



Western
Music

Don Wright Faculty of Music

OPERA AT WESTERN PRESENTS
**OPERA AND MUSICAL THEATRE GALA
WITH EARLY MUSIC STUDIO**

Saturday, January 31, 2026
8 p.m., von Kuster Hall

PROGRAM

- Chaconne from *Roland*, part one Jean-Baptiste Lully (1632-1687)
- Terzetto, from *Alcina – Non è amor, nè gelosia* George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)
Kendall Simon, Victoria Robinson, Lan Yang
- Aria, from *Theodora - As with Rosy Steps the Morn*
Zhongyi Wang
- Laudamus te, from Gloria RV589* Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)
Cosette Holliday, Ruijia Yang
- Chaconne from *Roland*, part two Jean-Baptiste Lully
- Two Daughters of this aged stream, from King Arthur* Henry Purcell (1659-1695)
Zhoulun (Joanna) Li, Lidia Permiakova
- From The Fairy Queen:
First Music: Prelude
- If Love's a sweet passion*
Eden Volpe-Rule and chorus
- Dance for the Fairies*
- Now the night is chas'd away*
Yi-Fan Lai and chorus
- From the cantata - *Aminta e Fillide: Per Abbattere il Rigor* George Frideric Handel
Wenke Li, Bailey Williams
- Chaconne from *Roland*, part three Jean-Baptiste Lully
- Intermission -
- Chorus of The Cigarette Girls from G. Bizet's *Carmen*
Full company
- "Mira, o Norma" from V. Bellini's *Norma*
Yi-Fan Lai, Lan Yang
- "Le faccio un inchino" from D. Cimarosa's *Il matrimonio Segreto*
Lidia Permiakova, Cosette Holliday, Zhongyi Wang

“We are Women” from L. Bernstein’s *Candide*
Zhoulan (Joanna) Li, Victoria Robinson

“Via resti servità” from W. A. Mozart’s *Le nozze di Figaro*
Wenke Li, Ruijia Yang

“Schläft sie?” From R. Strauss’ *Ariadne auf Naxos*
Lan Yang, Yi-Fan Lai, Kendall Simon

“Nous sommes assaillis!” from P. Viardot’s *Cendrillon*
Bailey Williams, Lidia Permiakova, Wenke Li

“Ecco la cappellina” from G. Puccini’s *Gianni Schicchi*
Eden Volpe-Rule, Ruijia Yang, Zhongyi Wang, Felix Stueckmann

“Their Spinning Wheel Unwinds” from B. Britten’s *The Rape of Lucretia*
Victoria Robinson, Cosette Holliday, Bailey Williams, Zhongyi Wang

“Zu hilfe! Zu hilfe!” from W. A. Mozart’s *Die Zauberflöte*
Zhoulan (Joanna) Li, Eden Volpe-Rule, Kendall Simon

“Salve Regina” from F. Poulenc’s *Dialogues des Carmélites*
Full company

SINGERS

Soloists

Cosette Holliday
Yi-Fan Lai
Wenke Li
Zhoulan (Joanna) Li
Lidia Permiakova
Victoria Robinson
Kendall Simon
Felix Stueckmann
Eden Volpe-Rule
Zhongyi Wang

Bailey Williams
Lan Yang
Ruijia Yang

Ensemble

Sarah Abado
Lauren Brown
Ana Kosoric
Isabella Mackie
Meghan Raddon
Ellieanna Yurchuk

EARLY MUSIC STUDIO

Joseph Lanza, *Director*
Borys Medicky, *Co-director, Keyboard Consultant*
Seohyang Oh, *Teaching Assistant*

Violins: Joseph Lanza, Helen Faucher,
Hijun (Kelly) Lee, Yuye (Jerry) Ma,
Alexander Illya Matwijw, Julian Trippell
Violas: Cian Diamond, Tasman Tantasawat
Cellos: Isaac Lee, Thomas Gadd

Flute: Caedwyn Boyd
Bassoon: Yaron Felter-Gonen
Keyboards: Borys Medicky, Ben Connors,
Yanni Cui, Qianying (Rosalia) Li

PRODUCTION TEAM

Music Director: Simone Luti
Stage Director: Anthony Rodrigues
Stage Manager: Rebecca Delhorbe-Young
Assistant Stage Manager: Sylvia Luo

Production Manager: Bryan Hart
Assistant Conductor: Theodore Chow
Pianists: Theodore Chow, Andrea He

PROGRAM NOTES

Tonight's Baroque portion of the 2026 Western *Opera Gala* explores a wide gamut of human experience: love, the drama that comes with it, courage in the face of harsh injustice, deeply held beliefs... There is 'naked' treachery, as well as the irony that comprises the ups and downs of love. A bit of Puckish humour, the victory of light over darkness, and finally, the hard work of dealing with difficult attitudes.

We start right away with high drama. The trio: "*Non è amor, nè gelosia*" means "*it is not love, nor jealousy*". Alcina is found out: her love is but a spell, and her powers depend upon deception. All is revealed; the truth is confronted.

In "*As with Rosy Steps the Morn*" Irene remains steadfast in her beliefs, even if the cost is her life. "*Laudamus Te*" is Latin for "We praise you".

Then, we travel to an earlier musical time: Henry Purcell and 17th century English theatre.

The "*Two Daughters by an aged Stream*" are mythological sirens, who seduce men with their irresistible beauty... to their deaths.

"*If Love's a Sweet Passion, why Does it Torment*" presents us not only the irony of love itself, but the struggles a lover has with it.

"*Now the Night is Chas'd Away*" is the celebration of light, and a new day, as well as King Oberon's birthday.

For the finale, we return to Handel: "*Per Abbattere il Rigor*." The English translation of this is: "*To subdue the rigor*" (of a cruel heart). This musical setting seems to suggest that the task will require a lot of energy and determination!

The Early Music Studio ("EMS") is dedicated to the exploration of music performance practices of the 17th and 18th century. This exploration is a challenging and ongoing journey for all of us. At the same time, it offers a treasure trove of discoveries. Our program has been greatly blessed with 13 annual residencies on our campus by musicians of the Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra. The EMS has wanted to share the rewards of this exploration with the faculty's vocal students: hence our great fortune to present these Gala co-productions with Opera Western.

We wanted to go further... so we invited two distinguished professional singers in our midst to share their insights in baroque performance practice with our vocal students this year.

Dr. Katherine Helsen and Ariel Harwood-Jones have volunteered to present a sort of "in house residency" by offering workshops and coachings for all the students you will hear on the baroque part of our Gala tonight. From all of us, both faculty and students, our deepest and heartfelt thanks to Kate and Ariel!

Program notes by Joseph Lanza

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We extend our deepest thanks to the many donors who give to Opera at Western. Your generous support is part of what makes these incredible productions possible. We fondly remember the late Ilona Janoschek who impacted countless students during her lifetime and chose to continue doing so as part of her legacy at Western. We also acknowledge the Late Reverend Edward Jackman and the Jackman Foundation, for their passionate support of the arts and Opera at Western. For information on how to create your own impact, contact Carole Metron at cmetron3@uwo.ca.

Join us in March for Opera at Western's final production of 2025-26:
Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* March 5-8
Purchase tickets: music.uwo.ca/events/opera.html

Upcoming performance of the Early Music Studio (von Kuster Hall):
Monday, March 30 (7:30 pm)