

Guild Hall

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GUILD HALL & BEL CANTO BOOT CAMP RESIDENT ARTIST PROGRAM RETURNS WITH INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED SOPRANO LISETTE OROPESA



Lisette Oropesa, French Bel Canto Arias, 2022. Photo: Lia Konrad

East Hampton, NY (July 10, 2023)— Guild Hall (158 Main Street, East Hampton, NY) announced today the continuation of their partnership with Bel Canto Boot Camp, and details on the 2023 Guild Hall & Bel Canto Boot Camp Resident Artist Series. Following the success of the 2022 program with guest artist baritenor Michael Spyres, the 2023 program will welcome 6 emerging opera singers for a two-week residency, culminating in a public masterclass and recital with 2023 guest artist, internationally renowned soprano Lisette Oropesa.

The Guild Hall & Bel Canto Boot Camp Resident Artist Series is a collaboration between Guild Hall of East Hampton and Bel Canto Boot Camp (BCBC). By providing individualized training from Bel Canto Boot Camp mentors and masterclasses with international artists, the series aims to support a new generation of emerging opera singers and to increase awareness and appreciation of the unamplified voice. Each residency culminates in a collaborative recital where audiences can hear some of the most influential opera stars of today and the stars of tomorrow together on stage. By inviting audiences into select rehearsals and masterclasses, Guild Hall and BCBC provide an insider's view into the singer's process – affirming an ever-increasing love and appreciation for the finesse and power of the unamplified voice.

The 2023 resident artists include soprano Siskelelwe Mngenela, soprano Elizabeth Novella, mezzo-soprano Anne Marie Stanley, tenor Derrek Stark, baritone David Wolfe, and bass-baritone Michael Leyte-Vidal.

The two-week residency will provide each resident artist with one-on-one coaching with Bel Canto Boot Camp co-founders Rachelle Jonck and Derrick Goff, present a dedicated performance for several Summer Camps on the East End and conclude with a public masterclass on August 10 at 6 PM with 2023 guest artist, internationally renowned soprano Lisette Oropesa. Highly praised for her seamless voice, precise coloratura, magnetic stage presence, and innate musicality, Oropesa and Bel Canto Boot Camp co-founders, Rachelle Jonck and Derrick Goff, will present an intimate recital of bel canto repertoire on Saturday, August 12 at 5 PM. This uniquely collaborative recital will include several duets and ensembles featuring Oropesa and the 2023 Guild Hall & Bel Canto Boot Camp Resident Artists.

MASTERCLASS: Lisette Oropesa & Bel Canto Boot Camp

Thursday, August 10, 6 PM

St. Luke's, Hoie Hall

18 James Lane, East Hampton

[MORE INFO >>](#)

RECITAL: Lisette Oropesa & Bel Canto Boot Camp

Saturday, August 12, 5 PM

St. Luke's, Hoie Hall

18 James Lane, East Hampton

[MORE INFO >>](#)

The Guild Hall and Bel Canto Boot Camp Resident Artist Series is supported by the Law Office of Natascia Ayers, Alexandre and Lori Chemla, Barbara Horgan, Ellen E. Myers, and Michéle and Steve Pesner, with additional support provided by Jan and Marilyn Breslow, Stan Herman, the Jeannette and H. Peter Kriendler Charitable Trust, Cornelia and Lawrence Randolph, Janet C. Ross, David Seeler and Ngaere Macray, Irene Silverman, and Barbara Toll.

Public funding provided by Suffolk County.

All musical programming is supported, in part, by the Ellen and James S. Marcus Endowment for Musical Programming.

Guild Hall's Learning + New Works programs are made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature. Additional major support comes from the Patti Kenner Arts Education Fellowship, the Lewis B. and Dorothy Cullman Endowment Fund, and the Melville Straus Family Endowment.

LISETTE OROPESA

Lisette Oropesa is one of the most in-demand lyric coloraturas today, who has triumphed in various roles throughout the most important houses in Europe and the US. A bel canto singer of considerable acclaim, Lisette recently had major success as Violetta in *La traviata* in Rome and the Teatro Real. This season Lisette opens The Royal Opera House in a new production of *Rigoletto*. Known for her liquid legato and seamless technique, impeccable language, stylistic integrity, precise coloratura, and superlative acting, Lisette excels in the repertoire of the bel canto, Mozart, and French composers.

Lisette was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, to Cuban parents, and played the flute for 12 years before she began her studies in vocal performance at Louisiana State University. After winning the Met Opera National Council Auditions, she entered the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program and moved to New York City. She sang her first major role, Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*, at the Met at the age of 22, and has sung there in over 100 performances in many different roles since. She won the Beverly Sills and Richard Tucker awards in 2019. In 2023, she won “Best Female singer of the year” from Oper! Magazine. She was awarded the merit of “Chevalière de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres” from the French ministry of culture.

She has appeared in concert halls and opera stages all over the world since graduating from the young artist program in 2008 and has become one of the most celebrated singers of her generation, both for her singing and her inspiring personal story. Lisette is a devoted runner who has completed 6 marathons and is an advocate for health and fitness.

<https://lisetteoropesa.com/>

MICHAEL LEYTE-VIDAL

Bass-baritone and Miami native **Michael Leyte-Vidal** is a graduate of Manhattan School of Music with a Master of Music in Classical Voice. Michael was last seen as a Resident Artist with Opera Colorado for their 40th anniversary season during which time he performed in the choruses of *Die tote Stadt* and *Turandot* on the mainstage while touring Colorado in *The Pirates of Penzance* (Sam/Sergeant of Police) and *Roméo et Juliette* (Friar Laurence). Michael is also active in musical theater, having played roles such as Judge Turpin in *Sweeney Todd*, Audrey 2 in *Little Shop of Horrors*, and Ernst Ludwig in *Cabaret*.

Michael is thrilled to be returning to East Hampton for the 2023 Guild Hall & Bel Canto Boot Camp Resident Artist Series and is especially honored to share the stage with fellow Cuban-American Lisette Oropesa.

SISIKELELWE MNGENELA

Sisikelelwe Mngenela is a promising young lyric coloratura soprano. She was born in the township of Sebokeng in Gauteng, South Africa, and participated in eisteddfod and choir activities from an early age. She is presently a second-year BA Music and Society student at the School of Music of the North-West University in Potchefstroom, where she completed her Diploma in Music (2020-2022).

During her diploma studies, she participated in solo masterclasses with Kamal Khan (2021), Bo Rosenkull from Sweden (2021, 2022, 2023), and most recently (2023) with Dominic Wheeler from the Guildhall School for Music & Drama (London). In 2022 she participated in masterclasses with Bel Canto Boot Camp presented by Rachelle Jonck and Derrick Goff. Sisi was a recipient of the Executive Dean’s Bursary Award for the most promising final-year vocal student in the Diploma of Music (2022).

Under the careful guidance of her vocal lecturer Dr. Antoinette Olivier, Sisi’s repertoire comprises composers such as Handel, Mozart, and songs cultivating principles of bel canto such as agility & legato.

ELIZABETH NOVELLA

British-American Soprano **Elizabeth Novella** most recently sang Giovanna in *Ernani* and covered Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* at Sarasota Opera. She was recently named a Finalist of the Tenor Viñas Competition with the Gran Teatre Liceu del Barcelona and is looking forward to being a Resident Artist at Guild Hall with Lisette Oropesa and Bel Canto Boot Camp this coming summer. This past August she sang Adele in *Die Fledermaus* with The Muses Project, and in December, she made her house and role debut as The Mother in *Amahl and the Night Visitors* with St. Petersburg Opera. In the spring of 2022, Ms. Novella covered the roles of Leïla in *Les pêcheurs de perles* and Marie in *La fille du régiment* with Sarasota Opera. During the winter of 2020, also with Sarasota Opera, she performed Giannetta in *L'elisir d'amore* "with a rich voice and fine comic timing" - *Herald Tribune* and Musetta (cover) in *La bohème*.

Ms. Novella was also seen as Antonia (*Les contes d'Hoffmann*) with the Aspen Music Festival and School, for which the press hailed: "Novella dazzled with rich sound and impressive intensity as Antonia" - *The Aspen Times*. She performed the role of Villiers' Fiancée and covered Peg in Carlisle Floyd's most recent opera *Prince of Players* with Little Opera Theatre of New York. Recent operatic roles with the Aspen Music Festival and School include Maia in the first fully staged production of Christopher Theofanidis' *The Cows of Apollo or the Invention of Music* under the baton of Robert Spano for which she was praised: "...there was first-rate singing from soprano Elizabeth Novella" - *Opera News*, as well as the High Priestess (cover) (*Aïda*) and Victoria (cover) in William Bolcom's *A Wedding*. In Aspen, Ms. Novella performed "I want magic" in a Master Class with the legendary Renée Fleming. In 2021 Ms. Novella was named a semi-finalist in the Annapolis Opera Vocal Competition. Other credits include Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*) with Venture Opera, Maja (*Goyescas*) with Bare Opera, Gertrud (*Hänsel und Gretel*) with the Manhattan School of Music Opera Theater, Madame Herz (*Der Schauspieldirektor*) with New York Lyric Opera Theater, as well as Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*) and Suor Genovieffa (*Suor Angelica*) with The Amalfi Coast Music Festival.

Ms. Novella holds an M.M. in Voice from the Manhattan School of Music and a B.A. in Music from Bard College. Ms. Novella is a native New Yorker and is currently based in NYC. elizabethnovella.com

ANNE MARIE STANLEY

Anne Marie Stanley is from Princeton, New Jersey (USA). She earned her Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance from Westminster Choir College in Princeton and her Master of Music in Voice Performance from the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University in Houston, Texas. In 2022 she was named a Grand Finals Winner of The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition, where she received the Faith P. Geier Award. Recent highlights include Third Wood Spirit in *Rusalka* at The Royal Opera House, the title role in Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* at The Royal Opera House Linbury Theatre, and cover Thurza in Dame Ethyl Smyth's *The Wreckers* at Glyndebourne Festival Opera. Awards include First Prize in the 2021 Giulio Giargiari Bel Canto Competition at the Academy of Vocal Arts and Grand Finalist in the Vincerò World Singing Competition in Naples, Italy. annemariestanleymezzo.com

DERREK STARK

Hailed by Opera News for his "handsome sound," and described as a "standout" by the Wall Street Journal, tenor **Derrek Stark** is quickly establishing a reputation as an elegant

performer with nuanced and stylish singing. Despite many COVID-19 cancellations, Mr. Stark returned to the stage for the 2020-2021 season with a house premiere at Opera Tampa singing Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*. Following these successful performances, Mr. Stark repeated the role with Eugene Opera later that summer. In 2022, Mr. Stark returned to Eugene Opera singing Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, made a house debut with Gulfshore Opera singing Alfredo in *Die Fledermaus*, and reprised the role of Rinuccio in *Gianni Schicchi* with Opera Tampa.

This summer, Mr. Stark will sing as the tenor soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Kansas City Symphony Orchestra and will be heard as Rodolfo in *La bohème* at the Bar Harbor Music Festival. Previous season highlights include the Italian Tenor in *Der Rosenkavalier* with Opernhaus Zürich, Alfredo in *La traviata* with Palm Beach Opera, and Arturo in *La straniera* with Teatro Nuovo at Jazz at Lincoln Center. He has also been heard as Giasone in *Medea in Corinto*, Rodolfo in *La bohème*, The Governor in *Candide*, Harry in *La fanciulla del West* with Santa Fe Opera, Peter Quint in *The Turn of the Screw*, Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, and Fenton in *Falstaff*.

Equally at home in concert repertoire, Mr. Stark has performed with the Atlantic Classical Orchestra, the Boise Philharmonic, the Orchestra of Saint Luke's, and the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra in repertoire ranging from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony to Orff's *Carmina Burana* and Rossini's *Petite messe solennelle*. Mr. Stark won second place in the Giulio Gari International Voice Competition, third place in the Opera Columbus Cooper-Bing Competition, 3rd place in the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod, and is a 2018 Sullivan Foundation Grant Winner. He has also received an encouragement award from the Gerda Lissner International Voice Competition, a Campbell/Wachter Scholarship from Santa Fe Opera, and a Bel Canto Vocal Scholarship Foundation award. Stark is an alumnus of many prestigious training programs including Santa Fe Opera, Palm Beach Opera, Bel Canto at Caramoor, and the Lyric Opera of Kansas City. He holds a B.M. from Mansfield University, PA, and a M.M. from The Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University. derrekstarktenor.com

DAVID WOLFE

Baritone **David Wolfe**, was most recently named as a Grand Finalist in the Metropolitan Opera's Eric and Dominique Laffont competition. He is currently an apprentice artist with Des Moines Metro Opera where he is covering Moralés in *Carmen*. He will also be joining the choruses of both *Carmen* and *The Love for Three Oranges* by Prokofiev.

He received his Master of Music degree from Northwestern University, where he studied with acclaimed voice teacher W. Stephen Smith. He made his Northwestern Opera Theater debut as Paul in the Midwestern premiere of Jake Heggie's opera, *If I Were You*, later appearing as Schaunard in *La Bohème*. He will sing the role of Luther Harlow/The Outlaw in Northwestern Opera Theater's production of the new opera *In a Grove* by Christopher Cerrone. David received his Bachelor of music from the Eastman School of Music, where he studied with both Jan Opalach and Robert Swensen. There he performed several roles in operas such as *A Postcard from Morocco* by Dominick Argento and *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* by Viktor Ullmann.

David has a strong passion for art song performance, as well as opera. In August, he attended the Steans Music Institute at the Ravinia Festival in Chicago, appearing in several recitals alongside faculty such as Steven Blier, Patricia McCaffrey, Graham Johnson, Alan Darling, Gerald Martin Moore, Lee Musiker, and many others. David has

also been active in community outreach projects with both the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and Wheeling Symphony Orchestra. He performed the role of *Bunsen* in the children's show *Dr. Freakquency's Sound Lab*, a project that showcases properties of sound through music. <https://davidwolfebaritone.com/>

ABOUT BEL CANTO BOOT CAMP

Bel Canto Boot Camp was born during the pandemic when they reached out to singers around the world – singers who had no place and seemingly no reason to sing. They needed to find a way to feed their own souls as well while they were cut off from music making – something they never even considered could possibly happen. They created The Vaccai Project – a unique online training course for singers. Just short of two thousand singers from America to South Africa, from Columbia to Russia practiced together for the day when stages would be open to them again and theaters would be filled with audiences. They discovered a beautiful new way to support singers – beautiful in its inclusivity, its expansion of the richness of the New York opera community to artists all over the world, the breaking of often prohibitive barriers of distance, cost, time, and audition-only programs.

Now, Bel Canto Boot Camp strives to support artists in the physical world as they did (and continue to do) virtually. Their ability to work in person with singers is now supported by an online platform allowing them to stay in contact when they cannot be there physically. Additionally, BCBC allows singers, teachers, and presenters to network effectively with each other in the ever-growing BCBC community.

www.belcantobootcamp.com.

ABOUT GUILD HALL

Guild Hall is the cultural heart of the East End: a museum, performing arts, and education center, founded in 1931. We invite everyone to experience the endless possibilities of the arts: to open minds to what art can be; inspire creativity and conversation; and have fun.

Guild Hall has served four generations and introduced audiences to the most storied artists and performers of our time. Now as we approach our centennial, we have embarked on a state-of-the-art renovation to match the caliber of our artistry for twenty-first-century audiences. The facility-wide Capital Improvements Project & Campaign includes top-of-the-line physical and technological enhancements to better deliver on our mission as an artist-driven, interdisciplinary institution.

For more information about Guild Hall, please visit GuildHall.org.

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