Transgressive Theatre-Opera presents:

THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA

BOOK BY CRAIG LUCAS
MUSIC AND LYRICS BY ADAM GUETTEL
PRODUCED BY ARRANGEMENT WITH TURNER ENTERTAINMENT CO.
OWNER OF THE ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE "LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA"
BASED ON THE NOVEL BY ELIZABETH SPENCER
ORIGINAL BROADWAY PRODUCTION BY LINCOLN CENTER THEATER, NEW YORK CITY, 2005
THE WORLD PREMIERE OF THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA WAS PRODUCED BY THE INTIMAN THEATRE
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
OPENING NIGHT: JUNE 14, 2003
BARTLETT SHER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR LAURA PENN, MANAGING DIRECTOR
AND THE GOODMAN THEATRE, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
OPENING NIGHT: JANUARY 20, 2004
ROBERT FALLS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR ROCHE SCHULFER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
DEVELOPED WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE SUNDANCE INSTITUTE THEATRE LABORATORY
THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA IS PRESENTED BY ARRANGEMENT WITH CONCORD THEATRICALS. WWW.CONCORDTHEATRICALS.COM
CAST
Margaret Johnson......Brittany Jeffery
Clara Johnson......Teaira Burge
Fabrizio Naccarelli......Mick Jutila
Signor Naccarelli......David Govertsen
Signora Naccarelli......Mary Govertsen
Franca Naccarelli......Katherine Petersen
Giuseppe Naccarelli......Jonathan Wilson
Roy Johnson......Wm. Bullion
Timothy McGowan......Priest/Various/Fabrizio Cover
Grace Reberg......Tour Guide/Various/Clara Cover

Music Direction and Accompaniment by
Sarah Jenks

Directed by
Aaron Hunt

Brent Morden
Audio & Video Design and Sound Effects

Denise Knowlton
Program

Costumes Courtesy of
Broadway Costumes, Inc.
1100 W. Cermak Rd.
Chicago, IL 60608
Broadwaycostumes.com

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The Chicago Community Foundation for the Arts Work Fund
COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund RFP

Chicago Opera Collective

And

Anne Slovin
Why is an opera company programming an American musical, and if there is a good reason (or two), why *The Light In The Piazza*, and why now?

At Transgressive Theatre-Opera, the word “theatre” in the company’s name isn’t an accident. We are proponents of a new lyric theatre that blends what is more commonly classified as the “musical” with what is considered to be “opera,” and the difference may be how the funds to mount the piece and put it together are collected and what group is most likely to purchase tickets for a particular story or style than anything else. We have always included works that present as “opera” that include dialogue, we pepper our seasons with operetta, and our casting always includes artists that cross-over between these supposed disparate forms, and I use “disparate” in particular because one of the meanings of the word is “unequal.” It is said that “pride goeth before the fall,” and if both the opera and the American musical are in trouble for audiences and funds these days, they best become friends, since they already share DNA.

This particular piece of lyric theatre began its developmental journey in Seattle in 2003, landed at The Goodman Theatre in Chicago in 2004, and finally opened in New York City at Lincoln Center in 2005, so if you consider the grand trajectory, this is still a very new piece. A definite departure from the shows that have played Broadway in the last twenty years, composer Adam Guettel uses a compositional palate that has been called “neoromantic,” as in a return to a higher emotional expression, or the “emotional saturation” that was the standard in 19th Century musical romanticism. Clearly classical in construction in terms of rhythmic and harmonic complexity, the soaring vocal lines over the piano-heavy score require solid vocal training to answer their required musicality, and indeed the two leading ladies of the original New York production were trained as opera singers and continue to visit both sister-genres. If we need further bolstering for our decision to include this in our season from a musical perspective, the show appeared at Lyric Opera of Chicago in 2019.

If that is the “How come?” then here is the “Why now?”: We have named our 2020/2021 season, “A Woman’s Agency,” and this story fits our examination like a glove. American writer Elizabeth Spencer, who is insufficiently celebrated today and was notably neglected by critics because she was a “Southern woman writer,” published nine novels, seven collections of short stories, a memoir, and a play. In 1953 she won a Guggenheim Fellowship and went to live and write in Italy. Her 1960 book of stories titled *The Light In The Piazza and Other Italian Tales* contained the delicate novella that inspired both a movie and this musical. Terry Roberts (2000) has said this of Spencer’s literary output: “Spencer’s themes relate to tension between the individual and the group, and deal with how family or community ties support but also bind the individual’s identity. She writes about this as it concerns the inner lives of her female characters, many of whom struggle to establish a fruitful life independent of society’s narrow restrictions.”

*The Light In The Piazza* is a woman’s story through and through, and Spencer leads us into the lives of four very different women who are negotiating their relationships to men, society, and themselves following World War II. When a wealthy American wife and her daughter travel to Florence for a vacation, and the beautiful daughter who is not quite “as she seems” falls in love with a handsome, young Italian man, the doors to both households are thrown open to us. We learn that the American mother is trapped in a loveless marriage, and her daughter is struggling for the right to make her own decisions despite an invisible handicap, The Italian parents have their secrets from each other, with the Italian mother quietly running the family through a brilliantly constructed, passive-aggressive paradigm, and the young hero’s brother and his wife, still childless after what is considered an inappropriate length of time in a Italian, Catholic family, blame each other and act out in the disproportionate ways that are available to them.

I would love to report that things are so very different now. I’d love to, but it would be a lie, another lie in a time in history replete with falsehoods that are tearing us apart. How can we save ourselves? Only by examining our history and steadfastly refusing to repeat it.

Aaron Hunt
1/31/2021
Act I
American Margaret Johnson and her daughter Clara are vacationing in Florence, and Margaret shares her memories of honeymooning there. A breeze passes under Clara's hat and sends it floating across the piazza. It is caught and returned to her by Fabrizio Naccarelli, a young Italian. The connection between the two is immediate and profound. In the coming days, Fabrizio pursues Clara, even securing the aid of his father in hopes of assuaging Margaret's thinly veiled hostility. Margaret continues to allude to a mystery around Clara, and how inappropriate a romance might be for someone in her situation. The Johnsons are invited to tea at the home of the Naccarellis, and Franca, who is married to Fabrizio's brother Giuseppe, warns Clara that men are not to be trusted. Margaret has a phone conversation with her husband Roy, who has remained behind in the States, and Roy warns against the unnamed consequences of any relationship in which Clara might become involved. The feelings of the young couple continue to grow, and when Clara attempts to meet Fabrizio outside their hotel at night but instead becomes lost and disoriented, Fabrizio climbs into the hotel room window to find out if Clara has found another love. Despite his protestations, Clara demands that he stay, and insists that he propose to her. Upon returning to the hotel room, Margaret finds them in bed together.

Act II
Margaret whisks Clara off to Rome, hoping to convince her that she must concede the marriage to Fabrizio, but in a moment of self-realization, Clara delivers a manifesto on the elusive, yet imperative quality of love that Margaret cannot disallow. The two go back to Florence, and Margaret begins to arrange for the wedding. While Clara is filling out her marriage application, Fabrizio's father sees that Clara is six years older than his son, much older than he feels is appropriate, and he ushers her family out of the wedding rehearsal. Back at the hotel, Margaret finally reveals the nature of Clara's handicap, but makes a plan to reconnect with Signor Naccarelli in hopes that he will change his mind about the wedding. They talk of young love together, remembering how it was for each of them, and he gives in. Margaret calls Roy to tell him that she is allowing the wedding, even though she realizes that she will be basing the rest of her future solely on her inheritance. Roy forbids the marriage, but Margaret insists that, just because Clara isn’t “normal,” that doesn’t mean that she must be alone and unloved. Clara overhears her and rushes off to tell Fabrizio that something is wrong with her, something that she can’t see so she can’t fix it, and that he must not marry her.
Meet the cast

Margaret Johnson - Brittany Jeffery
Clara Johnson - Teaira Burge
Fabrizio Naccarelli - Mick Jutila
Signor Naccarelli - David Govertsen
Signora Naccarelli - Mary Govertsen
Franca Naccarelli - Katherine Petersen
Giuseppe Naccarelli - Jonathan Wilson
The Priest/Fabrizio Cover - Timothy McGowan
Roy Johnson - Wm. Bullion
Clara Cover - Grace Reberg

Click on the cast member’s picture to read their bio.
ACT 1

OVERTURE

SCENE 1: Piazza della Signoria – Florence, Summer, 1953
   Statues and Stories ................................................. Margaret, Clara and the Company

SCENE 2: The Uffizi
   The Beauty is .......................................................... Clara

SCENE 3: The Naccarelli Shop
   Il Mondo Era Vuoto.................................................. Fabrizio
   American Dancing............................................... Instrumental

SCENE 4: The Duomo

SCENE 5: Piazzale Michelangelo
   Passeggiata.............................................................. Fabrizio

SCENE 6: The Naccarelli Home
   The Joy you Feel ..................................................... Franca

SCENE 7: Margaret and Clara’s Hotel Room
   Dividing Day ............................................................. Margaret

SCENE 8: On the Street
   Hysteria/Lullaby ...................................................... Clara and Margaret

SCENE 9: The Hotel Room
   Say it Somehow ...................................................... Clara and Fabrizio

INTERMISSION
We will now take a 10-MINUTE intermission

As you are aware, this is a difficult time for performing artists. Any small donation you might send their way would be much appreciated. The links to their payment accounts are below.

~THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE~
ACT 2

ENTR'ACTE

SCENE 1: Rome, The Ruins

SCENE 2: The Naccarelli Home
   AIUTAMI…………………………………………………………………………………………….The Naccarelli Family

SCENE 3: Rome, The Ruins
   The Light in the Piazza ……………………………………………………………..Clara

SCENE 4: Florence

SCENE 5: The Naccarelli Home
   Octet  ..............................................................Clara, Priest, Senior and Seniora Naccarelli, Franca, Guiseppe, Fabrizio, Margaret
   Clara’s Tirade  ......................................................Clara

SCENE 6: The Church --The Wedding Rehearsal
   The Beauty is (Reprise) .............................................Margaret

SCENE 7: The Naccarelli Shop

SCENE 8: Florentine Street
   Let’s Walk ........................................................Margaret and Signor Naccarelli

SCENE 9: The Hotel Room

SCENE 10: The Empty Streets of Florence at Dawn
   Clara’s Interlude......................................................Clara

SCENE 11: Outside the Church
   Love to Me..........................................................Fabrizio
   Fable .................................................................Margaret
Aaron Hunt
Producing Artistic Director

Sarah Jenks
Music Director
Piano and Flute

Brent Morden
Audio & Video Design
and Sound Effects
TT-O's OPERA-tives
Aaron Hunt - Producing Artistic Director
Sarah Jenks - Resident Musical Director
Paul Knappenberger - Resident Lighting & Sound Designer
Timothy McGowan – Social Media Marketing Manager
Denise Knowlton and Paul W. Thompson - Artistic Associates
Board Members
Aaron Hunt
John D. Burton
Kelli Strickland
Norm Cratty

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Transgressivetheatreopera.org
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Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter

UPCOMING:
Streamed into your living room
Le Nozze di Figaro
(The Mozart for Millennials Adaptation)
April 22-25

COMING RIGHT UP AWAY
Hope Heard 'Round the World
Echoes of Healing from Every Continent
March 26-28
Mezzo Soprano, Brittany Jeffery, is a Chicago based performing artist. Directly after relocating to Chicago in 2017 Brittany made her debut as Dorabella in Transgressive Theatre-Opera’s Cosi Fan Tutte and has continued as a freelance performer ever since. Brittany holds a Masters Degree in Opera Performance from Wichita State University (2016) and Bachelors Degrees in Music Education and Performance from Kansas Wesleyan University (2013). Brittany has studied with world-renowned bass-baritone Alan Held, routinely coached with operatic bass legend, Samuel Ramey, and currently studies with distinguished pedagogue and author, W. Stephen Smith.

Among Brittany’s most impressive accomplishments is the raging coloratura role of Bradamante in Handel’s Alcina, which she first performed with Chicago Vocal Arts Consortium in 2019. Also in 2019, she performed a leading role in the premiere performance of The Harbingers; by American Prize winning composer, Rossa Crean. Much of Brittany’s experience includes performances of 20th and 21st century works. Last March, Brittany was to make her debut with Thompson Street Opera Company with a leading role in Trifles by John Bilotta, but necessary precautions due to Covid19 led to cancellation just two weeks out from production.

Some more of Brittany’s full and partial operatic roles include Octavian from Der Rosenkavalier by Richard Strauss, Hänsel in Hänsel und Gretel, Romeo from Bellini’s Il Capuleti ei Montecchi, and several Mozart roles, including Cherubino in Le Nozze di Figaro, Third Lady in Die Zauberflöte, Dorabella in Cosi fan Tutte, both Sesto and Annio from La Clemenza di Tito, and Isolier from Le comte Ory- Many of which were on the Transgressive Theatre-Opera stage! Brittany feels equally at home with oratorio, concert works, and musical theatre, and she maintains a deep appreciation for the art song repertoire.

Brittany’s first experience with the role of Margaret Johnson in Guettel’s The Light in the Piazza was during graduate school, under the direction of Music Theatre Wichita’s, Wayne Bryan. She is elated at the opportunity to revive this role virtually with Transgressive Theatre-Opera and this astounding cast and production team!

Roles at Transgressive Theatre-Opera
LLS/Le Nozze di Figaro Act II, Cherubino, 2019
The Consul, Secretary (Cover), 2019
Count Ory, Isolier, 2019
Cosi Fan Tutte, Dorabella, 2018
Masque At Kenilworth, Quartet Alto Soloist/The Lost Chord, 2018
Trial By Jury, Ensemble, 2018
Teaira Burge is a Chicago based crossover performer who has developed a reputation as a versatile performing artist throughout opera, musical theater, and operetta productions. Since moving to Chicago in 2013, Teaira has had the pleasure of performing with several local companies, including Music Theater Works, New Moon Opera, The Floating Opera Company, Petite Opera Productions, The Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company of Chicago, and Chicago Folks Operetta. Teaira obtained her Master of Music degree from the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University and is a student of Rebecca Schorsch. Teaira also works as a teaching artist at Bubbles Academy, where she teaches Preschool Preparation, Creative Movement, Bubble Ballet, and Art + Music to students ages 1-5 years old. When she is not singing, dancing, or playing the ukulele for toddlers, Teaira is most likely cheering with PomSquad Fitness, attending bluegrass concerts, saving pictures of poodles to her phone, or eating her weight in salted caramel ice cream. teairaburge.com

Roles at Transgressive Theatre-Opera
Beauty, Beauty’s Truth, 2020
Count Ory, Jacqueline, 2019
Letters of Love and Subterfuge, Various, 2019
Cosi Fan Tutte, Despina, 2018
Masque At Kenilworth, Quartet/Jessica/Dancer, 2018
Trial By Jury, Ensemble, 2018
Cox and Box, Cox, 2017
The Best of the Worst, Various, 2017
Mick Jutila is excited to be making his Transgressive Theatre - Opera debut! Mick is currently studying to receive his MM in Vocal Performance in Music Theatre at New York University along with an advanced degree in Vocal Pedagogy and will graduate in the spring. Mick has performed for a variety of theatres and venues, some notable roles include Tommy in Brigadoon, Willis Parkham in An Embarrassing Position, Basilio in Le Nozze di Figaro, and ensemble roles in shows such as Wonderland, The Producers, and Les Misérables. Mick is also a professional musician, having played lead guitar for a production of Shakespeare in Love, and banjo for Cedar Point’s bluegrass band. While not performing, Mick likes to spend his time rock climbing, hiking, watching Netflix, or playing dungeons and dragons with his friends.
Chicago native David Govertsen has been active as a professional singer for nearly twenty years, portraying a wide variety of opera’s low-voiced heroes, villains, and buffoons. Mr. Govertsen has appeared as a soloist with numerous local and regional opera companies, including Lyric Opera of Chicago, Santa Fe Opera, Tulsa Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, and the Haymarket Opera Company. He is a member of the vocal chamber quartet Fourth Coast Ensemble, performing art song in Chicago and throughout the Midwest.

As a concert soloist Mr. Govertsen has performed with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Madison Symphony Orchestra, Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Grant Park Orchestra, Santa Fe Symphony and Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival among many others. He made his Carnegie Hall debut in 2011 as the Herald in Otello with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Riccardo Muti. He is an alumnus of the Ryan Opera Center and the Santa Fe Opera and Central City Opera apprentice programs and holds degrees from Northwestern University, Northern Illinois University and the College of DuPage. Mr. Govertsen is currently on faculty at North Park University, Valparaiso University, Lewis University and the College of DuPage.

Roles at Transgressive Theatre-Opera
Time in Beauty’s Truth, 2020
A Few Words About Chekov, Anton Chekov, 2016
The Telephone, Ben, 2015
Hello Out There, A Young Man, 2015
Mary is delighted to return to Transgressive Theater-Opera, having sung Fiordiligi/Cosi fan tutte, Olga Knipper/A Few Words About Chekov in TT-O’s production of A Chekhov Trio, and Lucy/The Telephone and A Girl/Hello Out There during the company’s inaugural performances. As a young professional singer in Chicago, Mary has performed with Third Eye Theatre Ensemble, Windy City Opera, Chamber Opera Chicago, Verismo Opera, Main Street Opera, OperaModa, Opera for the Young, the DuPage Symphony and Chorale, the Music Institute of Chicago, Katydid Opera, and Chicago Symphony Chorus. She has been seen as Lucia/Lucia di Lammermoor; Donna Anna/Don Giovanni; Fiordiligi/Cosi fan tutte; Rosalinde/Die Fledermaus; Adele/Le Comte Ory; Heroines/Les Contes d’Hoffmann; First Lady/The Magic Flute; Mimi and Musetta/La bohème, Madame Lidoine/The Dialogues of the Carmelites; and Mlle. Silberklang/Der Schauspieldirektor, among others. She has been an apprentice at Opera New Jersey, where she covered the role of Clorinda/La Cenerentola and at Cedar Rapids Opera, as Fiordiligi/Cosi fan tutte. This season Mary performed Alice Ford/Falstaff with Main Street Opera, and Almera/Dark Sisters with Third Eye Theater Ensemble. She lives in Chicago with her husband, bass-baritone David Govertsen and their son, Ben.

Roles at Transressive Theatre-Opera
Deceit in Beauty’s Truth, 2020
Count Ory, Countess Adele, 2019
Letters of Love & Subterfuge/Le Nozze di Figaro Act II Consul, Anna Gomez, 2019
Cosi Fan Tutte, Fiordiligi, 2018
A Few Words About Chekov, Olga Knipper, 2016
The Telephone, Lucy, 2015
Hello Out There, A Girl (Emily), 2015
Katherine Petersen is an engaging soprano specializing in the performance of 21st Century repertoire for voice/saxophone and Russian Art Song. Her recent collaborations with Decho Saxophone Ensemble (https://www.dechoensemble.com/new-page) include performances at the International Saxophone Symposium (2020) and an ensemble residency at the Lionel Hampton School of Music at the University of Idaho (2020). Her doctoral dissertation “Russian Repertoire: Developmental Perspectives” investigates the paucity of Russian Song Repertoire in the American voice studio and recital hall.

Based in Chicago, Katherine performs regularly with Folks Operetta, the Gilbert and Sullivan Opera Company, Chicago Opera Theater, and Transgressive Theatre-Opera. She makes frequent concert appearances with Folks Operetta in their recital series devoted to showcasing the music silenced by the Third Reich; concert titles include Kochen, Singen, und Essen; Operetta in Exile; Goodbye Berlin, Aloha Hawaii; Forbidden Opera. Her recent roles include Bessie Throckmorton in Merrie England, Brigitta in Iolanta, Contessa in Marriage of Figaro, Counsel to the Plaintiff/Trial by Jury, Lady of the Lake/Masque at Kenilworth, and Sylva Varescu in Csardas Princess. Previous regional performances include appearances with Opera Columbus, Bay View Music Festival, and the Russian Opera Workshop. Highlights of previous roles include Musetta in La bohème, Valencienne in The Merry Widow, Francesca in Rachmaninoff’s Francesca di Rimini, and Micaëla in Carmen. Concert repertoire highlights include soprano soloist in Dona Nobis Pacem by Ralph Vaughan Williams, Barber’s Knoxville: Summer 1915, Villa-Lobos’s Bachianas brasileiras No.5, and Handel’s Messiah.

Roles at Transgressive Theatre-Opera
Masque At Kenilworth, Soprano Soloist Lady of the Lake, 2018
Trial By Jury, Counsel for The Plaintiff, 2018
Baritone Jonathan Wilson is delighted to be performing again with Transgressive Theatre-Opera after several appearances in previous seasons and most recently singing the role of Counsel in their charming production of Beauty's Truth earlier this year. Praised by the Chicago Classical Review as a "superb actor" with a "resounding and luxurious" voice, Jonathan is an enthusiast of contemporary opera with recent favorite roles including Robert Dziekański in I will fly like a bird (Plant, Wainwright), The Poet in When Adonis Calls (Borzoni, de los Santos, Dillard), and Hannah-Before in As One (Kaminsky, Campbell, Reed).

With a reputation for sensitively straddling musical styles, Jonathan also recently performed as the titular character in Tom Waits’ and Kathleen Brennan’s adaptation of Woyzeck with Chicago Fringe Opera and has premiered many roles for new chamber operas and musical theater productions around the Chicago area. Jonathan is also a frequent singer with the Chicago Symphony Chorus, Grant Park Chorus, and Lyric Opera Chorus.

Outside of performing, Jonathan is passionate about math and science and holds degrees from the University of Illinois and University of Michigan in physics, mathematics, and electromagnetics. He has worked in the cellular telecommunications industry as a radio frequency electrical engineer and in Chicago-area colleges as a lecturer of physics, astronomy, and Earth science. He greatly admires the creative overlap between the scientific and musical arts in their explorations of the intricacy, complexity, and beauty of the world.

Roles at Transgressive Theatre-Opera
Counsel, Beauty’s Truth 2020
Masque At Kenilworth, Quartet Bass Soloist, 2018
Cosi Fan Tutte, Gugliemo, 2018
The Best of the Worst, Various, 2017
The Seduction of A Lady, Peter Semyonych, 2016
Timothy McGowan is excited to join Transgressive Theatre-Opera as both the Priest and Fabrizio cover in Adam Guettel’s The Light in The Piazza. McGowan is a versatile performer who enjoys singing traditional opera, sacred music, contemporary works and American Musical Theatre. He has performed with the Baltimore Choral Arts Society, the Ohio Light Opera, the Boston University Opera Institute, Odyssey Opera, The Palace Theatre (NH) and Seagle Music Colony among other companies. Enthusiastic about 21st century works, Timothy has been in several staged and concertized premieres including Joshua, an oratorio by Christopher LaRosa, Roscoe by Evan Mack and Rodman in North Korea by Sarah Hutchings. His favorite stage roles include the title role in Britten’s Albert Herring, and the Unnamed Tenor in Glass’s Hydrogen Jukebox. He was most recently seen as a soloist in selections from Messiah, tenor soloist in Montiverdi’s Vespers, Prince Karl in the North American Premiere of The Devil’s Rider by Emmerich Kalaman, William Fayre in Ivor Novello’s Perchance to Dream, and Peter in Babes in Arm by Rogers and Hart. An East Coast transplant, Timothy lives in Champaign with his fiance and their dog.
Wm. Bullion has been on the Chicago storefront theater scene his entire adult life. Director, actor, writer, Ensemble Member of the Factory Theater and Artistic Director of The Conspirators, where he recently appeared as Mr. Potter in “Ayn Rand’s ‘It's a Wonderful Life’ as Performed by The Conspirators Under the Direction of Debbie Wasserman Schultz,” or “Rand/Schultz”, which he also directed. If you love a little politics with your theater, Billy recommends learning more about The Conspirators at www.conspirewithus.org.

Roles at Transgressive Theatre-Opera
The Clinic, Officer JD Ellis, 2020
In May of this year, Grace Reberg, mezzo-soprano, earned a B.M. in Vocal Performance from Michigan State University under the tutelage of Jane Bunnell. Most recently she prepared the roles of Sesto in Mozart’s La Clemenza di Tito with MSU Opera Theatre, Irene Molloy in Hello, Dolly! with Seagle Music Colony, and was scheduled to sing the Alto Solo in Beethoven’s Mass in C Major with the MSU Symphony Orchestra, before the COVID-19 pandemic. She can also be seen featured in the Janiec Opera Company’s production of ZOOM Speed Dating Tonight!.

As a trained dancer with over 12 years of experience, Grace acted as Dance Captain in Romeo et Juliette with the Janiec Opera Company in 2019, in addition to covering the role of Stephano. She also served as Dance Captain in the 2019 production of Orpheus in the Underworld with the MSU Opera Theatre, in which she choreographed all dance sequences and sang the role of Venus.

Other notable stage credits include La Ciesca in Gianni Schicchi with the MSU Opera Theatre (2019), Prince Orlofsky (cvr) with the Janiec Opera Company (2019), and Cinderella in Cinderella with Opera in the Ozarks (2018).
Sarah Jenks holds a Bachelor of Arts in Piano from Ohio Northern University, Masters of Music in Vocal Coaching and Accompanying from University of Illinois, and a Professional Diploma in Opera from Roosevelt University’s (CCPA). She currently serves on staff as a vocal coach and accompanist for CCPA and has been a music director for several companies in the Chicagoland area, including Petite Opera, Chicago Opera Initiative, /kor/ Productions, and Cult Camp Productions. Past young artist programs include Chicago Opera Theater and Sugar Creek Symphony & Song. She is also the Director of Music at Immanuel United Church of Christ in Evergreen Park and an accompanist for the Lyric Unlimited Outreach Program.

Brent A. Morden is a New York-based composer, arranger, conductor, singer, and educator. Brent’s career has seen him conduct his award-winning band works in venues including Carnegie Hall, write music & lyrics for two comedy musicals produced at Columbia University, and assist acclaimed music director Rob Fisher. Nowadays Brent works as the Program Manager for Every Voice Choirs, a NYC-based nonprofit children’s choir program. Having produced audio for multiple virtual concerts since March 2020, Brent is excited to bring his expertise to Transgressive Theatre-Opera this season. Brent graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Columbia University in 2019 and enjoys running in the park.
Aaron Hunt’s career has encompassed opera, oratorio, operetta, musical theatre, theatre, and ballet. He made his NYC debut in Theatre Ten Ten’s *HMS Pinafore*, and appeared extensively in regional and national touring productions. In the greater Chicago-area, he has been seen with such companies as Drury Lane, Oakbrook Theatre, First Folio Theatre, Light Opera Works, L’Opera Piccola, and The Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Company. At Michigan Opera Theatre, Aaron sang roles in mainstage, touring, and outreach productions, including premieres of new works. Mr. Hunt directed TT-O’s 2015 inaugural production of a double-bill of Menotti’s *The Telephone* and Beeson’s *Hello Out There*, as well as A Chekhov Trio: Dominick Argento’s *The Boor* & *A Few Words about Chekhov*, Richard Wargo’s *The Seduction of a Lady, Cox and Box, Cosi Fan Tutte, Masque At Kenilworth, Trial By Jury*, and *The Consul*. Other directorial projects include Main Street Opera’s *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and his own child-centric adaptation of *The Magic Flute* for Verismo Opera. His professional affiliations include membership in ACTA, MCANA, AEA and AGMA. Aaron is a freelance opera, musical theatre, and theatre reviewer, with feature articles appearing in NewCity, Windy City Times, Dramatics Magazine, Daddy Magazine, and HowlRound.