



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
**TEACHERS  
OF SINGING**  
\*\*\*  
South Africa Chapter

# South Africa Chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing (SANATS) Inaugural Conference



**Stellenbosch University**  
**19-21 July 2023**

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## Word of Welcome from the President

*Dear SANATS friends and colleagues,*

*What an auspicious occasion this is, hosting the first SANATS conference at my Alma Mater, Stellenbosch University. I would like to extend a hearty welcome to all whom have travelled here from South Africa and a special welcome to our friends and colleagues who travelled to South Africa from abroad. I hope that your experiences here are enriching and that you share our spirit of generosity, camaraderie, and friendship. This is a time of innovation, of new beginnings, new friendships, and collaborations. Although there are several individuals to thank for making this event possible, I would like to start by thanking the SANATS board, Dr Bronwen Forbay, Dr Laetitia Orlandi, Ms Lize Thomas, and Ms Lauren Dasappa for their tireless efforts in making this conference a success. Thank you also to our international NATS region governor, Dr Sarah Holman, for her continued support and guidance. Lastly, thank you to Cape Town Opera for their valuable contribution to the conference and to Prof Mario Nell and Stellenbosch University for hosting us. Please enjoy the conference and I look forward to learning from the wonderful presenters that we have lined up this year.*

## Financial Support

This conference is made possible by the generous support of Prof Mirna Nel, Deputy Dean of Research at the Faculty of Humanities at North-West University, the MASARA (Musical Arts in South Africa: Resources and Applications) Research Entity (NWU), Stellenbosch University, and Furman University. This conference is partially funded by the NATS Discretionary Fund Grant.



## Conference Proceedings

DAY 1: 19 JULY	PRESENTER	TOPIC	VENUE
<b>09:00-10:00</b> Registration			Endler Foyer
<b>10:00-10:15</b>	Dr Conroy Cupido	Welcome	Jannasch Hall
<b>10:30-11:30</b>	Keynote address: Dr Diana Allan	<i>Global Connections: The Wisdom Among Us</i>	Jannasch Hall
<b>11:30-12:30</b>	Nancy Bos	<i>Empowered Voices: Overcome Your Fear, Unleash Your Potential</i>	Jannasch Hall
<b>12:30-13:30</b>	Dr Conroy Cupido	<i>Exploring how an Understanding and Awareness of one's Enneagram type can Promote Well-being among Singer-Teachers</i>	Jannasch Hall
<b>13:30-14:30</b> LUNCH			
<b>14:30-15:30</b>	Cape Town Opera Chorus	Concert: <i>Devotion</i>	Fismer Hall
<b>15:30-16:30</b>	Thomas Erlank	<i>Exploring how Emotion Regulation Strategies could mitigate Music Performance Anxiety through Technical Action Research</i>	Jannasch Hall
<b>16:30-17:00</b> TEA			
<b>17:00-18:00</b>	Nancy Bos	<i>Singing Through Change: Women's Voices in Midlife, Menopause, and Beyond</i>	
<b>18:00-19:00</b>	<b>Plenary Panel Discussion:</b>  Dr Laetitia Orlandi (Panel Moderator)  Dr Conroy Cupido, Ms Lize Thomas, Ms Lauren Dasappa, Dr Bronwen Forbay, Dr Antoinette Olivier	<i>A Reflection of Pedagogy and Prominent Voice Teachers in South Africa in the last 50 years</i>	Jannasch Hall

<b>DAY 2: 20 JULY</b>	<b>PRESENTER</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>VENUE</b>
<b>10:00-11:00</b>	Robert Gillmer Prof Alethea de Villiers	<i>Integrating Contemporary Commercial Music in Education: Enhancing Engagement and Expanding Musical Horizons</i>	Jannasch Hall
<b>11:00-12:00</b>	Lauren Dasappa Xander Kritzinger Elna van der Merwe	<i>The Relevance of Afrikaans Folk Songs Presented as Art Songs. A Lecture Recital of Ten Afrikaans Folks Songs - Arranged by Xander Kritzinger</i>	Fismer Hall
<b>12:00-13:00</b>	Rachelle Jonck	<i>The Singer's Skill Set: Learning from Historical Treatises and Recordings to Empower the Singer of Today</i>	Jannasch Hall
<b>13:00-14:00 LUNCH</b>			
<b>14:00-15:00</b>	Rachelle Jonck	Master Class SU Students	Fismer Hall
<b>15:00-16:00</b>	Rachelle Jonck	Master Class CTO Young Artists	Fismer Hall
<b>16:00-16:30 TEA</b>			
<b>16:30-17:30</b>	Dr Laetitia Orlandi	<i>Connectedness and Sacred Experiences: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Five Pianists' Spiritual Music-making Experiences</i>	Jannasch Hall
<b>17:30-18:30</b>	<b>Plenary Panel Discussion:</b>  Dr Laetitia Orlandi (Panel Moderator)  Dr Diana Allan, Dr Conroy Cupido, Dr Alexis Davis-Hazell, Dr Bronwen Forbay, Dr Sarah Holman, Dr Randall Umstead	<i>How do South African Voice Teachers Situate Themselves in the Greater NATS Environment?</i>	Jannasch Hall

<b>DAY 3: 21 JULY</b>	<b>PRESENTER</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>VENUE</b>
<b>10:00-11:00</b>	Keynote address: Dr Andile Khumalo	<i>The Shape of Voice in Contemporary African Music</i>	Jannasch Hall
<b>11:00-12:00</b>	Dr Antoinette Olivier	<i>Lived Experiences of Emma Renzi</i>	Jannasch Hall
<b>12:00-13:00</b>	Alexis Davis-Hazell	<i>Pedagogical Principles Applied to Art Songs and Spirituals by African American Women Composers: Selections for Beginning Singers</i>	Jannasch Hall
<b>13:00-14:00 LUNCH</b>			
<b>14:00-15:00</b>	Lauren Dasappa, Dr Andile Khumalo	<i>A Lecture Recital Nurturing Versatility and Excellence: Transforming Vocal Training for South African Singers in the Global Music Landscape: A Lecture Recital</i>	Fismer Hall
<b>15:00-16:00</b>	Dr Ollie Watts Davis, Dr Laetitia Orlandi	<i>Toward Justice and Shared Humanity: Art Song of Black Americans as Lens, Language, Vision, and Hope</i>	Fismer Hall
<b>16:00-16:30 TEA</b>			
<b>16:30-17:15</b>	Dr Bronwen Forbay, Dr Pieter Grobler	<i>Songs About Spring: Accessible Afrikaans Art Songs and Art Song Cycles for the Lyric-Coloratura Soprano</i>	Fismer Hall
<b>17:30-18:00</b>	Dr Conroy Cupido	Closing Remarks:	Fismer Hall

# KEYNOTES

## ANDILE KHUMALO

### Title

The shape of voice in contemporary African music.

### Abstract

Voice is central to both traditional or indigenous and contemporary African music. As a point of departure, we perceive voice as a tool we use to communicate with one another as humans, giving each other voice. The understanding of the voice is contextual, defined by how the sounds produced by the voice are understood within a particular context. An example could be taken from amaZulu speaking isiZulu – their shared understanding of the use of voice, including tonal fluctuations, allows them to understand one another. In other words, cultural experience is critical in understanding the voice within the African context.



The context also shapes how we choose to hear whether what is being sounded is musical. Here we look at the recitation of praise songs, which blurs the line between spoken voice and singing voice. How do we decide whether something is musical or not? Cultural experience plays a more significant role, but what also plays an even more prominent role is the listener's willingness to open their ears to new adventures that allow them to hear the voice as a diverse, complex instrument that carries the DNA of culture and cultures presented in the voice.

My focus on voice for this presentation will look at how African culture's use of voice has influenced the approach to composing for voice in my music and in the music of other African contemporary composers. In addition, I will examine the influence of African languages and overtone singing in constructing melody and harmonic worlds. I hope such a presentation may enrich and reinforce a deeper understanding of the African voice, particularly its use in contemporary music.

### Bio

**Andile Khumalo** (b. 1978) was born in uMlazi township, south of Durban. He holds a doctorate in music from Columbia University, a master's degree from The State University of Music and Performing Arts Stuttgart, and a Bachelor of Music from the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Dr Khumalo is a senior lecturer at Wits University, where he lectures in composition, music theory and orchestration. Khumalo has also been invited as a guest lecturer by universities in the USA, Germany, the UK and South Africa. He has received several prestigious awards, including a Civitella Ranieri Fellowship.

Dr Khumalo is one of the highly performed South African composers internationally. His music has been performed in the USA, Japan, Germany, France, the UK and Norway. His recent composition, *The Broken Mirrors of Time* (2021), was premiered in Oslo and Donaueschingen, while his newest string quartet premiered in February 2023, at the Eclat Festival in Germany. He is currently working on a song cycle influenced by the overtone singing of amaXhosa people, as well as on a new opera. Khumalo's research interests include African Nguni music, spectralism, and the perception of time.

## DIANA ALLAN

### Title

Global connections: the wisdom among us.

### Abstract

The recent COVID-19 pandemic taught us many things. It taught us that viruses can be extremely deadly. It taught us the importance of washing our hands and of protecting ourselves and our health by wearing masks. It taught us the need for physical distancing. But most importantly – it taught us that the world is a much smaller place than we realised.



My perception of the vast world changed as Zoom meetings became the norm.

We found that we could meet with colleagues from across the globe much more easily than we had ever imagined. Out of necessity, we started figuring out how to teach lessons, conduct masterclasses, hold meetings, and even produce a whole NATS National Conference online.

Through these COVID-related experiences and through recent international connectivity with the Summer 2022 NATS and ICVT International Connectivity Panels, the February 2023 NATS International Region Conference, presenting a session for a Summer Intensive conference in India in May, and a recent NATS trip to the UK, I have learned a great deal from our current global connections. No country or part of the world is the arbiter of all knowledge. We are so much richer when we share with each other. It is time we begin sharing with, listening to and gaining wisdom from singers and teachers from every musical culture.

In this session, I would like to share the various ways that NATS is facilitating these connections. As we connect, we learn that there truly is wisdom among us.

### Bio

The soprano **Diana Allan** has appeared in operatic and concert performances throughout the Midwest and Southwest. She has also performed in Germany, the Czech Republic, Italy and Brazil. Dr Allan has sung such leading operatic roles as Violetta in Verdi's *La Traviata*, Rosalinda in Johann Strauss's *Die Fledermaus*, Despina in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, Laetitia in Gian Carlo Menotti's *The Old Maid and the Thief* and she also has extensive oratorio experience. In addition to her operatic and oratorio performances, Dr Allan created the role of Eeba Streeba, a character in the children's television programme *Cat Paws in Motion*, which has aired on Public Broadcasting Service stations throughout the United States. Dr Allan has over 30 years of university-level teaching experience and she recently retired after working for 26 years in the voice faculty of The University of Texas at San Antonio.

Dr Allan has worked with performers of all ages and all performance levels to achieve success. However, many of them have struggled with performance-related issues, such as performance anxiety, lack of trust in learned skills and frequent underperformance in pressure situations. Through her mentoring experience, it became increasingly apparent that technical skill was not the only skill development necessary for performers to enjoy strong and successful performances. Therefore, Dr Allan has done extensive study in counselling, cognitive-behavioural strategies and sports psychology, and she is a certified Mental Game Coaching Professional (MGCP). She has coached or worked with performers throughout the United States, Ireland, Australia, Germany, Belgium, Nigeria, and Iran.

Dr Allan is the author of *The Mindful Musician: Physical and Mental Strategies for Optimal Performance* for Shanghai Conservatory of Music Press (in press). She is also the co-author of *The Relaxed Musician: Mental Preparation for Confident Performances* and the author of numerous articles, collected on her website, [musicpeakperformance.com](http://musicpeakperformance.com). This website has a readership of performers from over 180 countries.

Dr Allan, a long-time member of the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS), just completed her second term as NATS National Vice President for Auditions and, in June 2020, assumed her role as National President-Elect – a two-year position she will hold before becoming National President in 2022.

## RACHELLE JONCK

### Title

The singer's skill set: learning from historical treatises and recordings to empower the singer of today.

A lecture/workshop led by Rachelle Jonck, co-founder of Bel Canto Boot Camp.

### Abstract

**READ:** Join us as we browse the writings of Tosi, Corri, Celoni, Garaudè, Mengozzi, García and others who broke down so eloquently the skills needed to bring music written for the unamplified voice to life: legato, laryngeal registration, dynamics, agility, ornamentation, trill. In addition, these masters left us a treasure trove of exercises and vocalises pointing the way to mastery of the voice. What do we glean from these about how singers were trained in times before ours?

**LISTEN:** We explore the riches of historical recordings in the first decades of recorded sound. We meet the superstars of the past and compare sound to word. How closely do their performances resemble the written word of the treatises that predate them? Are there consistent traits in their singing that lead us to understand how singers were trained around the turn of the 20th century?

**SING:** Bring a warmed-up voice and we'll explore some of the old exercises together. Some can be hard to memorise, so we'll add in some short-form exercises that are easy to remember.

**DISCUSS:** Stick around to mull over some questions with colleagues. How has unamplified singing changed in the age of the microphone? Are the old ways of training voices still useful? How can we make skill set practice fun for ourselves and our students?

(You can access Bel Canto Boot Camp's Syllabus at <https://belcantobootcamp.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Skill-Set-Summer-2023-Syllabus.pdf> to get a glimpse into how they help singers build skills. There are habit trackers if you need help staying focused! Rachelle's lecture will include a slide show with additional research material to help us rub shoulders with the singers of the past.)

### Bio

**Rachelle Jonck** received her musical training at the Conservatory of Stellenbosch University in South Africa, majoring in both piano and musicology. After completing her studies, Rachelle joined Cape Town Opera as a rehearsal pianist and vocal coach. She also taught at the Opera School of the University of Cape Town. Moving to Pretoria, she served as chorus master and assistant conductor at the State Theatre Opera. She founded the State Theatre Philharmonic Choir and, in a fruitful relationship with the conductor Gérard Korsten, she presented a wide range of choral works including Bach's *St John Passion*, the Brahms *Requiem* and the Verdi *Requiem*.

For her contributions to opera in South Africa, she was awarded an FNB Vita Award, with special mention of her work with the State Theatre Opera Chorus and the Nederburg Opera Prize – South Africa's premier opera award. Throughout her operatic career in her home country, Rachelle maintained a busy concert schedule, accompanying local and visiting singers and instrumentalists, and serving as an official accompanist for Unisa's International String and Vocal Competitions.





In 1998 Rachelle moved to New York City as Head Vocal Coach and Assistant Conductor of the Bel Canto at Caramoor series, working alongside Will Crutchfield. Her work with the young artists of this company was featured in an article in *Early Music America*. Balancing her love for opera and song literature, she maintains a busy vocal coaching studio and enjoys recital collaborations when time permits.

Rachelle's studio includes professionals whose careers take them to the largest opera houses in the world and younger singers who are still on the verge of a professional career. While her range of repertoire is wide, she has made a name for herself in New York City as a specialist in the Italian style – focusing on the music of Handel, Mozart, and the bel canto masters, including Verdi.

Rachelle has taught master classes at a variety of training programmes, conservatories and universities, including Palm Beach Opera's Benenson Young Artist Program, Boston Conservatory at Berklee, the University of Missouri, Kent State University and Dickinson College. Her masterclass topics, while related to her main field of study, also explore the wider application of the bel canto approach to singing. These topics include: "One breath impulse per phrase: legato in practice," "Legato and language: breath and consonants," "Recitative study techniques," and "The Italian opera libretto: first things first when studying a role." She has been on the faculty at Manhattan School of Music, Westminster Choir College and The Steans Music Institute at Ravinia.

In addition to regular concerts at the Caramoor Festival, Rachelle's recital appearances in the United States include performances at the Weill Recital Hall, Opera America, the Bard Festival, the Monadnock Music Festival, Music Mountain, Van Cliburn Concerts, National Gallery Recitals, Art Song of Williamsburg, and the Dame Myra Hess broadcast concert series. She has appeared multiple times as a guest on Garrison Keillor's *A Prairie Home Companion*. Her recording *Gabriel Fauré: 30 Mélodies* (together with tenor Steven Tharp) was released in 2015.

As a conductor, Jonck made her debut conducting the Orchestra of St Luke's, in collaboration with the David Parsons Dance Company, soon after her arrival in the United States. She worked with this highly acclaimed orchestra again, in a collaboration with Pascal Riout, for New York Children's Free Opera and Dance at the Kaye Playhouse.

Rachelle returned to South Africa to conduct Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* at the Spier Festival in Stellenbosch. She made her operatic conducting debut in New York City, conducting the Orchestra of St. Luke's in their production of Bizet's *Le docteur Miracle* at the 92nd Street Y. For Caramoor, she conducted Mozart's *Così fan tutte* as well as Pauline Viardot's *Cendrillon*. Since 2015, she has been the music director of Westminster Opera Theater (Westminster Choir College's undergraduate opera programme), where she conducted Pauline Viardot's *Cendrillon*, Gilbert and Sullivan's *Iolanthe*, Grétry's *Zémire et Azor*, and Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*.

In the summer of 2017, Rachelle conducted Rossini's *Petite messe solennelle* during Caramoor's 20th-anniversary celebration and the farewell season of Bel Canto at Caramoor. Other collaborations for the 2017/18 season included debuts at Baltimore Concert Opera and Opera Delaware, conducting Massenet's *Werther*, a residency as the guest coach at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, which included a masterclass in recitative study techniques, masterclasses at the University of Missouri and Peabody Preparatory at Johns Hopkins and guest coaching at the Atlanta Opera Studio Program.

During the summer of 2018, she established a role study programme at Teatro Nuovo, which is Will Crutchfield's new bel canto venture. She led 45 young singers in studying roles from Mozart's five mature Italian operas (*Idomeneo*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte* and *La clemenza di Tito*). The

Mozart Project introduced singers to a structured way of studying a new role, starting with libretto study (including the basics of Italian poetry), recitative study techniques, ornamentation and cadenzas and culminating in memorisation techniques. In the 2018/2019 season, she led *Don Giovanni* for Baltimore Concert Opera's 10th anniversary season and led productions of *Madama Butterfly* and *Anna Bolena* in 2019/2020. In the summer of 2019, she led Teatro Nuovo's production of *La gazza ladra* to critical acclaim.

During the COVID-19 pandemic of early 2020, she established Bel Canto Boot Camp with her longtime collaborator Derrick Goff. It is home to The Vaccai Project: a course that teaches the elements of bel canto singing, Italian style and period notation practices, ornamentation and variation, and classic Italian poetry and libretto form, all based on Vaccai's *Metodo di canto*. In its initial two sessions, the project grew to include singers, teachers, coaches and conductors from around the world.

# SINGING AND WELLBEING

NANCY BOS

## Title

Empowered voices: overcome your fear, unleash your potential.

## Abstract

Nancy Bos, a highly regarded expert in voice science, personal development, and empowerment, will guide the audience through a series of immersive exercises and insightful discussions, empowering them to overcome fear and unleash the full potential of their voices.



Relying on her personal history with severe performance anxiety, her extensive experience empowering others' voices, and her unique approach, Nancy will help audience members tap into their inner strength and communicate their message with clarity and conviction.

What can you expect at the Empowered Voices Workshop?

1. Discover your authentic message: Through Nancy's expert guidance, you'll delve deep into the realms of self-discovery, uncovering the unique power and authenticity of your voice. Learn how to harness your inner strength and express yourself with confidence and purpose.
2. Overcome limiting beliefs: Nancy will share powerful techniques to help you identify and overcome self-doubt, fear of judgment and other limiting beliefs that hinder your voice. Step into a new realm of self-belief and unlock your true potential.
3. Community support: Connect with a vibrant community of like-minded individuals who are on a similar journey of personal growth. Share insights, stories and challenges, and forge meaningful connections that extend beyond the session, providing ongoing support for your empowerment journey.

This presentation is part of the Empowered Voices World Tour ([empowered-voices.com](https://empowered-voices.com)). Join us at the Empowered Voices session and witness the transformative impact it will have on your life.

## Title

Singing through change: women's voices in midlife, menopause, and beyond.

## Abstract

For cis females, voice maturation doesn't end in the teenage years. Some singers will go on to experience somewhat predictable voice fluctuations during the menstrual cycle, which is relatively well-known in the voice community. However, the 8 to 10 year-long menopausal transition's potential effects on the singing voice remain subject to a "strange secretiveness" in the pedagogic and performance communities.

In order to swing the door wide open on the issue, Cate Frazier-Neely, Nancy Bos and Joanne Bozeman interviewed 56 female singers of various genres and backgrounds and reviewed associated research and professional opinions. The result was *Singing Through Change: Women's Voices in Midlife, Menopause, and Beyond* (2020, StudioBos), a book written for singers and those who support them.

In this presentation, Nancy will provide insights into how singing can be impacted by the natural, biological metamorphosis of shifting hormonal balance in the body. The presentation will feature:

- A sampling of the interviews the presenters have done with nearly 60 women; real women's stories of singing during the menopausal transition.
- Discussion of typical voice changes and adjustments to these changes.
- Consideration of less common physical issues that voice teachers should be aware of.
- Empowerment of women who sing and are in perimenopause or past menopause.
- Information for those who have never gone through menopause to understand how associated voice difficulties impact singing and the singers' psyches.

## Bio

**Nancy Bos** is a highly respected and experienced voice expert who has dedicated over three decades to the voice industry. She is an accomplished author, professional singer, keynote speaker and thought leader.

Nancy is the author of several books, including

*Singing Through Change: Women's Voices in Midlife, Menopause, and Beyond*

*Singing 101: Vocal Basics and Fundamental Singing Skills for All Styles and Abilities*

*The Teen Girl's Singing Guide: Tips for Making Your Dreams a Reality*

Her books provide valuable resources for singers of all levels and abilities, demonstrating Nancy's commitment to helping individuals improve their vocal abilities.

In addition to her writing, Nancy is the founder of StudioBos Media, which provides high-quality educational resources such as the Celebrate Singing video library and the Empower Your Voice podcast. Nancy has also taught singing in her independent studio for over 25 years and has served as adjunct faculty at various institutions, including Cornish College, Seattle Pacific University, and Bellevue College. She has held various leadership roles in the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS), including serving as Vice President for Membership from 2018 to 2020.

Nancy is a member of the Recording Academy, PAVA, and is a Distinguished Voice Professional through NYSTA. Her extensive knowledge of vocal technique, physiology, performance psychology, and mindfulness practices, combined with her compassionate and effective teaching style, has made her a highly sought-after voice expert who has positively impacted the lives of many.

For more information, please visit [nancybos.com](http://nancybos.com).

## THOMAS ERLANK

### Title

Exploring how emotion regulation strategies could mitigate music performance anxiety through technical action research.

### Abstract

Music performance anxiety (MPA) is a prevalent occurrence in the performing arts (Dias et al., 2022, p. 1). It possesses the capability to derail a performance completely if the involved party is experiencing one or more extreme symptoms, such as a panic attack (Arlington, 2013, p. 208).

A variety of pre-emptive treatments are available, which include psychoanalytic therapies, relational and attachment-based psychotherapies, behavioural, cognitive and cognitive-behavioural therapies, multimodal therapies, hypnotherapy, etc. (Kenny, 2011). Although it is wise to work pre-emptively, learning how to deal with these types of extreme situations can only improve performance quality and the state of one's mental health (Arlington, 2013, p.217).

My approach will focus on the mitigation of MPA through means of emotion regulation (ER). ER refers to the attempt to influence one's emotions, defined as time-limited, situationally bound, and balanced (positive or negative) states (McRae & Gross, 2020, p.1). Similarly stated, ER is a multidimensional construct that broadly refers to a heterogeneous set of actions designed to modulate which emotions we have, when we have them, and how we experience and express them (Cisler & Olatunji, 2012, p. 183).

Kusev and Kobylińska argue that the effectiveness of ER strategies depends on the interaction of the attributes of a situation and the personality traits of the individual attempting to regulate his/her emotions (2019, p.1). In this regard, flexibility becomes an important aspect of how I will be conducting my research.

Technical action research (TAR) is the most suited method to the parameters of this study (Smith, 2023). As a participant-researcher, I will make use of an action research cycle, a process by which four stages are implemented to generate new knowledge: 1). investigating the current situation and planning changes, 2). introducing the changes, 3). monitoring the impact of the changes and collecting data, and 4). analysing and interpreting the data to generate actionable knowledge (Given, 2008, p.4).

Taking into consideration that my research will be ongoing, I will use my gained knowledge and the available literature on ER as a conceptual framework to discuss my hypothesis that MPA could potentially be mitigated through ER.

### Bio

Hailing from Cape Town, **Thomas Erlank** started his tertiary education at Stellenbosch University under the tutelage of Minette Pearce in 2008, after which he completed four years of postgraduate studies at the Royal College of Music in London, as an Oppenheimer Memorial Trust Scholarship recipient (a graduate diploma in vocal performance, a master of performance in opera vocal performance, and an artist diploma in opera vocal performance).



Ever since then, Thomas has been performing opera and concert repertoire internationally, with companies like Opernhaus Zürich, the Gulbenkian Institute in Lisbon, Moscow Chamber Orchestra, Zürich Chamber Orchestra, and the Cadogan Hall in London. Prominent operatic roles that he has performed include Tamino and Il Podesta (Mozart), Lurcanio, Grimoaldo, and Acis (Händel), and Le Chevalier de la Force (Poulenc). On the concert stage, Thomas has performed works by Mozart, Haydn, Schubert, Schumann, Saint-Saëns, Händel and Zender.

Most notably, Thomas received great praise for his performances of the Hans Zender-composed interpretation of Schubert's *Winterreise*, which was his house debut at the Opernhaus Zürich in 2018.

As of July this year, Thomas has joined the vocal faculty at the North-West University School of Music & Conservatory in Potchefstroom, working as a singing lecturer alongside doing research towards a doctorate degree in performance.

## CONROY CUPIDO

### Title

Exploring how an understanding and awareness of one's Enneagram type can promote well-being among singer-teachers.

### Abstract

In this duoethnography, Prof Conroy Cupido reflects on research he conducted with Dr Antoinette Olivier, where they explored how an understanding and awareness of each other's Enneagram styles may promote or contribute towards the well-being of singer-teachers.



While the term singer-teachers might apply to a variety of vocal performers who engage in teaching and learning, in the context of this study, the term was used to describe singers who teach applied vocal instruction at tertiary institutions. Many singer-teachers often face stressors and challenges deriving from both their academic environment and their professional careers as performers. Consequently, they need to facilitate positive relationships and effective communication skills with colleagues, mitigate challenging situations and conflict (both in the studio and on stage), show empathy towards others and find meaning and purpose in their roles as educators and performers respectively.

Although some amount of stress is inevitable in these environments, tools exist that promote the mitigation of these stressors, by fostering an understanding of what motivates us and others, what gives us meaning and purpose, and how we can approach situations in ways that attenuate conflict.

The Enneagram is such a tool that “facilitates recognition and understanding of broad patterns within human behaviour, allowing greater awareness of self and others” since “the combination of intra and interpersonal insight creates the potential for greater understanding and compassion, ideally resulting in improved relationships and respect for diversity” (Perryman et al., 2018, p. 18).

The authors have been identified as Type 3 and Type 2 respectively, and this study aims to explore how an awareness and understanding of each other's archetypes facilitates wellbeing as singer-teachers. To understand this phenomenon, the authors used Seligman's (2012) PERMA theory (positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishment) as a theoretical lens and employed duoethnography as a method, as described by Rinehart and Earl (2016).

**Keywords:** Enneagram, wellbeing, singer-teachers, positive psychology, PERMA, duoethnography

### References

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## Bio

Prof **Conroy Cupido** completed a music degree at Stellenbosch University, a master's degree in music and an artist certificate at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. He was the first South African to complete a doctorate degree in vocal performance, conferred at the University of North Texas.

He has performed roles in various operas and oratorios and has sung in many recitals, in South Africa, the United States and Europe. His research has been published in peer-reviewed journals and mainly concerns topics related to music, emotion, positive psychology and wellbeing.

During his studies abroad, Cupido was awarded the Sue Johnson Prize for Best Male Opera Singer and he was a finalist in the National Opera Association Voice Competition and the Shreveport Opera Singer of the Year Competition. He was awarded many merit-based scholarships for international study, including the Oppenheimer Memorial Trust Bursary, The National Arts Council of South Africa Award, the Schollmeier Foundation Bursary, the Dean's Camerata Opera Scholarship from the University of North Texas and The Bruce Foote Foundation Bursary.

He is currently an associate professor at North-West University and teaches applied voice, vocal pedagogy, vocal literature, and Italian and French diction.

His students have won major competitions such as the ATKV Musiqanto Competition, the Philip Moore Competition, the Mimi Coertse Singing Competition and the Unisa National Singing Competition. They have also been finalists and semifinalists in the Belvedere International Singing Competition, International Vocal Competition 's-Hertogenbosch, The Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, the Mirjam Helin International Singing Competition, the Galina Vishnevskaya International Opera Singers Competition, the Stenhammar Competition, the SAMRO Singing Competition and the Emmerich Smola Förderpreis Competition.

Cupido's students have performed at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Opera North (UK), Utah Opera, the Staatsoper Unter den Linden, Wuppertal Opera House, Theater Chemnitz, the Staatstheater Meiningen, Cape Town Opera and in the Nordrhein-Westfalen Opera Studio.

In 2013 Cupido was awarded the Prestigious Award for Teaching Excellence from North-West University and in 2017 was awarded two Institutional Research Excellence Awards for creative outputs (IRECO).

He is a director on the board of Cape Town Opera, where he chairs the Strategy Committee, and he has also served as Interim Vice-Chair. His productions at the Aardklop National Arts Festival have been nominated for a Fiësta Award on two occasions.

He was appointed as the first president of the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) South Africa Chapter in 2022.



# SCHOLARSHIP OF VOCAL TEACHING

LAUREN DASAPPA AND ANDILE KHUMALO

## Title

A lecture recital nurturing versatility and excellence: transforming vocal training for South African singers in the global music landscape.

## Performers:

Lauren Dasappa (soprano)

Liza Joubert (piano)

Ramon Alexander (piano)

## Abstract

Over the past two decades, South African singers have achieved remarkable success on the global stage, with artists like Pretty Yende, Pumeza Matshikiza, Levy Sekgapane, Musa Nkuna, and many others bringing international recognition to South Africa and its music education programmes. However, it is important to acknowledge that the experiences of these successful singers may not reflect the reality for most singers in South Africa.

The country's sole professional opera company, Cape Town Opera, faces annual funding challenges that impact the number of productions it can stage each year. Additionally, the scarcity of opera houses and limited funding often require singers to be versatile enough to participate in a range of productions beyond opera, such as Broadway shows, gospel performances and jazz concerts.

South African singers who have achieved international success while remaining in their home country have typically expanded their skills beyond operatic singing. Notable examples include the late Sibongile Khumalo and her cousin Sibongile Mngoma, Lauren Dasappa and Joyce Moholoagae. The approach taken by these accomplished singers toward the South African music scene prompts us to reconsider and reassess the training programmes for singers in South Africa, and to ensure that they are equipped for both the local and international music industries.

Now, the question arises: How can we achieve this? Dasappa has developed innovative approaches to vocal training that can be adapted for various settings, be it opera, *amakhwaya* singing or jazz, with only minor modifications. The composer Andile Khumalo has also explored this concept by showcasing the diverse sounds associated with the voice within the South African context, incorporating traditional African vocal styles from the Nguni people.

By embracing such innovative and inclusive training methods, we can better prepare South African singers for the multifaceted demands of the local music industry while also equipping them to succeed on the global stage.

**Keywords:** Innovative approaches, adaptability in vocal training, traditional African vocal styles, multifaceted demands



## Bio

**Lauren Dasappa** is a highly accomplished soprano hailing from KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. She possesses a versatile vocal ability and is known for her performances in operatic repertoire, oratorio, and baroque works. However, her musical talents extend beyond these genres, as she also excels in concert repertoire encompassing both standard and modern compositions. Additionally, Dasappa actively works towards promoting and creating awareness of African music within the classical and folk genres.

Apart from her performance career, Dasappa is a respected vocal pedagogue. She serves as a lecturer in voice studies at Stellenbosch University, where she maintains a full vocal studio. As a sought-after teacher, she conducts vocal workshops, coaches vocal ensembles, and provides guidance to recording artists and soloists for major productions. She is also involved in adjudicating eisteddfods, festivals, and vocal competitions, and she serves as an external examiner for vocal departments across South Africa.

Dasappa's influence extends beyond her teaching and performance activities. She currently holds a position as a board member of the South Africa chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS), where she serves as the secretary. This role allows her to further contribute to the development of vocal education in the country.

The impact of Dasappa's teaching is evident through her former students, who have achieved success in various fields. Many of them are involved in postgraduate programmes or engage in theatre productions nationally and internationally, spanning from operatic to theatrical and jazz contexts. Moreover, Dasappa's students have achieved notable success by winning vocal competitions both within South Africa and on the international stage.

Community development holds a special place in Dasappa's heart, and she actively participates in projects aimed at nurturing young singers from diverse communities. Through her dedication and involvement, she strives to provide opportunities and support for aspiring singers, contributing to the growth of the musical community as a whole.

## LIZA JOUBERT

### Bio

**Liza Joubert** was born and educated in Stellenbosch, studying piano under Juliana de Villiers and Betsie Cluver. She was the first resident accompanist at the Beau Soleil Music Centre in Cape Town. She is a sought-after collaborative pianist, adjudicator and teacher.



As a professional musician, Liza has been involved in numerous and varied musical activities, ranging from a series of solo and chamber music concerts on a restored 1802 Clementi piano in the historic Bertram House in Cape Town, to playing the double bass and piano for French cabaret performances throughout Southern Africa with chanteuse Daniele Pascal. She was the concert pianist aboard the MV Marco Polo luxury liner on a five week cruise between Cape Town, Buenos Aires and Antarctica. She has collaborated with musicians as diverse as avant-garde pianist Jill Richards and Belgian poet/musician Stef Bos. She has played ragtime in France and Switzerland and South African piano music in the Czech Republic.

From 2011 to 2014, Liza was an accompanist and educator at the Drakensberg Boys' Choir and performed nationally and internationally with the choir. During her stay in the Western Cape from 2015 to 2020, she embarked on several solo projects whilst maintaining an active teaching and performing schedule. She is the producer of the film "Nagmusiek", based on the seminal solo piano work by Arnold van Wyk, enhanced with a specially created visual (film) accompaniment by Pluto Panoussis and the 2016 Honours Class of the Open Window Academy. In July 2017, she performed her solo piano programme Ragtime Plus as part of the main programme at the Grahamstown National Arts Festival to capacity audiences. In March 2019, she performed her current solo project, Vredeklawers (Peace Pieces), to great acclaim at the Stellenbosch Woordfees. In March 2020, she accompanied four silent movies with her own improvised live piano playing, in Pulp Cinema as part of the Stellenbosch Woordfees. After two years back at the Drakensberg Boys' Choir as the Head of Music, Liza was delighted to return to Stellenbosch in 2023 as the Head of Music of the newly founded Cape Choral Academy.

## RAMON ALEXANDER

### Bio

Pianist and composer **Ramon Alexander** is considered a leading exponent of Cape Jazz. He studied jazz piano under Merton Barrow at The Jazz Workshop in Cape Town after he finished high school. He however graduated with a B.Sc. Agric. from Stellenbosch University in 2004 in viticulture and oenology.

Since he was selected as pianist for the Standard Bank National Youth Big Band in 2004, Alexander worked with a variety of artists such as Robbie Jansen, Errol Dyers, McCoy Mrubata, Mark Hauser, Tuur Forizone, Frank Paco's Art Ensemble, Japanese trumpet legend, Terumasa Hino and The Cape Jazz Band, led by veteran drummer Jack Mople.

His ensemble has performed at numerous local and international music festivals, notably the Cape Town International Jazz Festival, Borneo International Jazz Festival, The Darling Music Experience as well a residency at No Black Tie Jazz Club in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 2019.

Alexander has two albums to his credit. (*Picnic at Kontiki* [2011] and *Echoes from Louwskloof* [2015]). In 2018 *Cape Jazz Pianowas* released by Mountain Records. He's also produced numerous recording projects across various genres, most notably *Essence of Spring* [2018] by Cape Town jazz icon Ibrahim Khalil Shihab.

He also regularly conducts jazz ensemble workshops youth bands in the Western Cape.



## ANTOINETTE OLIVIER

### Title

Lived experiences of Emma Renzi.

### Abstract

Emma Renzi, who turned 97 in April 2023, is an internationally recognised South African opera singer, singing pedagogue and role model for a multitude of singers. I received singing lessons from her between 1990 to 2007.



Due to the nature of our connection, our interview conversations for this research project are about Renzi's professional career, her memories of a specific era, the technical aspects of teaching singing and the challenges of a professional singing career. Singing students and lecturers and music lovers can benefit from the lived experiences of this grand dame. The wealth of Renzi's first-hand experience and knowledge of styles in different genres of singing is invaluable for the development of young singers and lecturers. It is also of historical importance for South Africans to honour the legacy of a singer who gained international fame during her career.

The general aim of this research project is to conduct a narrative presentation based on interviews looking into the lived experiences of Renzi. A framework will be built to describe the plot or situations, highlight problems, special experiences, and survival moments; mention the interactions between Renzi and the audience, conductors, fellow singers, agents, and students; record her life circumstances; and, finally, focus on the meaning of Renzi's career for South Africans.

**Keywords:** Recalling memories, vocal development, pedagogical principles, teaching, appoggio, voice teachers, challenges

### Bio

Dr **Antoinette Olivier** studied music at the University of the Witwatersrand and completed a master's degree in music (*cum laude*) and a PhD in visual and performing arts with music at North-West University (NWU).

Before joining the NWU as a full-time lecturer she was a member of PACT Opera in Pretoria, working as the company manager before joining the opera chorus. She furthered her singing studies in Los Angeles and in South Africa with Emma Renzi. She is a recipient of numerous NWU awards, such as three individual awards in 2015, 2016 and 2018 by NWU for excellence in music performance for creative outputs. In 2015 Antoinette was awarded the NWU prize for Excellence in Teaching.

She has published in academic journals such as *Koers* and *SAJCH* and presented papers at international conferences. She is a member of the South African Society of Music Teachers, NATS and ISME.

In collaboration with her colleagues in the voice department at the NWU School of Music, they were recently nominated by kykNet for a Fiësta award, for an *RSG Dis Opera* production that involved all the department's singing students at the Aardklop and KKNK arts festivals. They jointly each received an NWU award for excellence in creative outputs in 2018.

Furthermore, she has served as an adjudicator for the Mimi Coertse voice competitions, as well as on the DVD screening panel at the Unisa National and International voice competitions. Antoinette is a regular external examiner for practical and academic postgraduate studies at tertiary institutions in South Africa.

## ROBERT GILLMER & ALETHEA DE VILLIERS

### Title

Integrating contemporary commercial music in education: enhancing engagement and expanding musical horizons.

### Abstract

This paper explores ways in which the diverse styles of contemporary commercial music (CCM) can be integrated into the music curricula at all levels of education. By focusing on the integration of contemporary commercial music in education, this paper aims to shed light on its importance, benefits, challenges, and strategies, empowering educators to embrace the richness and relevance of popular music genres in their teaching practices.



Moreover, the researchers explore the transformative potential of CCM. With the evolving landscape of music consumption and the ubiquity of popular music genres, it is imperative for educators to recognise the significance of incorporating these genres into music education.

This paper also examines the potential impact of contemporary commercial music on student engagement, cultural relevance, and the expansion of musical horizons. Furthermore, it delves into the challenges and strategies associated with integrating these genres into educational curricula.

The research methods employed in this qualitative study are personal observations, a literature study that entails a descriptive presentation of the literature, as well as a comparative analysis of curricula.

Preliminary findings from the study reveal that:

- (1) CCM enhances student engagement and creates meaningful connections and relevance in music education, fostering active participation and ownership in musical learning.
- (2) CCM celebrates diverse musical cultures and identities, by addressing cultural representation and inclusivity. CCM also promotes a broader understanding and appreciation of different genres and styles.
- (3) CCM expands musical horizons by breaking down genre boundaries and encouraging musical exploration. CCM also enables the development of critical listening skills and musical discernment.
- (4) The inclusion of CCM opens up avenues for creativity in diverse fields of music production and enhances innovation in music composition.

However, the inclusion of CCM is also marked with distinct challenges, which are listed as follows:

- (1) The major challenges are the entrenched traditional pedagogical approaches. Proponents of CCM need to overcome the resistance to change and the dominance of classical music traditions.

- (2) When introducing CCM, one has to address the concerns of other educators about the quality and artistic merit of contemporary commercial music.

- (3) Teaching methodologies need to be adapted and modified to accommodate the diverse musical styles in CCM.

(4) A further challenge is curriculum integration, and the alignment of CCM with existing curricula and standards, and balancing genre diversity while maintaining core musical concepts and skills.

Finally, the researchers provide recommendations for educators and policymakers on integrating contemporary commercial music effectively. The researchers also provide final reflections and highlight areas for further research and exploration in this evolving field.

**Keywords:** contemporary commercial music, music education, student engagement, cultural relevance, musical horizons, curriculum integration

## Bio

**Alethea de Villiers** is a full professor of music and the former head of the Department of Music and Performing Arts at Nelson Mandela University. She has over 30 years of experience in the education industry, including being a piano teacher, college lecturer and subject advisor, and 13 years as a university academic, during which time she has led curriculum transformation.

She has published extensively in diverse fields, including music education policy, church music, community music, cultural studies and contemporary commercial music. She has also successfully supervised doctoral and master's degree candidates. Additionally, she is a reviewer for several international and national journals and serves as an external examiner for universities in South Africa, both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

In 2008 she was a visiting professor at the Pratt Institute in New York.

At Nelson Mandela University, she serves on several committees, including the postgraduate studies committee, and the sub-ethics committee. She also serves on the Presidential Committee of ISME, is a past commissioner of ISME, is president of SASMT, and is the treasurer of the Gqeberha branch of SASMT. She is also an active member of SASRIM, HETL, NATS, the Gilbert and Sullivan Society, CatCare, and also a shore crew member of the National Sea Rescue Institute (NSRI).

Her areas of expertise include music education policy, multicultural education, democratic citizenship, music heritage, teacher education, identity, protean careers, contemporary commercial music and ethnomusicology.

**Robert Gillmer** is a singer, songwriter, performer and researcher with a wealth of experience in the music industry. Robert holds a Diploma in Music Education (*cum laude*), a bachelor's degree in music, and a master's degree in music performance. He was the first person in South Africa to specialise in the research field of contemporary commercial music (CCM) and has over 20 years of experience working with bands.

Robert has performed extensively both locally and internationally, showcasing his passion for contemporary vocal music. In addition to his industry experience, Robert is currently a CCM and jazz vocal instructor at Woodridge College and Nelson Mandela University. His expertise in teaching and mentoring young musicians adds an extra dimension to his work, making him a well-rounded music professional.

# THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY SINGER

ALEXIS DAVIS-HAZELL

## Title

Pedagogical principles applied to art songs and spirituals by African American women composers: selections for beginning singers.

## Abstract

Objective: to introduce selected art song repertoire by African American women composers, selected for beginner-level training, with an exposition of applicable pedagogical principles based on criteria for their appropriateness as teaching pieces.

The repertoire is provided not only as a resource for promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in programming and performance but specifically also to highlight its suitability as a pedagogical tool. The selected composers sustained themselves as educators out of necessity and conceived several pieces with primary or substantial pedagogical intent.

## Outcomes:

- Participants will be introduced to selected song repertoire composed and arranged by African American women composers, including Florence Price, Betty Jackson King, Zenobia Powell Perry, Lena McLin and Julia Perry, selected for beginner-level training.
- Participants will discuss priorities in assessing the difficulty of each piece and place them in sequence according to the appropriate student level.
- Participants will be provided examples of authentic interpretation/performance practice in the framework of pedagogical principles.

## Bio

The American mezzo-soprano **Alexis Davis-Hazell** is a teaching artist and singing actor of opera, concert and musical theatre repertoire. Her performances have earned her many accolades for the size and quality of her instrument, and the dramatic intensity that she brings to supporting characters.

Since contributing to the GRAMMY™ award-winning album *Gretchaninov: Passion Week* with the Phoenix Chorale, Alexis's soloist appearances include Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky*, Dvořák's *Stabat Mater*, Duruflé's *Requiem*, and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, performed with orchestras in the Southeast and Southwest U.S. She has performed a variety of roles at the International Alonzo Ortiz Tirado Opera Festival in Sonora, Mexico, Arizona Opera, Utah Festival Opera, Mississippi Opera, Opera Birmingham and Cincinnati Opera.

She has featured in over 130 performances of the Gershwins' masterwork *Porgy and Bess* at international venues, including Dresden Semperoper, Hamburgische Staatsoper, Mikhailovsky Opera in St. Petersburg, Moscow International House of Music, Polish National Opera, the Kuressaare Operadays Festival in Estonia, Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City, and San Francisco Opera.

Dr Davis-Hazell serves on the faculty of The University of Alabama School of Music as assistant director of undergraduate studies, assistant professor of voice and lyric diction, and a faculty fellow for the College of Arts and Sciences Leadership Board. She holds degrees in Vocal Performance from Temple University (B.M. Hons.) and Arizona State University (M.M., D.M.A.).

As the current National President-Elect of the National Association of Teachers of Singing, Dr Davis-Hazell continues to be an interdisciplinary collaborator, featured guest artist, clinician, and music humanities lecturer nationally and at international conferences of voice, opera, and arts research alliances.





# COLLABORATIVE PIANO

LAETITIA ORLANDI

## Title

Connectedness and sacred experiences: an interpretative phenomenological analysis of five pianists' spiritual music-making experiences.

## Abstract

The purpose of this interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is to explore how five professional pianists, employed at tertiary institutions in South Africa, make sense of spirituality in their lived music-making experiences. An IPA approach is used to investigate the meaning the phenomenon holds for the participants themselves and the way in which they make sense of their experiences (Smith et al., 2009).



Five professional pianists employed at tertiary institutions in South Africa were purposively selected for their experiences and expertise in their field and the phenomenon. Since exploring spiritual experiences is a complex process (Bender 2010), the interview questions were informed by a conceptual framework (Van der Merwe & Habron, 2015), reviews of spirituality (Selman et al., 2011), and definitions of spirituality (Boyce-Tillman, 2000, 2007; Nortjé & Van der Merwe, 2016; Palmer, 2006; Van der Merwe & Habron, 2015).

Through open-ended interview questions, participants were invited to tell stories of personal spiritual music-making experiences. The data collection was conducted through in-depth, semi-structured interviews, and rigorous data analysis and interpretation were conducted. Data were analysed using the six steps for IPA data analysis suggested by Smith *et al.* (2009). This process involved individual case analysis, supporting the idiographic commitment of IPA, after which cross-case analysis was used to identify developing patterns (Smith *et al.*, 2009).

Four super-ordinate themes and two unique emergent themes developed during the cross-case analysis. The four super-ordinate themes that emerged from the analysis of the data are: aesthetic sensory experiences; meaningful connectedness with self, music, audience, and musicians; unsafe emotional spaces; and sacred experiences. The two unique emergent themes that emerged from the analysis of the data are: music is a reflection of our lives; and music-evoked autobiographical memories.

Due to the limited scale of this presentation, only two of the super-ordinate themes will be discussed:

- connectedness with self, music, audience, and musicians, and
- sacred experiences.

During this presentation, the findings of the study will be explored. The findings suggest that music-making generates spiritual experiences through connection and intention, which in turn strengthens the desire and intention for connection and spiritual experiences.

The aim of the study is to address the gap in the literature regarding the multidimensional and interconnected nature of professional pianists' spiritual music-making experiences. This study is the first of its kind in South Africa and assists in making the voices of professional pianists heard towards creating a greater awareness and better understanding of spiritual music-making experiences.

This presentation is based on a book chapter published in *Ritualised Belonging: Musicing and Spirituality in the South African Context* (Orlandi, 2021). The study discussed in the chapter forms part of my unpublished formal assignment submitted in partial fulfilment of the degree Doctor of Music with Music Performance at the North-West University in South Africa.

**Keywords:** Lived experiences, spiritual music-making experiences, pianists, interpretative phenomenological analysis, connection

## Bio

Laetitia Orlandi started her early piano studies with Elsabe Feldtmann. She completed the Doctor of Music with Music Performance degree at North-West University with Prof Liesl van der Merwe as her promotor. As a graduate of the University of Pretoria, Laetitia completed her BMus, BMus (Hons), and MMus degrees in Performing Arts (*cum laude*) as well as the Unisa teacher's and performer's licentiates in piano, chamber music, and vocal accompaniment under the tutelage of Prof Ella Fourie.

She is the recipient of numerous awards and scholarships and has received masterclasses from Andrzej Jasinski, Joseph Banowetz, and Pascal Rogé. As a répétiteur in the Department of Performing Arts at the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), she accompanied staged productions of more than 17 operas.

Laetitia acted as an official accompanist for various national and international events, such as the 5th and 6th Unisa International Voice Competitions and the 35th International Hans Gabor Belvedere Singing Competition. She served as chairperson of the shadow jury for the 5th and 6th Unisa National Piano Competitions, the 13th & 14th Unisa International Piano Competitions, and as jury coordinator for the 3rd Unisa National Strings Competition.

Laetitia regularly performs as a collaborative pianist. Highlights include *The Carnival of the Animals* (Saint-Saëns) and Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 7 (Clara Schumann) with the Gauteng Philharmonic Orchestra.

Laetitia is currently the Assistant Dean (Teaching & Learning) of the TUT Faculty of Arts & Design and resides in Pretoria with her husband and their two teenage sons.

# LECTURE RECITAL

DR OLLIE WATTS DAVIS

## Title

Toward justice and shared humanity: art song of Black Americans as lens, language, vision, and hope.

## Abstract

Performance-Lecture with a Question & Response period



Soprano Ollie Watts Davis has presented a recital of art songs by Black Americans for the National Association of Teachers of Singing Chapters across the United States, along with performances at the 54<sup>th</sup> National Conference in Chicago and the NATS Teacher Intern Program at Georgia Southern University.

Representative works include song literature by Francis Hall Johnson, Henry Thacker Burleigh, Margaret Allison Bonds, Charles Lloyd, Jr., H. Leslie Adams, and John Daniels Carter, with texts by the foremost Black writers of the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

This presentation consists of excerpts from recorded performances and an interactive lecture, narrating the objective and development of the recital. A time for questions and responses is also included.

As calls for diversity in concert programming and academic curricula reached a fever pitch in 2020, awareness of exclusion evidenced at institutions and in systems provided an opportunity for performing and learning from a wider, more equitable angle.

“Toward justice and shared humanity: art song of Black Americans as lens, language, vision, and hope” traces the experiences of Black Americans through their song and literature and in their voice. This repertoire advances the notion that progress is made beyond statements and the initial inclusion of “underrepresented” works. True progress demands initiatives that lead to an understanding of the social and cultural histories and contexts that informed the creative output.

The stories of Black Americans captured in this literature and song showcase the triumphs, strength, creativity, reality and cultural treasure that is Black America. This repertoire reveals a lens for seeing the survival strategies and nourishing ways forward that Black Americans have used throughout their experience.

Hope for lasting change that encourages commitment toward a shared human experience across ethnic and racial lines, that enlivens an equitable vision for life that is freedom for all, and with language to express the need for everyone to work together toward this future, is put forth in this lecture recital.

**Toward justice and shared humanity:  
art song of Black Americans as lens, language, vision, and hope**

**Performers:**

Ollie Watts Davis (soprano)

Laetitia Orlandi (piano)

**Programme:**

City called Heaven

Francis Hall Johnson  
(1888-1970)

Deep River

Henry Thacker Burleigh  
(1866-1949)

Compensation (Paul Laurence Dunbar)

Charles Lloyd, Jr.  
(1948-2022)

*Night Songs*

Prayer (Langston Hughes)

Harrison Leslie Adams  
(b. 1932)

Drums of Tragedy (Langston Hughes)

The Heart of a Woman (Georgia Douglas Johnson)

Night Song (Clarissa Scott Delany)

Sence you went away (James Weldon Johnson)

Creole Girl (Leslie Morgan Collins)

Troubled Water

Casey Robards, piano

Margaret Bonds  
(1913-1972)

*Three Dream Portraits*

Minstrel Man (Langston Hughes)

Margaret Bonds  
(1913-1972)

Dream Variation (Langston Hughes)

I, Too (Langston Hughes)

For a Brown Girl Dead (Countee Cullen)

Margaret Bonds  
(1913-1972)

From *Cantata*

*Recitative*

(Sometimes I feel like a Motherless Child)

*Toccata*

(Ride on King Jesus)

John Daniels Carter  
(1932-1981)

## Bio

Dr **Ollie Watts Davis** is the Suzanne and William Allen Distinguished Professor of Music and conductor of the award-winning Black Chorus at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Her awards include being named a University Scholar, among the highest honours bestowed upon a member of the Illinois faculty, the Outstanding Faculty Leadership Award, the Campus Award for Excellence in Teaching, and the UI Women's Association Bronze Medallion of Honor, which recognised her as a woman who "through example and service has used her talents to enrich the lives of others."

As a soprano, Dr Davis earns superlatives for her vocal artistry, extraordinary versatility and radiant stage presence. Since her Carnegie Hall debut, she has appeared with leading orchestras, and internationally in Europe, Africa, Asia and across the Americas. As conductor and soprano with Black Chorus, Dr Davis has released two recordings, being featured on *Rootsongs* with the Jupiter String Quartet, in addition to her solo recording, *Here's One*.

As the author of the *Talks* mentoring curriculum, with StudiO: the Ollie Watts Davis Institute for Vocal Arts, and with her national Black Sacred Music Symposium, Dr Davis lends her voice to important work. She serves with her husband, Rev Dr Harold Davis, at Grace Fellowship Church in Champaign. They have five adult children and three grandchildren.

Ollie Watts Davis holds a B.S. from West Virginia Institute of Technology (*magna cum laude*), an M.A. from West Virginia University, and an M.M. and D.M.A. (Phi Beta Kappa) from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

## BRONWEN FORBAY AND PIETER GROBLER

### Title

Songs About Spring: Accessible Afrikaans Art Songs and Art Song Cycles for the Lyric-Coloratura Soprano

### Abstract

This recital focuses on the performance of “Songs About Spring: Accessible Afrikaans Art Songs and Art Song Cycles for the Lyric and Lyric Coloratura Soprano” featuring the music of S. le Roux Marais (1896-1976), Chris Lamprecht (b. 1927), and John Kilburn Pescod (1896-1985), set to poems by C. Louis Leipoldt (1880-1947), J. R. L. van Bruggen (1895-1948), and Chris Lamprecht (b. 1927). English translations will be provided.



### Performers:

Bronwen Forbay (soprano)

Pieter Grobler (piano)

### Recital programme:

Lentelied

S. le Roux Marais  
(1896-1976)

*Aan die Noordweste*

Chris Lamprecht  
(b.1927)

I. Die Kameeldoringboom

II. Die Grootrivier se voël

III. Reën op die veld

IV. Namakwaland se blommetjies

V. Loeriesfontein

Oktobermaand

John Kilburn Pescod  
(1896-1985)

## Bio

**Bronwen Forbay** has been hailed by *Opera* magazine for singing that is “at once powerful, radiant, timbrally beautiful, and balanced throughout the range, her soprano is that of a singer at the top of her game”.

As a Durban-born South African Fulbrighter, Dr Forbay’s operatic successes include critically acclaimed performances of Mozart’s Queen of the Night (*The Magic Flute*) with the Wolf Trap Opera Company, Eugene Opera, and Tulsa Opera. Other celebrated roles include Orasia, Queen of Thrace (U.S. premiere of Telemann’s *Orpheus*), Adina (*L’elisir d’amore*), Velmyra (*Wading Home* by Mary Alice Rich), Violetta (*La Traviata*), and the title role in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with the Cape Town Opera.

Concert appearances as a soloist include standard and modern works including Bach’s *B Minor Mass* (Santa Fe), Handel’s *Creation* (Cincinnati), Mozart’s *Requiem* (on tour in Northern Italy: Venice, Verona, Vicenza), Mendelssohn’s *Elijah* (Dallas), Beethoven’s *Missa Solemnis* (Tulsa), Miller’s *ReWind Cantata for voice, tape and testimony* (Royal Festival Hall, London), and Mnomiya’s *Ingqai sivele we-Africa* (Durban). An avid recitalist, Forbay has performed throughout South Africa, the US and Europe at notable venues, including the American Cathedral in Paris, *Les Arts Georges V* recital series, and with Stephen Pierce (piano) at the University of Southern California.

Having achieved success in several voice competitions, Forbay was awarded the 2007 Standard Bank Young Artist Award for Music (a prestigious national South African award whose recipients include Pretty Yende). Selected for the renowned NATS Intern Program in 2013, Forbay has presented at DFW NATS, Texoma NATS, National NATS, CMS National Conferences, and ICVT.

She is a highly sought-after adjudicator and clinician and frequently serves in this capacity for the Schmidt Vocal Arts Organization.

An associate professor of voice at Furman University (Greenville, South Carolina), Dr Forbay served on faculty at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (South Africa) while fulfilling her Fulbright two-year homestay requirement. She has taught at the University of Mary-Hardin Baylor (Belton, Texas), Sam Houston State University (Huntsville, Texas), and McLennan Community College (Waco, Texas).

Dr Forbay holds degrees from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Manhattan School of Music, Southern Methodist University, the University of Cincinnati CCM, and she is the first South African woman to earn a DMA in Voice Performance.

She served as TMTA Voice Contest Chair from 2018-2021, is a member of the NATS International Advisory Committee, is president-elect of Furman’s Black Faculty and Staff Association, and is the treasurer of the South Africa Chapter, NATS.

Forbay’s research interest focuses on illuminating DEI in Afrikaans art song literature and exposing it to a wider audience. Two articles on *Afrikaans Lyric Diction*, co-authored with colleague Dr Christian Bester, were published in the *NATS Journal of Singing* in 2022. *Afrikaans Art Song Literature: Translation and Pronunciation Guide*, also co-authored with Dr Bester, will be published by OUP in 2024.

The South African pianist **Pieter Grobler** has been described as a performer with “finesse, sensitivity and a flawless sense of the classical style” (*The Star*). Grobler worked with Joseph Stanford at the University of Pretoria. Postgraduate studies were with Joseph Banowetz, at the University of North Texas (UNT), where he completed the MM and DMA piano performance degrees. During his tenure at UNT, he regularly attended lessons with the pianists Adam Wodnicki, Elvia Puccinelli and Harold Heiberg.

Grobler has been the recipient of numerous scholarships and prizes from institutions in both South Africa and the USA.

In 2010 he accepted a position at Stellenbosch University, where he lectures in piano performance, chamber music, vocal accompaniment, and repertoire studies. His postgraduate supervision has centred on topics in pedagogy and repertoire studies.

He regularly acts as an adjudicator and examiner throughout South Africa and is the organiser and chairman of the jury for the Hennie Joubert Piano Competition, held bi-annually as part of the Stellenbosch International Piano Symposium. He has taught and performed in its sister project, the Stellenbosch International Chamber Music Festival since 2011.

In addition to his music activities, Grobler has served as chair of the Stellenbosch University Music Department.

Pieter maintains an active concert profile, both as a solo and collaborative artist. In addition to performances across South Africa, he has performed in the U.S., Canada, Europe and China. Noteworthy among these appearances was a live radio broadcast of a solo piano recital, as part of the Dame Myra Hess Concert Series hosted at the Chicago Cultural Centre, a number of South African national tours, and numerous appearances with duo partner, the violinist Annette-Barbara Vogel (both in Canada and South Africa).

Pieter is a familiar face to Stellenbosch audiences, where he performs regularly. To date, he has performed the premieres of numerous South African musical works, the most noteworthy being Alexander Johnson's *3 Incantations for Piano* (dedicated to him), Peter Klatzow's *Sonata for Cello and Piano* with cellist Peter Martens, and Bongani Ndodana-Breen's *Safika – Three Tales of African Migration*.



## LAUREN DASAPPA

### Title

The relevance of Afrikaans folk songs presented as art songs: a lecture recital of ten Afrikaans folk songs – arranged by Xander Kritzinger.

### Abstract

South Africa's rich and intricate history is a subject of both celebration and controversy. Often referred to as the Rainbow Nation due to its diverse population and 11 official languages, one language, in particular, is associated with the period of segregation known as "apartheid". However, it is important to recognise that Afrikaans culture encompasses more than its association with oppression.

Within the culture, there exists a handful of authentically South African melodies and lyrics in the form of Afrikaans folk songs. While these songs draw inspiration from European and East-Asian influences, they possess an intrinsically South African essence.

Despite their simplicity, these songs reflect over 350 years of love, war, faith, and identity. They not only celebrate Afrikaans culture but also encompass the broader themes of humanity and the human experience, specifically within a South African context.

This prompts the question: Should the ownership of cultural heritage be limited to Afrikaans speakers alone, or can it be appreciated and performed by those who do not speak the language?

To address this question, we present a recital featuring ten arranged songs performed by two individuals from contrasting backgrounds. The recital aims to elevate these folk songs beyond their mere existence, shedding light on their simple beauty and allowing audiences to rediscover elements of themselves within a contemporary framework.

By doing so, we hope to foster a deeper appreciation for the cultural heritage encapsulated in these songs and promote a sense of unity and understanding among diverse communities.

### Performers:

Lauren Dasappa (soprano)

Xander Kritzinger (tenor)

Elna van der Merwe (piano)



## Recital programme:

*Tien Afrikaanse Volksliedere*, X. Kritzinger (b.1985)

1. Magaliesburgse aandlied
2. Hulle sê daar's 'n man in die maan
3. Die Overbergse liefdesliedjies
4. Siembamba
5. Vervul my hart met dankbaarheid (Môregesang)
6. Kolperd
7. Ma daar kom die jong soldaat
8. Vaarwel my eie soetelief
9. Mamma, 'k wil 'n man hê!
10. Voortrekker aandgesang

## Bio

**Lauren Dasappa** is a highly accomplished soprano hailing from KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. She possesses a versatile vocal ability and is known for her performances in operatic repertoire, oratorio, and baroque works. However, her musical talents extend beyond these genres, as she also excels in concert repertoire encompassing both standard and modern compositions. Additionally, Dasappa actively works towards promoting and creating awareness of African music within the classical and folk genres.

Apart from her performance career, Dasappa is a respected vocal pedagogue. She serves as a lecturer in voice studies at Stellenbosch University, where she maintains a full vocal studio. As a sought-after teacher, she conducts vocal workshops, coaches vocal ensembles, and provides guidance to recording artists and soloists for major productions. She is also involved in adjudicating eisteddfods, festivals, and vocal competitions, and she serves as an external examiner for vocal departments across South Africa.

Dasappa's influence extends beyond her teaching and performance activities. She currently holds a position as a board member of the South Africa chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS), where she serves as the Secretary. This role allows her to further contribute to the development of vocal education in the country.

The impact of Dasappa's teaching is evident through her former students, who have achieved success in various fields. Many of them are involved in postgraduate programmes or engage in theatre productions nationally and internationally, spanning from operatic to theatrical and jazz contexts. Moreover, Dasappa's students have achieved notable success by winning vocal competitions both within South Africa and on the international stage.

Community development holds a special place in Dasappa's heart, and she actively participates in projects aimed at nurturing young singers from diverse communities. Through her dedication and involvement, she strives to provide opportunities and support for aspiring singers, contributing to the growth of the musical community as a whole.

**Xander Kritzinger** is a choral conductor, tenor, vocal pedagogue, and composer of predominantly vocal music, who began his music career as a member of the Drakensberg Boys Choir. It was there where he was later appointed as student conductor and voice teacher. Xander then enrolled at Stellenbosch University, where he completed his undergraduate, honours and master's degrees.

During his undergraduate years, Xander won both the Mabel Quick and Hartman singing bursaries. His master's degree in singing performance placed a focus on research into training the changing or mutating boy voice.

Currently, Xander is the founder, managing director and conductor of the newly established Cape Choral Academy, and is also a part-time voice lecturer at the Music Department of Stellenbosch University.

In 2017 he won the Cape Town Male Voice Choir Composition Competition with his work "In die skadu's van my siel", which forms part of his *Soul Trilogy* motets for mixed choir. Other well-known compositions include his *Mass for the Karoo*, *Sing 'n nuwe lied* and his *Watervlerk song cycle*.

As a tenor, he specialises in early music and art song repertoire and has performed with various professional vocal ensembles, such as the Cape Consort and Cape Town Soloist Choir. He has performed as a soloist in major works, such as Bach's *Ascension Oratorio* and Handel's *Utrecht Jubilate*, among other oratorios. He has also played the role of Gerrardo in Puccini's opera *Gianni Schicchi* and in 2022 he was one of the soloists of the Libertas Choir's Opera Gala concert, held in the Endler Hall and the Artscape Opera House.

**Elna van der Merwe** was a full-time accompanist and part-time piano lecturer at the Conservatory of Stellenbosch University until 2001. Since then, she has been an ad hoc pianist and sought-after collaborative artist, for local as well as international artists, such as Michell Breedt (mezzo-soprano), Douglas Masek (saxophonist), Maria Kliegel (cellist) and Susan Milan (flautist).

Van der Merwe studied piano and organ at Stellenbosch University, winning several awards, stipends, and competitions. She has performed as a soloist with various national orchestras. The local instrumentalists and singers with whom she regularly performs include Zanta Hofmeyr, Zanne Stabelberg, the South African Sopranos, Niel Rademan, Maria du Toit, Liesl Stolz, Peter Martens and Suzanne Martens.

In May 2011, she performed as a collaborative pianist with Zanta Hofmeyr in Malta. She also accompanied the Libertas choir on their tours to Belgium and the USA.

She has been awarded by SAMRO in gratitude and recognition for excellent service in accompaniment in the Overseas Scholarship Competitions. As an accompanist, she has appeared in all the Unisa International Singing and Strings competitions since 1990, and recently also in the Flute and Clarinet competitions.

As a multi-talented pianist, she has played in two-piano arrangements with Zorada Temmingh, as part of The Blondes, and performed at all the major festivals in South Africa. In 2011, The Blondes performed in Israel and London.

Van der Merwe has recorded many CDs and DVDs with different artists and served on several music competition panels as an adjudicator.

# PLENARY PANEL DISCUSSIONS

## Title

A reflection of pedagogy and prominent voice teachers in South Africa in the last 50 years.

## Panel Members

Dr Laetitia Orlandi (Panel Moderator)

Dr Conroy Cupido, Ms Lauren Dasappa, Dr Bronwen Forbay, Dr Antoinette Olivier, Ms Lize Thomas

## Bio

**Lize Thomas** started piano tuition at the age of nine and performed Mozart's Piano Concerto K. 414, with orchestra, at the age of twelve. At the age of fourteen, she performed a concerto for piano and orchestra, specially composed for her by Robert Clough, at Unisa.

Having obtained a BA and HED in languages at the University of Pretoria, she furthered her vocal tuition under George van der Spuy at the US Conservatory of Music in Stellenbosch from 1981 to 1985. During this time, she was an assistant accompanist, attended masterclasses by Gérard Souzay with Dalton Baldwin and obtained the Unisa singing licentiates (performer's and teacher's) and LRSM (teacher's).



She returned to Pretoria in 1986 for a National Diploma in Opera, under the guidance of Emma Renzi, at the Technikon Opera School. There she performed a number of lead roles in student productions, most notably Charlotte in *Werther*, and was also the recipient of various awards.

Lize was a member of the PACT opera chorus from 1989 to 1990 and debuted as Hänsel (*Hänsel und Gretel*) at the Roodepoort Pro Musica Opera in October 1990. In 1991 she sang Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*) and Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*) and received a VITA Award for Zerlina and Hänsel (repeated in 1994, 2005).

Lize has appeared as a soloist in the Rossini *Stabat Mater* (Sidwill Hartman) and Mahler's Symphony No. 2 (Hanli Stapela), both in Johannesburg. Her recitals of French mélodies were widely acclaimed.

Since 1990, Lize lectured voice at the Musical Theatre Department (Technikon Pretoria) and, intermittently, at the University of Pretoria. She was appointed head of Opera at the Technikon Pretoria/TUT in 1998, where she remained until July 2010.

She has been a Unisa music examiner since 2003 and regularly serves as an external examiner (UCT, NWU) and national adjudicator (SAMRO, ATKV, International Belvedere Singing Competition). In 2016, she was a member of the executive committee administering and presenting the 35th International Hans Gabor Belvedere Singing Competition in Cape Town.

In December 2018, Lize was invited to the Swakopmunder Musikwoche as vocal and choral assistant, under the directorship of Cornelia von Kerssenbrock of the Immling Festival.

She joined Cape Town Opera as a fundraiser in January 2011 and is currently head of the Judith Neilson Young Artist Programme and artistic manager.

From 2012-2013, she joined the CTO Chorus for productions of *La Traviata* and *Otello* and a concert version of *Porgy and Bess* with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Simon Rattle. She was the company manager on three CTO tours in Germany between 2012 and 2019. From June to December 2021, she was acting artistic director of the CTO.

Lize obtained her MBA from TUT in 2008 and an MMus from NWU (*cum laude*) in 2020, on the topic "Exploring the role of female leadership during the organisational process of the 35th Belvedere International Singing Competition: An autoethnography". She is the current South African representative of the International Hans Gabor Belvedere Singing Competition and serves on the committee of the SA Chapter of NATS.

## Title

How do South African voice teachers situate themselves in the greater NATS environment?

## Panel Members

Dr Laetitia Orlandi (Panel Moderator)

Dr Diana Allan, Dr Conroy Cupido, Dr Alexis Davis-Hazell, Dr Bronwen Forbay, Dr Sarah Holman, Dr Randall Umstead

## Bio

**Sarah Holman**, mezzo-soprano, recently performed Haydn's *Missa in Tempore Belli* with the Rockford Symphony and was a featured soloist in *Ivor Novello: A Celebration* with the Kansas City World War I Museum and William Jewell College. She has performed with the Lake Forest Symphony, Chicago Master Singers, and DePaul Community Chorus in Mahler's Symphony No. 2, Bach's Cantata No. 147 ("Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben"), Elgar's *The Light of Life*, Stanford's *Stabat Mater*, Bruckner's *Mass in D minor*, Dvořák's *Mass in D*, Mozart's *Requiem* and Handel's *Messiah*.



Her operatic appearances have been with Opera Southwest, Lyric Opera Cleveland, Chicago Chamber Opera, DuPage Opera, Muddy River Opera, City Opera of the Quad Cities, and Kansas Opera, and have included the roles of The Baroness in *Vanessa*, the production *Gian Carlo Menotti: A Tribute*, under the stage direction of Francis Menotti, Elizabeth Proctor in *The Crucible*, Dorabella in *Così fan tutte*, the Mother in *The Consul*, Katisha in *The Mikado*, Lady Jane in *Patience*, Meg Page in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Beatrice in *Beatrice and Benedict*, and the title role of *Regina*.

She enjoyed a long tenure in the Dean Wilder Singers, a vocal quartet which toured throughout the United States, Mexico and Southern Korea, performing opera, oratorio and sacred literature.

As a recitalist, Dr Holman has performed in numerous venues in the United States and in Cambridge, Birmingham, and Northampton in the United Kingdom. She has been a featured artist and master teacher with the Southern Young Artist Opera Project in Beijing and in Changhua and Taipei. She was a featured artist and a master teacher at the Asian Opera Festival in Kunming, China, and at the Bel Canto Opera Workshop in Kaohsiung, Taiwan.

A recipient of a Goldovsky Opera Directing Internship with Harrower Opera in Atlanta, Dr Holman, a professor of voice, has served as director of Opera at Wheaton College Conservatory. She was a featured presenter at the International Congress of Voice Teachers conference in Stockholm, in 2017, and currently serves on the National Association of Teachers of Singing Foundation Board.

**Randall Umstead** comes to Furman as the Herring Professor and chair of the Department of Music after 15 years on the faculty of the Baylor University School of Music. Dr Umstead spent the final four of those years having served as associate dean of academic affairs, after serving six years as director of vocal studies. During his time at Baylor, he served as a full, voting faculty member on Baylor's Board of Regents and chair of the Faculty Senate.



Dr Umstead also served two terms as governor of the Texoma Region of the National Association of Teachers of Singing. As such, he spent four years on the board of the association.

As a performer, Dr Umstead was twice a fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center.

He has performed as a soloist with the Bach Society Houston, Johannesburg Festival Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Flagstaff Symphony, Colorado Bach Ensemble, Cincinnati Baroque Orchestra, Catacoustic Consort, Richmond Symphony Orchestra, the Kwazulu-Natal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Irving Symphony, and the Bach Society of Dayton.

Dr Umstead's students have gone on to successful careers as musicians and educators, and they have been accepted into prestigious graduate programs, including the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Indiana University, the Yale University School of Music and the University of Michigan.

# Concert and Masterclasses

## Cape Town Opera Chorus

### Title

Devotion.

**Conductor:** Marvin Kernelle

### Bio

Marvin Kernelle, singer, chorus master and conductor was born and raised in Cape Town.



He joined Cape Town Opera in 2004 as a member of the Choral Training. From 2005 to 2009 Marvin started his vocal tutelage under renowned teacher Virginia Davids at the University of Cape Town and graduated with a Performance Diploma in Opera. He joined the Cape Town Opera Voice of The Nation Ensemble as a full-time member in March 2009, winning the Chorus of The Year Award in 2013.

Marvin has performed as a chorus member in various operas, including *The Pearl Fishers*, *Poet and Prophetess*, *La Traviata*, *Il Trovatore*, *Carmen*, *Nabucco*, *Alcina*, *La Boheme*, *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Otello*. Travelling productions include *Show Boat*, *Porgy and Bess* and various Gala Concerts in Paris, Oslo, Berlin, Tel Aviv, Malmo, London, Edinburgh, Cardiff, Melbourne, Wiesbaden and Nürnberg. His cameo roles include the Messenger (*La Traviata*), Peter (*Porgy and Bess*), Haushofmeister (*Der Rosenkavalier*) and the First Guard (*Mandela's Songbook*).

Marvin was promoted to Assistant Chorus Master and Outreach Coordinator at Cape Town Opera in 2013 and was actively involved with the training of chorus members for productions including *Porgy and Bess*, *Show Boat*, *Mandela Trilogy* and various concerts. In 2014 Marvin was promoted to Chorus Master of Cape Town Opera.

He has trained the Cape Town Opera Chorus for local and international productions of *Carmen*, *Mandela Trilogy* (in Cape Town, Hong Kong and Dubai), *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Così fan Tutte*, *Maria Stuarda*, *La Traviata*, *Carmen*, *Rigoletto*, *The Flying Dutchman* (Artscape Opera House), *Porgy and Bess* (Liceu – Barcelona, Teatro Real – Madrid, Teatro Colon – Buenos Aires, Asia Culture Centre – Seoul) and various concerts locally and internationally.

Marvin was a judge on the reality TV show *Varsity Sing* for kykNET. In July 2017 he made his debut as an international adjudicator at the European Choir Games in Riga and shared the podium with the world-renowned conductor and composer, John Rutter. He has adjudicated the World Choir Games in Pretoria in 2018. In the same year, Marvin was the conductor of Woodfees *Centenary Pops* and Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*.

He made his opera conducting debut at the Artscape Opera House for Cape Town Opera, leading the Cape Philharmonic Orchestra with a production of *Maria Stuarda*. In 2019 Marvin worked with the production of *Mi(SA)* and conducted at the RMB Starlight Classics. He was the assistant conductor for a production of *Capuleti e i Montecchi*, with Jeremy Silver (UCT) and Cape Town Opera.



Marvin was the chorus master for the following productions: *Orphée et Eurydice* (Cape Town), *Porgy and Bess Suite* performed at the Alte Oper, Frankfurt, with the HR Symphony Orchestra, as well as the African Angels 2019/2020 tour. Kernelle also conducted the Grace Notes European Tour in 2019, which also included a concert in Budapest.

In 2020, Kernelle was chorus master and assistant conductor for the Cape Town Opera production of *La Bohème* and assistant conductor to maestro Jeremy Silver in a production of *Così fan tutte*. In 2021, he conducted *The Pearl Fishers* as well as Cape Town Opera's production of *La Rondine* at the Artscape Opera House. During 2022, Marvin conducted the Cape Town Opera Chorus in a sold-out performance of *Grace Notes* at St. George's Cathedral, and various community concerts in Cape Town. In July of that year, Marvin was the musical director for Cape Town Opera's Spirituals Concert and conducted the Eastern Cape Philharmonic Orchestra and Cape Town Opera Chorus in the ICONS performance at the National Arts Festival.

He is the chorus master and assistant conductor for the premiere of *Sara Baartman – The Opera* for the UCT Opera School. In 2023, Marvin curated and performed as a soloist in various programmes across Cape Town. He is currently in the final year of his postgraduate diploma in opera conducting, working under the mentorship of maestro Jeremy Silver.

## MASTERCLASSES PRESENTED BY RACHELLE JONCK

Masterclasses presented at this conference feature talented students from Stellenbosch University and singers from the Judith Neilson Young Artist Programme at Cape Town Opera.

### Cape Town Opera

Cape Town Opera, established in 1999, is the only permanent non-profit opera company in South Africa and Africa. The Company is a shining example of an artistically engaged, socially conscious music institution. Since its inception, Cape Town Opera has applied itself to developing skills, resources, networks, infrastructure, and markets for the greater good of all opera practitioners and performing artists in South Africa.

As a national and international platform for South Africa's extraordinary vocal talent, the Company stages world-class mainstage or site-specific productions of traditional opera repertoire and new commissions. Venues include Cape Town Opera's home base, the Artscape Theatre Centre in Cape Town, and other local, national and international venues.

South African stars shining brightly on the international stage include Pretty Yende, Pumeza Matshikiza, Levy Sekgapane, Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha, Golda Schultz and Vuvu Mpofu.

The stellar quality of the Company's chorus is recognised worldwide, gaining attention when it was the recipient, in 2013, of Best Opera Chorus at the International Opera Awards Competition in London.

Cape Town Opera's Judith Neilson Young Artist Programme provides upcoming artists with training, employment and invaluable experience working in a professional opera company, offering opportunities to exceptionally talented postgraduate singers, pianists and conductors and open to participants internationally. The Company is very proud that Pumeza Matshikiza, Golda Schultz, Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha, and Vuvu Mpofu are alumni of this programme.

Cape Town Opera's youth development and education programmes actively engage with young singers and musicians throughout the country. One of the flagship programmes is the Foundation Studio, which plays a pivotal role in enabling exceptional vocally gifted secondary school learners between the ages of 14 and 18, by laying the foundations for a career in music and singing. The course successfully bridges the gap for these learners, who are disadvantaged by their lack of access to formal music tuition due to circumstances beyond their control. They are provided with the necessary skills and competencies that enable them to be eligible to apply for bursaries to study voice and music at a tertiary institution.

Cape Town Opera sees itself playing a vital role in the custodianship of the South African voice, one of South Africa's national treasures.