *H.M.S. Pinafore* and Cedar Rapids Opera Theatre as stage director for *The Gondoliers*. He made his Mobile Opera debut in the fall of 2010 as both Maximilian and stage director for *Candide*. He recently returned to the Natchez Opera Festival as Ko-Ko and stage director for *The Magic Flute* for Hubbard Hall Opera Theatre in upstate New York.

Stage engagements also include Pali in the New York Philharmonic's *Die Zigeunerbaron*, the dual role of Cadmus/Somnus in Handel's *Semele* for Anchorage Opera, and a return appearance at the Bard Festival in *Walzer aus Wien*. He has also performed with the Boston Lyric, Baltimore, Des Moines, Long Beach Civic Light, and Santa Fe Operas, the Metropolitan Opera Guild, and L'Opera Francais de New York, among others, and has created roles in Philip Glass's *The Witches of Venice* (recorded for Euphorbia) and Lee Hoiby's *The Tempest* with Des Moines Metro Opera. Earning considerable attention for his work in contemporary music and theater, especially for his renowned performances of Davies' *Eight Songs for a Mad King*, Mr. Houghtaling has performed with Gunther Schuller, the Virgil Thomson Foundation, *ALEA III* on the Kalamata and Iraklion Festivals in new works for Greek National Television, and in an eclectic mix of modern repertoire by Cage, Crumb, Glass, and others. ("Paul Houghtaling has personality and a splendid voice." *The Boston Globe*) He has recorded for the New World Records, EMI, Euphorbia and Prospect Classics labels. He is Professor of Music and Director of Opera at the University of Alabama.



Wesley Caulkins • baritone

Wesley Caulkins is a versatile baritone and multi-instrumentalist whose artistry and leadership have earned distinction on the stage and in the studio. With an expansive skillset that bridges classical vocal performance, music education, and arts administration, Wes brings a dynamic and holistic approach to every facet of their work.

Since moving to Huntsville, Alabama, Wes has served as Chief Operating Officer of the Alabama Music Academy, where he oversees daily operations, strategic planning and implementation, outreach, hiring, event coordination, and teacher support. Under Wes's leadership, the Academy has expanded its private instruction offerings and community reach boasting a net growth of over 25% since taking the role. In addition to administrative work, Wes maintains an active teaching studio through the Academy and also works as a substitute at Valley Conservatory as needed teaching voice, piano, trombone, and guitar.

Wes holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Voice Performance from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, graduating cum laude with a minor in piano. As a student artist, they directed ensembles including a men's choir and barbershop quartet, and served as music director for a fully staged production of Mr. and Mrs. Bob Cratchit's Wild Christmas Binge. Wes is currently completing a Master of Music in Voice Performance at Southern Illinois University, where they served as a graduate assistantship teaching collegiate voice students and working as a recording technician.

Wesley's stage credits span opera, operetta, musical theatre, and sacred music. Excited to portray Carlino in Opera Huntsville's production of Don Pasquale when it is rescheduled, recent performances include Mr. Big Bad in Little Red's Most Unusual Day and Mr. Lindquist in A Little Night Music, where they also covered the role of Count Carl-Magnus. With Nashville Opera, Wes appeared in the ensemble of Pagliacci, and as a guest artist with the Southern Illinois Music Festival, they have portrayed roles including the Old Gypsy (Il trovatore), the Doctor/Notary (Gianni Schicchi), and Donald J. Alfonso (COVID fan tutte). Other notable roles include Antonio and covers of Figaro and Bartolo in Le Nozze di Figaro with Red River Lyric Opera, and appearances as Masetto (Don Giovanni) and Curio (Giulio Cesare) with Undercroft Opera. Earlier roles include Aeneas in Dido and Aeneas, Ben in The Telephone, and Bartolo in Le Nozze di Figaro at the Opera Festival di Roma.

In addition to his vocal talents, Wes is a seasoned coach and accompanist with extensive experience in diction, rehearsal techniques, and musical collaboration. He has studied under distinguished teachers including Joseph Baunoch, David Dillard, Peter Volpe, and Chuck Chandler, and worked with esteemed conductors and directors such as Ed Benyas, Josh Shaw, Nyela Basney and Dugg McDonough.

A strong advocate for community engagement and music education, their commitment to fostering the next generation of artists is matched by an entrepreneurial spirit and drive to build sustainable models for arts organizations. Whether on stage, in the classroom, or behind the scenes, Wesley Caulkins continues to cultivate a career defined by curiosity, craftsmanship, and connection. With a growing list of professional credits and a steadfast commitment to vocal excellence, they remain a vibrant and emerging voice in the operatic and choral music world.

Creative Team



Erin Huelskamp Bohn • Stage Director

Energetic, hardworking and enigmatic, Erin Huelskamp enthalls audiences as a flutist, stage and music director, and composer. Musically, her styles and preferences vary wildly; she will readily perform and promote popular and jazz tunes alongside classical and high-art favorites. In essence, if there is a place and opportunity to make music, Huelskamp will explore it. Currently serving as Artistic Director of Encore Opera Huntsville and Orchestra Director for Asbury Church in Madison, Alabama, Huelskamp regularly performs in the greater Huntsville area on flute. With extensive experience as a composer, arranger, and engraver, she creates dramatic and comical music that often reflects a philosophical twist on her daily experiences.

Co-founder and executive director emeritus of the Juventas New Music Ensemble, Huelskamp voraciously promotes new music – especially by amazing unknown composers – and she strives to draw ever new audiences to the burgeoning sounds of the 21st century. Marked by Chamber Music Today as “the only realistic response to the the state of affairs in this country,” Huelskamp combines entrepreneurship and music to motivate change.

Huelskamp’s compositions elicit numerous awards and performances. Noted as “startling revelatory” and “electrifying”, recent compositions include Soul Travel for SATB chorus and commissioned by the Huntsville Master Chorale, Swing Low Sweet Chariot for Asbury Church, Shall We Gather At The River for the Asbury Percussion Ensemble, and continued work on her second opera The Ten-Block Walk. Former accolades include the Ellen Taaffe Zwilich Prize, special recognition from the New York Youth Symphony First Music 23, and third place at the Music Teachers National Association Student Composition Competition. Huelskamp has the privilege of performances both nationally and internationally, including such venues as L’Ecole Normale de Musique in Paris, France, Studzinski Recital Hall at Bowdoin College in Maine, the Interlochen Academy of the Arts in Michigan, Bard University in New York, the University of Missouri-Columbia, Harvard University, and many more.

Shortly after the completion of her first opera The Year of the Serpent, Huelskamp delved into directing theatrical works. Her production of Light and Power with Juventas won the American Prize in opera as well as second place in the Professional Division of the National Opera Association's video competition. Little Women with the Wakefield Repertory Theatre won a DASH award for Best Actress, and I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change with the TCAN Players was nominated for a DASH award for Best Ensemble. Her setting of Der Zwerg with OperaHub took special notice in The Boston Globe. Additional, favorite directing credits include Candide with Harvard University's Lowell House Opera, Aida The Musical, Thoroughly Modern Millie, and Legally Blonde The Musical with the Performing Arts Connection, Company with the TCAN Players, The Music Man with the Winthrop Playmakers, You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown with Beyond the Fourth Wall, The Magic Mirror with Juventas and serving as Assistant Stage Director for The Two Gentlemen of Verona the Shakespeare on the Common production with Commonwealth Shakespeare Company.

Trained as a classical dancer for 16 years, Huelskamp began composing at the age of ten with no musical training. In 2000 she pursued studies in music at the University of Missouri-Columbia where she earned a Bachelor of Music in both composition and flute performance; she studied composition with Thomas McKenney and Stefan Freund and flute with Steven Geibel. In 2007, Huelskamp completed a Master of Music in Composition from the Boston Conservatory, where she studied with Andy Vores, Dana Brayton, and later Ken Ueno. She studied acting with Bobbie Steinbach.

Huelskamp maintains a private teaching studio in Madison, Alabama where she currently resides. Former notable teaching roles include serving as a certified teacher at the Performing Arts Connection in Sudbury, visiting lecture presentations at The Boston Conservatory, Bentley University, and the University of South Florida, and teaching several years as a professor of music theory at Boston College.



Christopher-Joel Carter • Piano

Christopher-Joel Carter, IV is a professional organist and pianist, working, performing, and recording in all genres and mediums.

In 2008, Christopher won first place in the Liberace Piano Competition, in which he is the reigning champion. In winning the Liberace Piano Competition, Christopher was invited to live and work in Las Vegas, Nevada. During his performance tenure in Las Vegas, Christopher was the headlining pianist at the new M Resort and Casino, and as guest artist at many other casinos, hotels, and venues. He has shared the billboard with Natalie Cole, Alan Jackson, ABC, Wang Chung, Marie Osmond, Cutting Crew, Siegfried & Roy, Cee-Lo Green, among myriad others.

Christopher-Joel is the principal organist and pianist at Trinity United Methodist Church in Huntsville, Alabama, a position he began in 2016.

Outside of music work, Christopher is a serious aficionado of modern and contemporary art, and he is the proud "dog-dad" to King Henri St. Cartier (Henry), his English Bulldog.

Please visit: cjciv.com or www.youtube.com/TopherJC4

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Special Thanks

Trinity UMC

Opera Huntsville Team

Sierra Hammond | production manager
Shannon Rose McCauliffe | grants specialist
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