



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

July 22, 2014

Washington National Opera Announces the 2014-2015 Class of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program

Roster includes 10 singers and 3 pianists/coaches

Program includes mentorship by:

Artist in Residence Deborah Voigt

Voice teachers Diana Soviero and William Stone

**Guest vocal coaches Bénédicte Jourdois, Kathleen Kelly,
and Danielle Orlando**

Career consultants Ken Benson and Matthew Epstein

Guest drama coaches Peter Kazaras and Alan Paul

Performance highlights include:

World premiere performances of the American Opera Initiative

A special performance of *La bohème* on November 14, 2014

***Stars of Tomorrow* concert conducted by Eric Owens on March 20, 2015**

Free concerts at the Kennedy Center

and more

(WASHINGTON, D.C.)—Washington National Opera (WNO) today announced the roster of emerging artists and renowned vocal coaches engaged for the 13th season of its Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program. Under the leadership of program director Michael Heaston, the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program continues to increase its number of performances throughout the season and expand its training regimen to include mentorship by its returning Artist in Residence, the acclaimed American soprano Deborah Voigt. Additional faculty members include voice teachers Diana Soviero and William Stone; guest vocal coaches Bénédicte Jourdois, Kathleen Kelly, and Danielle Orlando; career consultants Ken Benson and Matthew Epstein; and guest drama coaches Peter Kazaras and Alan Paul, among others. The new class of young artists will participate in several world premiere productions during the 2014-2015 season as part of WNO's American Opera Initiative and will star in a special performance of *La bohème* on

~ more ~

November 14, 2014 and in the annual *Stars of Tomorrow* recital on March 20, 2015, featuring the WNO Orchestra conducted by Eric Owens (star of WNO's revival of *The Flying Dutchman*).

The 2014-2015 Domingo-Cafritz Young Artists are:

Joel Ayau, Woodstock, Connecticut, U.S. (pianist/coach, first year)

Christian Bowers, Hankins, New York, U.S. (baritone, second year)

Michael Brandenburg, Austin, Indiana, U.S. (tenor, first year)

Jacqueline Echols, Detroit, Michigan, U.S. (soprano, second year)

Raquel González, Lawrence, Kansas, U.S. (soprano, first year)

Yi Li, Jinan, China (tenor, second year)

Kevin Miller, New York, New York, U.S. (pianist/coach, third year)

Tomoko Nakayama, Tokyo, Japan (pianist/coach, second year)

Deborah Nansteel, Havelock, North Carolina, U.S. (mezzo-soprano, second year)

Patrick O'Halloran, Olathe, Kansas, U.S. (tenor, second year)

Kerriann Otaño, Wading River, New York, U.S. (soprano, first year)

Aleksandra Romano, New Haven, Connecticut, U.S. (mezzo-soprano, first year)

Wei Wu, Beijing, China (bass, second year)

“The Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program is a vital part of Washington National Opera’s mission, and I’m proud of the steps we’ve taken to revitalize the program and increase the young artists’ involvement in both our artistic programming and our community engagement,” said WNO Artistic Director Francesca Zambello. “Michael Heaston has selected an excellent group of singers and pianists for next season, and I look forward to introducing our new WNO ‘home team’ to Washington audiences.”

Complete biographies of the 2014-2015 Domingo-Cafritz Young Artists appear later in this release.

A world-class coaching roster

Leading the coaching roster for the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program’s 2014-2015 season is Deborah Voigt, the acclaimed American soprano best known for her dramatic interpretations of the leading roles in operas by Wagner, Strauss, and Puccini. During her second season as the program’s Artist in Residence, Ms. Voigt will work with the young artists by leading individual coaching sessions, presenting group classes on a variety of repertoire, and hosting career roundtable discussions.

The young artists will also continue to work with voice teachers Diana Soviero, one of the foremost interpreters of the *verismo* repertoire and now one of the most in-demand voice teachers in New York, and William Stone, esteemed baritone and member of the voice faculty at the Academy of Vocal Arts in Philadelphia. The roster of guest vocal coaches includes Bénédict Jourdois, a member of the faculty at The Juilliard School, the Curtis Institute of Music, and the Manhattan School of Music; Kathleen Kelly, who has led the music staffs of the Vienna State Opera and Houston Grand Opera and is now the principal coach at the Butler Opera Center at the University of Texas at Austin; and Danielle Orlando, an acclaimed collaborative pianist and the principal master coach for the Curtis Institute of Music and a master coach for the Academy of Vocal Arts.

Choreographer Karma Camp and directors Peter Kazaras, Nick Olcott, and Alan Paul will work with the young artists on drama and movement. New this season, veteran artist managers Ken Benson and Matthew Epstein will advise the young artists on the business side of opera and serve as career development mentors.

The young artists will continue their work with principal coach Ken Weiss and resident vocal coach Louis Salemno. WNO Music Director Philippe Auguin will also work with the young artists during the season.

Performance opportunities at the Kennedy Center and beyond

An essential component of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program is the opportunity to perform at the Kennedy Center as well as various community concerts, recitals, and events throughout the Washington, D.C. area. These performance opportunities allow the young artists to explore new repertoire, experience various ensemble formats, adapt to the acoustics in a variety of venues, and perform before a live audience. The young artists also receive invaluable networking time in a work environment with experienced singers, conductors, musicians, and crew members.

Young artists gain significant performance experience on the stages of the Kennedy Center. A highlight of the program is the annual Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Performance, featuring young artists performing leading roles in the Kennedy Center Opera House as part of the WNO season. In the 2014-2015 season, the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Performance will be the November 14, 2014 performance of Puccini's classic *La bohème*, a new production conducted by WNO Music Director Philippe Auguin.

The Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program prepares and engages young artists to study and perform supporting roles in WNO productions. As members of the cast, young artists participate in all scheduled rehearsals and receive direction and guidance from the opera's key artists. In WNO's 2014-2015 season, young artists will perform supporting roles in *Florenca in the Amazon*, *La bohème*, *The Little Prince*, *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, *The Flying Dutchman*, and *Cinderella*.

The 2014-2015 season will provide the young artists with extraordinary opportunities to work with living composers and librettists on several world premiere productions. Under the auspices of WNO's American Opera Initiative, the young artists will work with new composer-librettists teams on three 20-minute operas which will premiere on November 21, 2014, as well as with a more experienced composer-librettist team on a new hour-long opera, *Penny*, which will be presented on January 23 and 24, 2015. In this work, the young artists will be mentored by conductor Anne Manson, composer Jake Heggie, and librettist Mark Campbell. Composers, librettists, and casting for these new works, which will be performed in the Kennedy Center Terrace Theater, will be announced in the coming months.

As part of a new annual tradition, the young artists will perform in a special showcase recital—*Stars of Tomorrow: The Domingo-Cafritz Young Artists in Concert*—in the Kennedy Center Opera House on March 20, 2015. Supported by the WNO Orchestra conducted by Eric Owens, the young artists will highlight their talents and celebrate their seasons in Washington. The young artists will continue to perform in one-hour free performances on the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage to highlight upcoming productions, preview the productions of the coming season, and for other special performances. These appearances are streamed live on the Kennedy Center's [website](#) and archived for future viewing. More information on these and other events will be announced in the coming months.

Biographies of the 2014-2015 Domingo-Cafritz Young Artists

American pianist, coach, and teacher **Joel Ayau** joins the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program in January 2015. As a coach and répétiteur, he has worked with companies including the Toledo Opera, Aspen Opera Theater Center, and Music Academy of the West. He is currently on the music staff of the Castleton Festival as chorus master and opera scenes coach. From 2011 to 2014, he served as pianist for the United States Army Chorus, performing for foreign dignitaries and audiences around the country. He has performed instrumental recitals with such artists as Ian Bousfield, David Halen, and Charles Neidich, and his work accompanying singers has taken him to Stern Auditorium in Carnegie Hall, Coolidge Auditorium at the Library of Congress, and the National Concert Hall in Taipei, Taiwan. He holds a Doctorate in Musical Arts from the University of Michigan in Collaborative Piano. He earned a Master's degree in Collaborative Piano from The Juilliard School and a bachelor's degree in Piano Performance and Computer Science from New York University. He is currently an Adjunct Assistant Professor at Shenandoah Conservatory and a regular guest professor at several universities in Taiwan.

A native of Hankins, New York, American baritone **Christian Bowers** returns for his second season of WNO's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program. In the 2013-14 season at WNO he was seen as an Army Surgeon in *The Force of Destiny*; in *Uncle Alex*, part of the American Opera Initiative; and as Stubb in *Moby-Dick*. In the summer of 2014 he makes his Glimmerglass Festival debut as Clyde Griffiths in *An American Tragedy*. In 2012 and 2013 he was a young artist with Santa Fe Opera, where he performed the role of Sciarrone in *Tosca* and covered the title role of Abdul in Menotti's *The Last Savage*. Recent performances also include Masetto in *Don Giovanni* with Opera Colorado. He completed his final year as a resident artist at the Academy of Vocal Arts in 2013, and has been recognized at several prestigious competitions, including the Violetta DuPont Vocal Competition (first prize, 2014), the Houston Grand Opera Eleanor McCollum Vocal Competition (finalist, 2013), the George London Foundation (finalist, 2013), the Mario Lanza vocal competition (second prize, 2011), and the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions (District winner, 2011 and 2012).

A native of Austin, Indiana, American tenor **Michael Brandenburg** joins the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program in fall 2014. A 2013 winner of the Metropolitan National Council Auditions Grand Finals, his recent performances include the title role in *Werther* and Le prince charmant in *Cendrillon* at Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music. In summer 2014 he will cover the roles of Alfredo in *La traviata* and Don José in *La tragédie de Carmen* at Des Moines Metro Opera. He is a recent winner of the Bel Canto Competition in Chicago, and began studying voice while pursuing an M.S. in Aquatic Biology at Ball State University.

A native of Detroit, American soprano **Jacqueline Echols** returns for her second season of WNO's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program. Last season at WNO she appeared as the First Lady in WNO's new production of *The Magic Flute*, covered the role of Pip in *Moby-Dick*, starred as the Unicorn in the world premiere of *The Lion, the Unicorn, and Me*, and appeared in *Breaking*, part of the American Opera Initiative. She also appeared as Musetta in North Carolina Opera's *La bohème*. Other recent appearances include Giulietta in *King for a Day* (The Glimmerglass Festival), Countess Ceprano in *Rigoletto*, First Lady in *The Magic Flute*, and Clara in *Porgy and Bess* (all with Cincinnati Opera). She has also sung the role of Micaela in *Carmen* with Eugene Opera. She has appeared with New York Harlem Productions as both Clara and Bess in *Porgy and Bess* and was featured in a documentary *Porgy and Me*, which premiered

in Germany in January 2010. In 2012 she was a second prize winner at the Gerda Lissner International Vocal Competition. She completed her master's degree and artist diploma at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Upcoming performances include Echo in *Ariadne in Naxos* with The Glimmerglass Festival (where will also be covering Julie Jordan in *Carousel*), Musetta in the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Performance of WNO's *La bohème* and Clorinda in WNO's *Cinderella*, and her role debut as Violetta in *La traviata* at North Carolina Opera.

Originally from Lawrence, Kansas, soprano **Raquel González** joins the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program in fall 2014. She recently earned a master's degree from The Juilliard School, where she also completed her undergraduate studies. At Juilliard, she has been seen as Tatiana (*Eugene Onegin*), Arminda (*La finta giardiniera*), Dido (*Dido and Aeneas*), and Mélisse (*Armide*). She has spent several summers at the Chautauqua Institution singing such roles as Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*), Adina (*L'elisir d'amore*), and Lauretta (*Gianni Schicchi*). As a Gerdine Young Artist at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, she appeared in the world premiere of Terence Blanchard's *Champion* and returned to OTSL in the summer of 2014 as a Festival Artist in the role of First Lady (*The Magic Flute*) and as the cover for Blanche (*Dialogues of the Carmelites*). In concert, she has appeared with the New York Festival of Song at Alice Tully Hall. With William Christie and Juilliard415, she has sung Iphise in Rameau's *Les fêtes d'Hébé*, in Handel's *Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno*, and Diane in Charpentier's *Actéon*. She made her debut with the New York Philharmonic as soprano soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony at Avery Fisher Hall. A 2014 Eastern District winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, she has also been awarded prizes from the Liederkrantz Foundation and the Gerda Lissner Foundation.

A native of Jinan, China, tenor **Yi Li** returns for his second season of WNO's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program. A 2014 winner of the Metropolitan National Council Auditions Grand Finals and a second prize winner at the Gerda Lissner Foundation Competition, he was recently seen as the First Armored Man in WNO's *The Magic Flute*. In summer 2013 he represented China in the 2013 BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition. A graduate of San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program and University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music (CCM), he has also participated in CCM's festival in Spoleto, Italy, as well as the Opera Studio Nederland in Amsterdam. Recent performances include Tamino in *The Magic Flute*, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*, Alfredo in *La traviata*, Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, Rodolfo in *La bohème*, and Cavaradossi in *Tosca*. He won first prize at the 2012 Opera Columbus Irma M. Cooper Vocal Competition; the 2009 International Singing Competition in Marmande, France; and the 2008 World Chinese Singing Competition of Taipei. He has also received prizes from the Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation and was a finalist in the 2009 Montserrat Caballé International Singing Competition. Future performances include Cassio in *Otello* at the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing and Rodolfo in the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Performance of WNO's *La bohème*.

American pianist **Kevin Miller** returns for his third season as a collaborative pianist in WNO's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program. Last season with WNO he served as Assistant Conductor for WNO's world premiere holiday opera, *The Lion, the Unicorn, and Me* and for *The Magic Flute* under the baton of WNO Music Director Philippe Auguin. In summer 2014 he returns to The Glimmerglass Festival as a member of its music staff, assisting on *Madama Butterfly*. Previous credits include Assistant Conductor for WNO's *Norma*, and productions of *The Flying Dutchman* and *Passions*, a double of works by Pergolesi and David Lang, while a

member of The Glimmerglass Festival's Young Artists Program. He was also a member of San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program in 2012. Recent performing credits include a recital with Joseph Calleja and Nadine Sierra at the Supreme Court of the United States, as well as an appearance with Calleja on NPR's *Tiny Desk Concert* series. He has appeared with Jessye Norman at Carnegie Hall in Laura Karpman's production of Langston Hughes's *Ask Your Mama*, and partnered with countertenor David Daniels in concert. He received his Bachelor of Music from Mannes College and completed his Artistic Diploma and Masters of Music in Collaborative Piano at the University of Michigan. In 2008, he made his international solo debut in recital at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Netherlands.

A native of Japan, collaborative pianist **Tomoko Nakayama** returns for her second season of WNO's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program. Last season with WNO she served as Assistant Conductor for WNO's productions of *The Elixir of Love* and the world premiere of Huang Ruo's *An American Soldier*. In 2012, she served as apprentice music coach on Wolf Trap Opera Company's production of *The Rake's Progress*. She recently served as a staff accompanist at The Juilliard School, and she also served as faculty vocal coach and opera scenes director at Boston University's Tanglewood Institute and is a former piano fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center, where she worked on *Don Giovanni* under the baton of Maestro James Levine. She recently worked at the International Vocal Arts Institute in Tel Aviv, Israel, where she was a faculty pianist for performances of *La bohème*. She has also served as pianist, coach, and continuo player in *Le nozze di Figaro* with the Opera on the Avalon festival in Canada. Highlights of recent seasons also include performances at Merkin Concert Hall with the New York Philharmonic Ensembles and collaborations with members of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra at the Cape Cod Chamber Music Festival. A prolific chamber music performer, she is the founding member of Eta3, a piano, clarinet, and flute trio, which made its Alice Tully Hall debut in 2006.

Born in Okinawa, Japan, and raised in Havelock, North Carolina, mezzo-soprano **Deborah Nansteel** returns for her second season of WNO's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program. She made her WNO debut last season as Curra in *The Force of Destiny* and was also seen as the Cat in the world premiere of *The Lion, the Unicorn, and Me*; in *Breaking* and *Uncle Alex*, part of the American Opera Initiative; and as The Third Lady in WNO's new production of *The Magic Flute*. Recent performances include Foreign Woman in *The Consul* (Seattle Opera) and Mary in *The Flying Dutchman* (while a member of The Glimmerglass Festival Young Artists Program). She is a graduate of the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM) and was also a participant in the Young Artists Program of Seattle Opera, where she appeared as Giulietta in *Un giorno di regno* and the Nursing Sister in *Suor Angelica*. Recent credits include Berta in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* with the Merola Opera Program and with CCM; other CCM performances include Marguerite in *La damnation de Faust*, Mother Marie in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Mother Goose in *The Rake's Progress*, and Bianca in *The Rape of Lucretia*. She has also appeared as Marthe in *Faust* and Lily/Strawberry Woman in *Porgy and Bess* with Dayton Opera. Recent concert appearances include soloist in Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano Giuseppe Verdi in Milan, Italy. Upcoming engagements include Nettie Fowler in *Carousel* (The Glimmerglass Festival), Juno/Ino in *Semele* (Seattle Opera), and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony (Seattle Symphony).

A native of Olathe, Kansas, American tenor **Patrick O'Halloran** returns for his second season of WNO's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program. Last season with WNO he was seen as Tamino in the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Performance of *The Magic Flute*; as Joseph in the

world premiere of *The Lion, the Unicorn, and Me*; and in *Duffy's Cut* and *Breaking*, part of the American Opera Initiative. Last season he also performed the roles of Rodolfo in *La bohème* with Kentucky Opera, Alfredo in *La traviata* with Arizona Opera, and was tenor soloist in the Choral Arts Society of Washington's performance of the Verdi *Requiem*. He also won an encouragement award at the Opera Index Competition. He is an alumnus of The Glimmerglass Festival's Young Artists Program, where he sang the role of Edoardo in *King for a Day* (2013). He was recently seen as Cavaradossi in *Tosca* with the Owensboro Symphony Orchestra and as Rodolfo in Central City Opera's family performance of *La bohème*. As an Emerging Artist with Virginia Opera he was seen as Glazier in Phillip Glass's *Orphée*, the Doctor in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and covered Nadir in *The Pearl Fishers*. Recent concert appearances include Verdi's *Requiem* with the Choral Arts Society of Washington at the Kennedy Center. He has also performed the roles of Don José in *Carmen*, Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette*, Sam in *Susannah*, the Duke of Mantua in *Rigoletto*, Frederic in *The Pirates of Penzance*, Cégeste in *Orphée*, Barrett in *Titanic: The Musical*, and Guillot in Offenbach's *The Lantern Marriage*. Upcoming performances include Don José in *La tragédie de Carmen* at Des Moines Metro Opera, Arcadio in WNO's *Florenca in the Amazon*, and Alfredo in *La traviata* at Fort Worth Opera Festival.

A native of Long Island, New York soprano **Kerriann Otaño** joins WNO's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program in fall 2014. She was recently a member of the Fort Worth Opera Studio, where she made her festival debut as Despina in *Così fan tutte*. In summer 2014 she joins The Glimmerglass Festival's Young Artists Program, covering the role of Roberta Alden in *An American Tragedy*. She advanced to the regional level of the 2014 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and was awarded second place in the Mid-South Region. Last season, she was seen as an apprentice artist with Sarasota Opera and Central City Opera, where she covered Queenie in *Show Boat* and was heard as Berta in the family performance of *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. In 2012, she received acclaim for her Donna Elvira as a young artist in Seagle Music Colony's production of *Don Giovanni*. She holds a master's degree from Mannes College, where she sang Maria Corona in *The Saint of Bleecker Street* under the baton of Joseph Colaneri. She completed her Bachelors of Music at Indiana University.

A native of New Haven, Connecticut, mezzo-soprano **Aleksandra Romano** joins WNO's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program in fall 2014. She was a Mid-Atlantic Regional Finalist and Encouragement Award Winner in the 2014 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. In summer 2014, she joins The Glimmerglass Festival to cover the roles of Kate Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly* and Sondra Finchley in *An American Tragedy*. Recent roles include two Rossini heroines: Angelina in *La Cenerentola* with Yale Opera and Rosina in *Il barbiere di siviglia* in the family performance at Central City Opera. Other major credits include Romeo in Bellini's *I Capuleti e i Montecchi* with Yale Opera (2013), Despina in *Così fan tutte* (2012), and Antonia's Mother in *Les contes d'Hoffmann* (2011), both with Connecticut Lyric Opera. In 2011 and 2012 she was a member of the Wolf Trap Opera Studio. An active concert soloist, she has performed with the Voices of Cooperstown, the Waterbury Symphony Orchestra, and the American Symphony Orchestra. She has received prizes from Yale University (Lotte Lenya Scholarship, 2013), the Bard College Concerto Competition (2009, 2010), the Classical Singer University Competition (national semifinalist, 2010), and the Presser Foundation (2009). She holds a bachelor's degree from Bard College and a master's degree from Yale University.

Chinese bass **Wei Wu** returns for his second season in WNO's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program. Last season with WNO he was a member of the ensemble in the world premiere of *The Lion, the Unicorn, and Me* and was seen as Second Armored Man in *The Magic Flute*. He

recently appeared as the Four Villains in *Les contes d'Hoffmann* at the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing in a production by WNO Artistic Director Francesca Zambello. He has also recently performed Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* with Opera Arkansas and appeared in concert as bass soloist in Mozart's *Requiem* with the Grand Junction Symphony and in Verdi's *Requiem* with the Colorado Springs Philharmonic. He recently made his Alice Tully Hall debut singing in concert with performers from China's *I Sing Beijing* opera program. He has appeared on stage as Ferrando in *Il trovatore* and Tom in *Un ballo in maschera* with China National Opera; and as Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, Doctor Grenvil/Marchese in *La traviata*, Olin Blich in *Susannah*, Colline in *La bohème*, Jigger in *Carousel*, Dr. Gibbs in *Our Town*, and Figaro in *Le nozze di Figaro* with University of Colorado Opera. He has also appeared as Colline in *La bohème* in concert performances with the Colorado Springs Philharmonic. Other past performances include appearances at the China National Opera House, Roma Auditorium Symphony, and with Opera Hong Kong. In 2010 and 2012, he was a district finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. Upcoming performances include Colline in the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Performance of WNO's *La bohème* and The King in WNO's *The Little Prince*.

ABOUT WASHINGTON NATIONAL OPERA

Washington National Opera (WNO) is one of the leading opera companies in the United States. Founded in 1956 and now an affiliate of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the company boasts numerous artistic highlights, including world premieres, commissioning of new works and new productions, international tours, and performances by some of opera's most admired artists. WNO productions have been heard around the world, through radio and television broadcasts on WETA-FM, NPR, SiriusXM Satellite Radio, and PBS, as well as through audio and video recordings.

WNO recently launched the American Opera Initiative, a comprehensive new commissioning program that brings contemporary American stories to the stage while fostering and developing the talents of new American composers and librettists. WNO contributes to the future of opera through two other signature artist-development programs: the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program is a leading resident-training program for artists on the verge of international careers, and the WNO Opera Institute nurtures the ambitions of high-school-age singers and pianists from across the nation during an intensive three-week summer program.

WNO's education and access initiatives include year-round programs in public schools throughout the region; *Generation O*, a popular discount-ticket initiative for young people; and a variety of lectures and discussions for every production on the season calendar. Among the most popular of WNO's community programs is M&M'S® *Opera in the Outfield*, which brings free, live simulcasts of opera to Nationals Park for thousands of opera fans as well as new audiences.

ABOUT THE DOMINGO-CAFTRITZ YOUNG ARTIST PROGRAM

Founded by Plácido Domingo and soon to begin its 13th season, the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program guides young singers, coaches, and accompanists on the verge of international careers. The program provides intensive study with renowned vocal and drama coaches and offers voice lessons, language classes, career guidance, and master classes with Washington National Opera staff and guest artists. The Domingo-Cafritz Young Artists also have the opportunity to perform and cover roles in WNO productions.

In addition to many performances on the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage, the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artists have performed at the White House, Teatro alla Scala in Milan, Opéra de Monte-Carlo, the Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia in Valencia, the United States Senate, the Supreme Court, the Music Center at Strathmore, the Smithsonian Institution, the Mexican

Cultural Institute, and numerous embassies. They have also appeared in concert with Maestro Domingo at the Reignwood Theatre in Beijing.

Each season, the Young Artists sing a fully staged performance with orchestra in the Kennedy Center Opera House as part of the WNO season. Past productions have included *La traviata*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, and *Madama Butterfly* conducted by Maestro Domingo; and *Così fan tutte*, *Don Giovanni*, and *The Magic Flute* conducted by WNO Music Director Philippe Auguin. Next season's production will be *La bohème*, which will be performed on Friday, November 14, 2014.

Graduates of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program have gone on to successful careers including performances at the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, LA Opera, New York City Opera, The Glimmerglass Festival, Santa Fe Opera, National Symphony Orchestra, Carnegie Hall, Bayreuth Festival, Glyndebourne Festival, Berlin State Opera, Teatro Real in Madrid, and Opéra de Monte-Carlo.

Auditions for places in the program's 2015-2016 season will be held series of national auditions throughout the fall of 2014 in Washington, San Francisco, New York, Chicago, and Cincinnati. More details will be announced in the coming months.

FUNDING CREDITS:

Major support for WNO is provided by Jacqueline Badger Mars.

David and Alice Rubenstein are the Presenting Underwriters of WNO.

The Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program is made possible through the generous support of The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation.

Additional funding for the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program is provided by Judy and Billy Cox.

For more information about Washington National Opera,
visit www.kennedy-center.org/wno.

Visit www.facebook.com/WashingtonNationalOpera
for behind-the-scenes news, special offers, and advance notice of events.

Follow [@dcopera](https://twitter.com/dcopera) on Twitter for up-to-the-minute news, offers, and more.

Patrons 30 and under and active-duty members of the military are invited to join the Kennedy Center's *MyTix* program for special discount offers and chances to win free tickets.

For more information, visit www.kennedy-center.org/mytix.

MyTix is part of the *Rubenstein Arts Access Program*.

PRESS CONTACT*:

Michael Solomon
(202) 416-8453
masolomon@kennedy-center.org

TICKETS & INFORMATION:

(202) 467-4600; (800) 444-1324
www.kennedy-center.org/wno