

Loyola University New Orleans
School of Music and Theatre Arts
Presents

Loyola Opera Theatre:
Suor Angelica
Gianni Schicchi

Music by

Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)

Libretto by

Giovacchino Forzano (1884-1970)

with

Lara Lignitz, *Suor Angelica* Stage Director
Irina Kyriakidou, *Gianni Schicchi* Stage Director
Carol Rausch, Music Director
Sofia Riggio, Conductor



April 22, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. &
April 24, 2022 at 3 p.m.
Louis J. Roussel Performance Hall

Suor Angelica and Gianni Schicchi

Music by Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)

Libretto by Giovacchino Forzano (1884-1970)

World premiere: Metropolitan Opera, New York City on December 14, 1918

Suor Angelica Cast

Friday, April 22

Sunday, April 24

Sister Angelica		
The Principessa	Reign Zurri	Reign Zurri
Sister Genovieffa	Luretta Bybee	Luretta Bybee
The Monitor	Kieva Banks	Jayne Edwards
Mistress of the Novices	Riley Vagis	Riley Vagis
The Abbess	Emily Cotten	Emily Cotten
Sister Dolcina	Margaret Branyon-Goodman	Margaret Branyon-Goodman
The Nursing Sister	Taylor Tumulty	Taylor Tumulty
Sister Osmina	Julia Ernst	Julia Ernst
1st Cercatrice	Taylor Witherspoon	Rachel Davidson
2nd Cercatrice	Veronica Samiec	Veronica Samiec
A Novice	Rachel Davidson	Taylor Witherspoon
1st Lay-Sister	Marina Kotscho	Marina Kotscho
2nd Lay-Sister	Elizabeth Peters	Elizabeth Peters
Sister Lucilla	KC Nichoalds	KC Nichoalds
Sister Dispensiera	Charlotte Butler	Charlotte Butler
Miracle Child	Cami Moses	Cami Moses
	Rad Jennings	Rad Jennings

Covers:

Lara Lignitz - Sister Angelica

Marina Kotscho - Sister Genovieffa/Sister Dolcina

Julia Ernst- The Monitor/Mistress of the Novices/The Abbess

Jane Edwards - A Novice

Synopsis: Suor Angelica

A convent in Italy in the 1950's

The opera opens with scenes showing various aspects of convent life - the sisters singing hymns, the Monitor rebuking those who are late to chapel, and everyone gathering for recreation in the courtyard. The Mistress of the Novices explains that this is the first of three evenings that occur each year, when the setting sun turns the water in the fountain a golden color. The event causes the sisters to remember Bianca Rosa, who has died. The nuns also discuss their desires, all of which the Monitor believes are wrong. But Sister Genovieffa confesses that she wishes to see lambs again, having been a shepherdess in a former life. And Sister Dolcina wishes for something good to eat! Sister Angelica claims to have no desires, but the nuns gossip that her true wish is to hear from her noble, wealthy family. Rumors are that she was sent to the convent as punishment. The Nursing Sister asks Angelica for a wasp-bite remedy to help an afflicted nun. The two Cercatrici bring supplies and the news that a grand coach is waiting outside. The Abbess announces Angelica's aunt - the Principessa. This severe personality explains that Angelica's younger sister is to be married and asks Angelica to sign over her inheritance to cover wedding costs. Angelica replies that she has repented for her sin, but cannot forget the memory of her illegitimate son, taken from her seven years ago. Initially reticent, the Principessa explains that the boy died of fever. Angelica, devastated, signs the document and collapses as her aunt leaves. Then she is seized by a heavenly vision - she believes her son is calling to her to meet him in paradise. She concocts a poison and drinks it, but then realizes that she has committed a mortal sin and has damned herself to eternal separation from the boy. She begs the Virgin Mary for mercy, and, as she dies, a miracle occurs - the Virgin appears, along with Angelica's son.

20-Minute Intermission

Gianni Schicchi Cast

Friday, April 22

Sunday, April 24

Gianni Schicchi

Lauretta

Doctor Spinelloccio

Amantio di Nicolao

Pinellino

Guccio

Buoso Donati's Relatives:

Rinuccio

Zita

Simone

Nella

Gherardo

Gherardino

La Ciesca

Marco

Betto

Spencer Reichman

Allison Waguespack

Gregor Rankine

Nicholas Smith

Gregor Rankine

Jacob Huffty

Jeremiah Tyson

Margaret Branyon-Goodman

Nathaniel Richard

Taylor J. White

Grayson Stephens

Rad Jennings

Riley Vagis

Kai Buie

B Schaubhut

Spencer Reichman

Nora Cullinan

Gregor Rankine

Nicholas Smith

Gregor Rankine

Nathaniel Richard

Jeremiah Tyson

Margaret Branyon-Goodman

Jacob Jenkins

Nicole Bittner

Justin Eifert

Rad Jennings

Emily Cotten

Garrin Mesa

Jacob Huffty

Covers:

Nathaniel Richard - Doctor Spinelloccio/Amantio di Nicoalo

Kai Buie - Guccio

Synopsis: Gianni Schicchi

Florence in the 1950's

After the death of Buoso Donati, his relatives pretend to mourn, but are really more interested in the contents of his will. Betto mentions a rumor that everything has been left to a monastery - a disturbing thought which precipitates a frantic search for the will. The document is found by Rinuccio, who asks his aunt Zita if he can marry Lauretta, daughter of Gianni Schicchi, a newcomer to the city. She replies that he can marry whom he pleases if Buoso has left them rich. Rinuccio happily sends little Gherardino off to fetch Lauretta and Schicchi. The relatives' worst fears are confirmed: Buoso has indeed left his inheritance to the friars. Rinuccio suggests that only Schicchi can get them out of this predicament and defends the man's humble origins, which now threaten his marriage to Lauretta. When Schicchi arrives, Rinuccio begs him for help, but Zita rudely tells him to leave. Only a plea from Lauretta convinces Gianni to help the conniving Donatis. After twice looking over the will and expressing that nothing can be done, he hatches a plan. The body of the deceased is removed from the room, and Schicchi pretends to be Buoso during a visit from Doctor Spinelloccio. Having established himself as "alive," Schicchi calls for a notary to dictate a new will. The relatives are delighted, offering personal bribes to obtain the choicest possessions. In a beautiful trio, the women help Gianni put on Buoso's nightclothes. Before entering the bed, Schicchi warns the group of the gruesome punishment that awaits those found guilty of corroborating in falsification of a will - the loss of a hand! When the lawyer arrives, Gianni allocates to all present the minor parts of the inheritance with mock benevolence, but turns over the prime holdings - the mule, the house, and the mills at Signa - to none other than himself! The Donatis, fearful of losing their hands, are powerless to protest. They leave the house in a frenzy of looting as Schicchi chases them out. He can now provide a respectable dowry for Lauretta and Rinuccio, who sing an ecstatic love duet. Schicchi addresses the audience, asking them to forgive his shenanigans (even if Dante will not) in light of "extenuating circumstances."

Artist Profiles

Kieva Banks is a soprano from New Orleans. She has been in several opera productions at her high school, the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts (NOCCA). She has sung the roles of Mrs. Nolan from *The Medium*, Apollo from *Semele*, the title role from *Alcina*, Acis from *Acis and Galatea*, Miss Pinkerton from *The Old Maid and the Thief*, Rosalinde from *Die Fledermaus*, Elisetta from *Il matrimonio segreto*, and First Witch from *Dido and Aeneas*. She was also in the Ursuline Academy choir and NOCCA vocal program choir while attending both schools. She participated in the Donald W. Wood, Sr. Vocal Competition and the National Association of Teachers of Singing (N.A.T.S.) Competition and placed 3rd for both in her junior year of high school. She has also participated in the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Annual Talent Hunt Competition which took place at Dillard University, and received first place her senior year of high school. And in the fall semester of 2021, she placed second in the N.A.T.S. competition as a sophomore.

Nicole Bittner, soprano, is a freshman Vocal Performance major from Haubstadt, IN, in the studio of Dr. Tyler Smith. Nicole is excited to make her Loyola Opera Theatre debut as Nella in *Gianni Schicchi*. Although this is her first full opera, she has been in numerous musical theater productions in Indiana and was also heard this past November in Loyola's scenes program. She recently won 1st place in the freshman women's division for the Louisiana National Association of Teachers of Singing (N.A.T.S.) competition in March 2022. Nicole looks forward to sharing Loyola's production of *Gianni Schicchi* with the audience this weekend, and she hopes everyone enjoys it as much as she enjoys being a part of it.

Caroline Boudreaux, a New Orleans native, is a senior Vocal Performance major. While this is not Caroline's first production with Loyola Opera Theatre, this is her first time serving as stage manager. Caroline was previously seen in Kurt Weill's *Street Scene* (Mae Jones), Maurice Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilèges* (La tasse chinoise) and *Dido and Aeneas* (cover for the Sorceress). She has appeared in scenes as Tytania from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and as Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*. Caroline is thrilled to be part of the production team for two wonderful Puccini operas this weekend!

Margaret Branyon-Goodman, mezzo-soprano, is a third year graduate student from Mountain View, CA, pursuing her master's degree in Vocal Performance in the studio of Luretta Bybee. She has been singing and performing since she was a child. During her junior and senior years of high school, Margaret sang with the Los Altos High School Main Street Singers, an international touring choir, traveling to a total of eight different countries. She attended Baylor University, earning a 2018 Bachelor of Music Degree in Vocal Performance. Margaret recently joined the New Orleans Opera Chorus, and just performed in *La bohème* earlier this month. She looks forward to performing new roles in both *Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi*, as this is her second time performing in these operas.

Kai Buie, baritone, is a junior Vocal Performance major in the studio of Dreux Montegut. Previously seen as L'horloge comtoise in Loyola's production of *L'enfant et les sortilèges*, Kai performed several shows throughout his high school years with the Performing Arts Academy, led by Arianna Cassar-Cruice and Annelise Cassar-Tedesco. After the challenges of these past two years, he is excited to return to the stage to make music again!

Charlotte Butler, a Northshore native, is a junior Vocal Performance Major in the studio of Irimi Kyriakidou. During high school she studied at the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts (NOCCA), and before that was a member of the children's chorus for New Orleans Opera. She is excited to be in her first full-length opera in Roussel Hall this weekend!

Luretta Bybee has proven to be a mezzo-soprano of remarkable range and versatility in her performances throughout the world and has now become in demand as a dynamic and comedic singing actress. Continuing her forays into the realm of musical theater, Ms. Bybee has portrayed roles such as Madame Armfeldt in *A Little Night Music* with the Pine Mountain Music Festival, Little Buttercup in *H.M.S. Pinafore* and her role début as Golde in *Fiddler on the Roof* at Shreveport Opera, Ruth in *The Pirates of Penzance* with San Diego Opera, and Mrs. Lovett in Sondheim's beloved horror story *Sweeney Todd* at Vancouver Opera, Glimmerglass Opera, and New Orleans Opera. Recent engagements include performing "On Broadway" with the Springfield Symphony, and the roles of Madame de la Haltière in *Cendrillon* with New Orleans Opera, Mary in *Der fliegende Holländer* with Dallas Opera, Opera Carolina and Seattle Opera, and Dame Marthe in *Faust* with Arizona Opera. She also sang as a soloist in the NYFOS Sondheim Concert at Carnegie Hall and Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with the Seattle Symphony and San Antonio Symphony. She first made her Seattle Opera début as Princess Maria in Prokofiev's *War and Peace*, in a production directed by Francesca Zambello released on video, and has returned as a house favorite in multiple productions, including the company's famed Ring Cycle. International recognition came early in her career when she sang the title role in the world tour of Peter Brook's *La tragédie de Carmen*. Bizet's heroine has since figured heavily in Ms. Bybee's career success, and she recently directed the Peter Brook adaptation at Shreveport Opera. A sought-after educator, clinician, and competition judge, Professor Bybee serves on the

voice faculty at Loyola University's College of Music and Fine Arts in New Orleans. She is delighted to make her onstage debut as the Principessa surrounded by Loyola's talented students.

Emily Cotten, mezzo-soprano, from Durham, NC, is a second year graduate student pursuing a master's degree in Vocal Performance in the studio of Luretta Bybee. She completed her undergraduate studies in Vocal Performance at the University of Michigan in 2018, studying under Professor Carmen Pelton. Before matriculating to Loyola, she was a junior publicist for the Boston Symphony Orchestra and studied voice with Dr. Jennifer Sgroe. Emily performed an excerpt from Massenet's *Cendrillon* for Loyola's November 2021 scenes program and sang the role of Belinda in *Dido and Aeneas* for the April 2021 Dixon Court production.

Nora Cullinan, soprano, is a junior Vocal Performance major and Theatre Arts minor in the studio of Dreux Montegut. This is her second opera at Loyola, having sung the role of the First Witch in *Dido and Aeneas* in last spring's Dixon Court performance. Nora has called the stage her home since her first role in *The Sound of Music* when she was eight years old. In 2019 she received the Best Actress award at the New Mexico High School Musical Theatre Awards for her performance as Irene Molloy in *Hello, Dolly!* and represented her state in the national competition at the Minskoff Theatre on Broadway. When she's not endlessly practicing, Nora runs Loyola's Mixed Martial Arts Club and bakes fancy cupcakes.

Rachel Davidson, soprano, is from Dallas, TX, She graduated with her Bachelor of Music degree from Loyola in 2021 and is now working toward her master's degree in Vocal Performance in the studio of Dr. Tyler Smith. She has performed in several of the University's previous opera productions, including Massenet's *Cendrillon* (ensemble), Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilèges* (Maman), and Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* (Second Witch). In Opera Workshop scenes programs she has performed selections from Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, from Kurt Weill's *Threepenny Opera*, and from two Offenbach works - *La Périchole* and *Les contes d'Hoffmann*. In the summer of 2019, Rachel traveled to Kiefersfelden, Germany, to sing in the International Performing Arts Institute's summer program.

Jayne Grey Edwards, soprano, is a senior Vocal Performance and Piano Performance double major. She studies voice with Dr. Tyler Smith and has studied with four skilled pianists: Dr. Brian Hsu, Dr. Mi-Eun Kim, Dr. Xiting Yang, and Dr. Peter Collins. One of Jayne's favorite memories at Loyola was placing first in the Jonathan McCall Division of the 2020 NOLA Chamber Fest competition with her incredible colleague, Madeline Moore, and with the help of their chamber coach, Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg. Past credits with Loyola Opera include Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilèges*, Adamo's *Little Women*, and covering the role of Belinda in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* last spring. Jayne is grateful to finish her last semester by singing with this talented cast.

Justin Eifert, tenor, is a freshman Vocal Performance major from Houston, TX, in the studio of Luretta Bybee. Justin has been an avid performer and singer since high school and has participated in a wide variety of choral and theatrical events. Most notably, he has held named roles in Houston Grand Opera's "Art of Opera" summer program throughout high school and achieved first chair in the TPSMEA All-State Choir in 2019 and 2020. Today he is the tenor section leader for Saint Andrew's Episcopal Church Choir. Justin is making his college opera debut as Gherardo in *Gianni Schicchi*, and he is extremely excited for future opportunities at Loyola!

Julia Anne Ernst, mezzo-soprano, is a Mandeville, LA, native and a sophomore Vocal Performance major in the studio of Irini Kyriakidou. She is thrilled to be performing the role of the Nursing Sister in Loyola's production of *Suor Angelica*. Julia recently won first place in the Neapolitan Masters Competition and will travel to Italy this summer to sing concerts in Naples and on Procida Island. She also won second place in the Orpheus National Vocal Competition and first place at the Southern Regional N.A.T.S. Competition, was a finalist in the Schmidt Undergraduate Awards, and a finalist for the Opera Grand Rapids VanderLaan prize. Julia was thrilled to win the 2022 Loyola Symphony Orchestra Concerto Competition, and she is grateful for the opportunities Loyola has given her to perform and to grow as an artist.

Jacob Huffty, baritone, from Baton Rouge, LA, is a freshman Vocal Performance major in the studio of Dr. Tyler Smith. He has won first place in the Louisiana division of the National Association of Teachers of Singing (N.A.T.S.) student auditions two years in a row and now holds first place in the regional auditions. With more than ten years of choral experience, he has had the privilege of singing with the Louisiana Philharmonic in the NOVA Chorale, and with the New Orleans Opera Chorus for their February 2022 Gala Concert.

Jacob Jenkins is a bass-baritone from Houston, TX. He studied under Professor Clifton Forbis at Southern Methodist University, where he graduated with a B.M. degree in Vocal Performance. He is currently pursuing a master's degree at Loyola in the studio of Luretta Bybee. Jake was heard in scenes from two Mozart operas this past November and is excited to make his debut with Loyola Opera Theatre as Simone this weekend. He is also a member of the Saint Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church choir under the direction of Steven Blackmon.

Rad Jennings is a 6th-grader at St. Paul's Episcopal School in Lakeview. He and his family moved to New Orleans from California, where Rad sang in the San Francisco Boy's Choir. He currently studies voice and piano with Maggie Probst, and violin with the orchestra's concertmaster, Byron Tauchi. As a member of the children's chorus, Rad was the Act II boy soloist in New Orleans Opera's recent production of *La bohème*, and he is delighted to make his debut this weekend with Loyola Opera Theatre.

Marina Kotscho is a junior Vocal Performance major currently in the studio of Irimi Kyriakidou. She also previously studied with Ellen Frohnmayr. Marina comes from a prestigious family of journalists and screenwriters from São Paulo, Brazil, but decided to follow a completely different path, starting classical vocal training at the age of 15 when she emigrated to the United States. She went to a magnet school - Dr. Phillips High in Orlando, FL, - where she was accepted into the Visual and Performing Arts program for music, and graduated in 2019. Marina is honored to be given the opportunity to pursue a musical career in the U.S. and to be a part of this production of *Suor Angelica* at Loyola.

Irimi Kyriakidou continues to showcase her "sweet and virtuosic vocal talents" (*The Observer*) with opera companies and symphony orchestras internationally. Ms. Kyriakidou studied at the Maria Callas Conservatory in her native Athens under Marina Krilovici and is the winner of the second prize in the Maria Callas Grand Prix in Athens, first prize in the European Competition "Debut 2004" and the "Pro Europa" prize of the European Culture Foundation. Ms. Kyriakidou was seen as Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi*, Musetta in *La bohème* and Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* with the Greek National Opera. She went on to reprise the role of Zerlina in her debut at Venice's Teatro La Fenice in 2010 and 2011. The role of Zerlina also brought her debut at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in 2012. Under the baton of Riccardo Muti, she performed as Cherinto in *Demofonte* in her debuts with the Opéra national de Paris and the Ravenna Festival. A graduate of the International Opera Studio at Opernhaus Zürich, she performed as Pamina for the IOS production of *Die Zauberflöte*. Other roles include Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier* with the Tel Aviv Opera, Xenia in *Boris Godunov* with Théâtre du Capitole in Toulouse, and Micaela in *Carmen* with New Orleans Opera and Opera Las Palmas. She has also sung at the Royal Opera House Muscat in Oman, Smetana Hall in Prague and at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris. Since January 2019 she has been teaching voice at Loyola and now teaches all diction courses as well as assisting with Opera Workshop.

Lara Lignitz is a citizen of Cherokee Nation who directs, sings, and acts. She has held many roles on and off the stage. Her most recent work at Loyola has taken the shape of directing the Spring 2022 performance of *Suor Angelica* as well as singing in, and directing for, the Opera Scenes program last November. Additionally, she directed and co-starred in the musical *The Last Five Years* for McNeese State University in Spring 2021. Her blend of experience and a keen insight into many sides of humanity informs her work as a director, creating a unique experience for those working with her or viewing her productions. Currently Ms. Lignitz is pursuing a graduate degree in Vocal Performance at Loyola University New Orleans, where she intends to continue her work performing and directing.

Garrin Mesa, baritone, is from New Orleans, LA, and is a junior Vocal Performance major in the studio of Dr. Tyler Smith. He is delighted to be making his operatic debut as Marco in Loyola's production of *Gianni Schicchi*. Equally at home in musical theater, Garrin has recently been seen playing the roles of Kenickie in *Grease*, and Bobby in *Cabaret*, both with Rivertown Theaters for the Performing Arts. He is also a Choral Intern/Soloist at St. George's Episcopal Church and a cantor at St. Francis of Assisi. He has had such an amazing experience throughout the rehearsal process, and he hopes that the audience has fun watching this delightful comedy.

Cami Moses, a soprano from Houston, TX, is a sophomore at Loyola. She graduated from Kinder High School of the Performing and Visual Arts in 2020 with a concentration in Vocal Performance and that same year performed the role of Sofia in their production of *The Color Purple*. She joined the Houston Symphony Chorus for a performance of "Home Alone" and appeared in "Gilbert O' Sullivan" as part of the operetta *The Pirates of Penzance*. She participated in the Southwestern ACDA (SWACDA) "Celebrating Youth and Diversity in the Choral Arts" concert in Oklahoma as a member of the Women's Honor Choir directed by Sandra Snow. Later that same year Cami won first place in the Women's Division of the National Association of Teachers of Singing (N.A.T.S.) competition as a freshman, and received the same honor the following year when she competed at LSU.

KC Nichoalds, a native of New Orleans, is a senior Vocal Performance major in the studio of Dreux Montegut. She has been singing and performing since high school, where she participated in several productions of musical theater. At Loyola, KC has enjoyed being in the chorus of several operas, as well as performing in many opera scenes programs. KC is looking forward to sharing Loyola's *Suor Angelica* with the audiences in Roussel Hall!

Elizabeth Peters, soprano, is a sophomore Vocal Performance major from Metairie, LA, in the studio of Dreux Montegut. This will be her second full production with Loyola Opera Theatre. She appeared in last year's Dixon Court

performance of Mozart's *The Impresario* as Miss Silverpeal. Elizabeth was seen in the November 2021 scenes program in excerpts from *Die Zauberflöte* and *The Gondoliers*. She currently sings as a soprano section leader at Christ the King Lutheran Church under the direction of Christopher Holder. She is very excited to be featured in Loyola's production of *Suor Angelica* and is very much looking forward to more opportunities in the near future!

Gregor Rankine, bass, is a first year Vocal Performance major from New Jersey in the studio of Dreux Montegut. This is his first time singing complete operatic roles onstage, adding to his experience of portraying Dick Deadeye in a scene from *H.M.S. Pinafore* last November. Before coming to Loyola, the New Jersey Youth Chorus (NJYC) was the foundation of his musical education. Gregor joined in 2012 and remained with the organization until graduating from high school in 2021. With NJYC he was part of the children's chorus in a 2014 production of *Carmen* by the Light Opera of New Jersey. Gregor is a member of University Chorale and University Chorus at Loyola. His roles in *Gianni Schicchi* have made him excited to continue his involvement in Opera Workshop.

Carol Rausch is the Chorus Master and Music Administrator for the New Orleans Opera Association. She also serves as Chorus Master and Music Administrator for the Chautauqua Opera's summer festival season, where she heads the music staff and oversees the nationally recognized young artist program. Ms. Rausch has previously worked for Greater Miami Opera (now Florida Grand Opera), Virginia Opera, Ohio Light Opera and Opera Columbus. Her educational background includes degrees from Indiana University and The Ohio State University, plus a year of study at the Conservatoire Royal de Musique in Brussels, Belgium, as a Rotary Foundation Graduate Fellow. She has studied with pianists Jorge Bolet, Earl Wild, Richard Tetley-Kardos and Sonja Anshütz. Ms. Rausch has worked at Ohio State, Kenyon College (Ohio) and the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University (Houston). In fall 2002 she joined the faculty of Loyola University New Orleans, and in 2010 she became Director of Loyola Opera Theatre after the retirement of David Morelock. Several main stage University productions, as well as scenes programs, have won *Gambit* magazine's "Tribute to the Classical Arts" awards. Ms. Rausch has remained active as a freelance vocal coach and recital accompanist, and has frequently judged the annual Metropolitan Opera auditions.

Spencer Reichman, baritone, is a native of Austin, TX, now living in New York City. He has recently performed Monterone (*Rigoletto*) with Shreveport Opera, Dick Deadeye (*H.M.S. Pinafore*) with Pensacola Opera, Melchior (*Amahl and the Night Visitors*) with Nashville Opera, Moralès (*Carmen*) with the New Orleans Opera Association, and Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*) with Shreveport Opera and Central City Opera. Equally at home with operetta, Mr. Reichman has been invited to Harrogate, England, to perform at the International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival. Mr. Reichman's 2022-23 season includes performances with Fort Worth Opera, Pensacola Opera, New Orleans Opera Association, Loyola Opera Theatre, and Saratoga Opera. Mr. Reichman has completed apprenticeships with the Florentine Opera, Nashville Opera, Central City Opera, Shreveport Opera, Chautauqua Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, the Crested Butte Music Festival, Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music Opera Bootcamp, and Opera in the Ozarks. He was twice named a regional finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions and received an encouragement award in 2016. Mr. Reichman holds degrees in voice from Loyola University New Orleans and Texas State University San Marcos.

Nathaniel Richard, baritone, is from Napoleonville, LA, and is a Vocal Performance major in the studio of Dr. Tyler Smith. Nathaniel performed in Loyola's Dixon Court production of *Dido and Aeneas* in April 2021 and was seen in Opera Workshop's November 2021 scenes program in Nunemaker Hall. He joined the New Orleans Opera Chorus for their February 2022 Gala Concert. Nathaniel hopes that you enjoy the Puccini double bill this weekend!

Sofia Riggio is a graduate student who will receive her master's degree in conducting this May. Sofia grew up in New York, first developing her skills onstage as a singer, and then in the pit playing French horn. She moved to New Orleans to pursue her B.M. in Music in 2016. During her undergraduate years she sang a myriad of roles, including Suor Genovieffa in *Suor Angelica* and Nella in *Gianni Schicchi*. Sofia started as a choral conductor under the tutelage of Dr. Meg Frazier, and she is grateful for the direction of Carol Rausch in her current operatic studies. She has previously conducted several choral works at the University, as well as Loyola Opera Theatre's Dixon Court productions of Mozart's *The Impresario* and Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* in Spring 2021. She assistant conducted *Suor Angelica* and Jake Landau's *Pietà* with the Narnia Festival in Italy last summer. An avid composer, she has written choral pieces and is now working on her first opera. Sofia is appreciative of the opportunities that Loyola has given her and is thrilled to conduct the talented cast and orchestra for this weekend's performances.

Veronica Samiec, soprano, is a senior Vocal Performance major from outside of Philadelphia, PA, who studies with Irini Kyriakidou. She is excited to sing the role of Prima Cercatrice in *Suor Angelica* this weekend, and is looking forward to her senior recital on May 1st at 3:00pm in Nunemaker Auditorium. Veronica has previously been in the chorus of Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilèges* and sang the role of Second Witch in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* for last April's Dixon Court

performance. She also currently sings at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in New Orleans. This summer Veronica will be heading to Kiefersfelden, Germany, for an intensive program with the International Performing Arts Institute. She is incredibly thankful that live performances are able to happen again and that she can have this beautiful opportunity with her friends and colleagues. Veronica will begin graduate work at Roosevelt University in Chicago in fall 2022 and looks forward to this next phase of her career.

B Schaubhut, baritone, is a New Orleans native and a sophomore Vocal Performance major in the studio of the extraordinary Dreux Montegut. Besides their vocal work, B plays harp and piano as secondary instruments under the direction of Rachel van Voorhees and Dr. Peter Collins respectively. B has previously performed with the Jefferson Performing Arts Society, as well as participating in musical theater at Jesuit High School. B looks forward to sharing Loyola's production of *Gianni Schicchi* with audiences this weekend.

Brian Schneider is a lighting designer based in Lafayette, LA. A New York City native, Brian now integrates Louisiana's culture and point of view into his designs. The ethereal qualities he chases while working with groups such as Opera Louisiane, Basin Dance Collective, Acting Up in Acadiana, LSU Turner-Fischer Center for Opera, and Zachary Richard, is ever captivating to him. Additionally, Brian designs and builds custom lamps. In 2019 his exhibition of constellation lamps titled "And The Stars Aligned" was featured at The Acadiana Center for the Arts. You can view his work at www.footcandlelighting.com.

Nicholas Anthony Smith of New Orleans is completing his master's degree in the studio of Dr. Tyler Smith and is excited to be playing the role of Amantio di Nicolao. He was seen in Loyola's April 2021 Dixon Court production of Mozart's *The Impresario* (Mr. Angel), and has also performed in *Sister Act* (Joey), *Hairspray* (Edna), *Seussical the Musical* (Horton), and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (Hysterium). Nicholas would like to thank his friends for always supporting him in everything he does.

Grayson Stephens, tenor, is from Arlington, TX, and is currently a sophomore Vocal Performance major in the studio of Dr. Tyler Smith. Grayson has sung since he was a child; he was involved with theater in high school, appearing in *The Explorers Club*, and *James and the Giant Peach*, for which his performance as Earthworm garnered him a nomination for a Betty Lynn Buckley Award for Best Supporting Actor in a Musical. *Gianni Schicchi* is Grayson's first full opera, and he is thrilled to be a part of such a wonderful production, and excited to be back on the stage!

Taylor Tumulty, soprano, is a freshman Vocal Performance major from Ponchatoula, LA. While this is her first time appearing in an opera, she is not new to the stage. Taylor has performed many roles, such as Mary Poppins in *Mary Poppins* and Miss Honey in *Matilda*. She is in the studio of Dreux Montegut and in November 2021 placed third in her category in the National Association of Teachers of Singing (N.A.T.S.) Southern Region vocal competition. Taylor would like to thank her parents and friends for giving her their everlasting support, and all of her teachers along the way who have helped her become who she is today. She hopes you enjoy the show!

Jeremiah Tyson, tenor, is a native of Dallas, TX, and a graduate of Southern Methodist University, with a Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance and a minor in Italian. Recent performances include Barber/Anselmo and Sancho (cover) in *Man of La Mancha* and Basilio in *Don Quichotte auf der Hochzeit des Comacho* with Opera Saratoga, Aeneas in *Dido and Aeneas* with Loyola Opera Theatre, The Second Nazarene in *Salome* with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, the Stage Manager in Ned Rorem's *Our Town* with Meadows Opera Theatre, the Governor in *Candide* with the Dallas Winds, Soloist/Chorus in *Porgy and Bess* with Fort Worth Opera, and Basilio in *Le nozze di Figaro* with LSU Opera. Last summer Jeremiah had the honor of being a young artist with Opera Saratoga, and in summer 2022 he will join the prestigious Glimmerglass Opera young artist program. He will complete his master's degree in Vocal Performance from Loyola in May.

Riley Vagis, a mezzo-soprano from Houston, TX, is a junior Vocal Performance and Composition major in the studio of Loretta Bybee. She sang the role of Second Woman in *Dido and Aeneas* in 2021 and looks forward to performing *Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi* without a mask! Riley has been singing since middle school, but began to focus more on her vocal career when she was able to participate in the Bauer High School Voice Studio with the Houston Grand Opera. Currently, she is the Loyola School of Music theory tutor, and enjoys singing with her church choir on Sundays. Riley recently performed her junior recital and cannot wait for future opportunities!

Allison Waguespack, soprano, is a Baton Rouge, LA, native and a first year Master of Vocal Performance major in the studio of Dr. Tyler Smith. Allie is thrilled to be back on the Roussel Hall stage as Lauretta in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*, having last been seen there as Noémie in *Cendrillon* in January 2019. She was also Miss Silverpeal in the Dixon Court performance of Mozart's *The Impresario* in April 2021. Allie is a soprano section leader with the St. Louis Cathedral Choir.

She recently won second place in the Younger Advanced Treble division for the Louisiana Chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing (N.A.T.S.) competition in March of 2022.

Taylor J. White, soprano, hails from Jackson, MS, and is a graduate of Xavier University of Louisiana, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Music and received the St. Cecilia Music Award. She is currently pursuing a master's degree in Vocal Performance at Loyola. White began her music career in Jazz and Mississippi Blues, performing as a soloist at the New Orleans Jazz Festival in 2017 and 2020. She now specializes in classical music and is a proud member of OperaCréole. In October 2021, White performed the world premiere of "To Meditate in His Temple," a song cycle by pianist and composer Dr. Maria Thompson Corley. This summer she will be traveling overseas to study opera at the International Performing Arts Institute in Kiefersfelden, Germany.

Taylor Witherspoon, a soprano from Jonesboro, LA, is a graduate student in Vocal Performance at Loyola, where she studies with the fantastic Loretta Bybee. Taylor has been singing and performing since she was in high school, and during her senior year was given the opportunity to sing with the National Honors Choir in Carnegie Hall. While an undergraduate she was able to refine her craft in Italy at the "Music in the Marche" program. In summer 2022 Taylor will be in Germany for further musical study, while being immersed in the culture. At Loyola, Taylor has worked toward becoming a great musician and having a wonderful representation before she graduates in May. She aspires to have an operatic career and travel the world doing what she loves.

Reign Zurri, soprano, is a native of Dallas, TX, currently living in Baton Rouge. As early as high school she appeared as the Mother in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, Katisha in *The Mikado* and Papagena in *Die Zauberflöte*. During that time she developed her operatic technique through the teaching of Peter Strummer and Linda Roark-Strummer. Reign received her B.M. in Vocal Performance from LSU, where she appeared in the choruses of *The Rake's Progress* and *Le nozze di Figaro*. During her junior year she studied at the Philipps-Universität Marburg as an international student. Reign is currently working toward a master's degree in Vocal Performance at Loyola, and also enjoys a musical sideline as an indie pop and alternative singer and songwriter.

Special Thanks

Kern Maass, Dean of the College of Music & Media
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Dr. Serena Weren, Assistant Professor, Director of Bands
Riley Vagis, costume advice and donation of several costume pieces for *Gianni Schicchi*

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Loyola School of Music & Theatre Arts

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Orchestra Personnel

Violin 1

Byron Tauchi-concertmaster LPO
Madeline Moore S
Gabriel Platica LPO
Elizabeth Overweg LPO

Oboe

Jane Gabka F/LPO

Clarinet

John Reeks F/LPO

Violin 2

Sarah Yen LPO
Kate Tutaj S
Gabrielle Fischler G

Bassoon

Bryan Ingrassia S

French Horn

Lauren Bravo S

Viola

Bruce Owen F/LPO
Ethan Thompson S
Maya Garcia S

Timpani

Jim Atwood F/LPO

Cello

Heléna Tietze S
Josh Sierra S

Percussion

Dave Salay F/LPO

Bass

Madeleine Wanner S

Keyboard

Yui Asano F/LPO

Flute

Patti Adams F/LPO

Celeste & Orchestra Manager

Jack Gardner G

F = faculty

S = student

LPO = Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra

G = guest

Production Team

Music Director	Carol Rausch
Conductor	Sofia Riggio
Stage Director, <i>Suor Angelica</i>	Lara Lignitz
Stage Director, <i>Gianni Schicchi</i>	Irini Kyriakidou
Set Design	Irini Kyriakidou and Lara Lignitz
Lighting Designer	Brian Schneider
Assistant Lighting Designer	Brianna McMorris
Stage Manager	Caroline Boudreaux
Lead Facilities Technician, Loyola University New Orleans	Jeff Zielinski
Assistant Facilities Technician, Loyola University New Orleans	Brianna McMorris
Stage crew	Riley Jennings
Contracts & Student Records Coordinator, College of Music & Media	Priscilla Dardar
Rehearsal Pianist	Carol Rausch
Orchestra Contractor	Jack Gardner
Orchestra Materials	Pocket Publications
Supertitles	Chadwick Creative Arts
Supertitle Operator	Claire Shackleton
Administrative Assistant, School of Music & Theatre Arts	Kelly Cuppett
Graduate Assistant, School of Music & Theatre Arts	Emily Cotten

Props and costumes from the New Orleans Opera Scenic Studio and
the Loyola Department of Theatre Arts & Dance

Loyola Voice Faculty

Luretta Bybee
Dr. Meg Frazier
Irini Kyriakidou
Dreux Montegut
Dr. Marcus St. Julien
Claire Shackleton
Dr. Tyler Smith
Dr. Betsy Uschkrat

*“Thank you for attending the Loyola Opera.
You are supporting the opera stars of tomorrow.”*

- Dr. Meg Frazier, Associate Dean
Loyola College of Music & Media

Upcoming Events

Graduate Recital: Kelly Cuppett, piano

Saturday, Apr. 23, 7:30 p.m.
Roussel | Free admission

Saxtravaganza

Monday, Apr. 25, 7:30 p.m.
Nunemaker | Free admission

Jazz Workshop & Training Bands

Tuesday, Apr. 26, 7:30 p.m.
Roussel | Free admission

Junior Recital: Charlotte Butler, voice

Tuesday, Apr. 26, 7:30 p.m.
Holy Name of Jesus | Free admission

Student Brass Ensembles

Wednesday, Apr. 27, 7:30 p.m.
Nunemaker | Free admission

Concert Band & Wind Ensemble

Thursday, Apr. 28, 7:30 p.m.
Roussel | Free admission

Junior Recital: Kai Buie, voice

Friday, Apr. 29, 7:30 p.m.
Nunemaker | Free admission

Duo Cintemani: Flute & Guitar Masterclass

Saturday, Apr. 30, 2 p.m.
CMM 240 & 230 | Free admission

Graduate Recital: Taylor Witherspoon, voice

Saturday, Apr. 30, 3 p.m.
Nunemaker | Free admission

Loyola Symphony Orchestra & Chorale

Saturday, Apr. 30, 7:30 p.m.
Roussel | Free admission

Senior Recital: Jayne Edwards, voice

Sunday, May 1, 2 p.m.
St. Francis of Assisi | Free admission

Senior Recital: Veronica Samiec, voice

Sunday, May 1, 3 p.m.
Nunemaker | Free admission

Classical Guitar Night

Sunday, May 1, 7:30 p.m.
Roussel | Free admission

Graduate Recital: Nicholas Anthony Smith, tenor

Friday, May 6, 7:30 p.m.
Nunemaker | Free admission

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