

The APSU Music Department
and the
Center of Excellence for the Creative Arts

presents

APSU Opera Theatre
Presents
“American Opera Adventures”

Dr. Penelope Shumate – Director

Collaborative Pianist in Concert Performance – Jeffrey Thomas

Opera Singers:

Bailey Ables, Emma Bachman, Emma Bell, Salem Bowman, Larry Cotton, Morgan
Christianson, Madison Frank, Katelyn Gabler, Ninfa Garcia, Natalya Gonzalez,
Carter Hallums, Israel Jimenez, Haley Leathers, Micah Nicolai, Kori Nunn,
Jackson Whitfield

Emma Bachman - Graduate Assistant to the Director

Rehearsal Collaborative Pianist – Ryan Jones

Nathan Robertson – Technical Director

Mackenzie Kelly – Assistant Technical Director

Luke Anderson – Lighting Designer

Ian Underwood & Francis "Frank" Ferri– Grad. Assistants to the Tech. Director

2 p.m.

November 24, 2024

George and Sharon Mabry Concert Hall
Music Mass Communication Building

—Program—

The Tender Land is an opera in three acts composed by Aaron Copland (1900-1990) between 1952 and 1954 to a libretto by Erik Johns (1927-2001). The opera premiered at the New York City Opera in 1954. Set in the Midwest during the Great Depression, the plot centers around Laurie Moss, a graduating senior in high school who lives with her Mother, Grandfather and younger sister. Two drifters, Top and Martin come to town, and they are invited to Laurie's graduation party. Laurie falls in love with Martin and the two are caught kissing at the party which enrages Grandpa Moss. He banishes the two men, but Laurie and Martin meet in secret and plan to run away the next morning. When Laurie wakes, she discovers that Martin has left without her. She is heartbroken from this betrayal and decides to leave her home anyway to explore the world and bids farewell to her family.

“Stomp your foot”

At a party to celebrate Laurie's high school graduation at the Moss' family home in Act II, everyone joys together to sing and dance.

Full Company

The Ballad of Baby Doe is an opera in two acts composed by Douglas Moore (1893-1969) in 1956 to a libretto by John Latouche (1914-1956). It premiered at Central City Opera in 1956. The plot centers around the lives of historical figures Horace Tabor, his wife Augusta, and his second wife Elizabeth “Baby Doe” Tabor around the turn of the 20th century in Western America. At the height of his success as wealthy businessman and while married to Augusta, Horace has an affair with Baby Doe who moves to his town of Leadville, Colorado, resulting in his divorce from Augusta. As time goes on, Augusta watches the couple fall into financial ruin followed by Horace's death.

“What are you looking for Horace?”

In scene three from Act I, Augusta and Horace argue as she confronts her husband regarding his affair with Baby Doe.

Madison Frank as *Augusta* (Salem Bowman/cover)

Israel Jimenez as *Horace* (Micah Nicholai/cover)

Three Decembers is a one-act opera composed by Jake Heggie (b. 1961) in 2008 to a libretto by Gene Scheer (b. 1958). Houston Grand Opera premiered the opera in 2008. The plot centers around Made-line, a famous stage actress and her two adult children Beatrice and Charlie during the AIDS crisis. The opera is in three parts, each during a December in the years 1986, 1996, and 2006 where the family members discover new details from their past and work through their emotions.

“What do you remember about Dad”

In this duet from Part I, siblings Beatrice “Bea” and Charlie share memories about their deceased father.

Emma Bachman as *Bea* (Bailey Ables/cover)

Carter Hallums as *Charlie* (Jackson Whitfield/cover)

The Clever Artifice of Harriet and Margaret is a one-act chamber opera by Leanna Kirchoff (b. 1969) who was both the composer and librettist. The debut performance was at the University of Colorado in 2013. Taking inspiration from the play “Overtones” by Alice Gerstenberg, the opera tells the story of Harriet and Margaret, who are old acquaintances and are meeting again after many years of being apart. Both women are haunted by versions of their younger selves named Hetty and Maggie, performed by two other singers in the opera. Harriet is still upset that she turned down her love John’s marriage proposal because he was a struggling painter, which resulted in John marrying Margaret instead. At the time of Harriet and Margaret’s meeting, Margaret and John are struggling financially and need Harriet’s help. Harriet agrees to commission a painting from John of her own portrait and wonders what it will be like to see him again.

“How foolish of you to remember John”

In this scene, Harriet is preparing for a visit she is dreading with her old acquaintance Margaret. Hetty, Harriet’s inner self, argues with Harriet about her lost opportunity to marry John, who is now married to Margaret. Their argument continues as Hetty gives Harriet advice on how to behave during the upcoming visit with Margaret.

**Salem Bowman as *Harriet* (Madison Frank/cover)
Katelyn Gabler as *Hetty***

Down in the Valley is a one-act opera composed by Kurt Weill (1900-1950) in 1945 to a libretto by Arnold Sundgaard (1909-2006). Weill’s revised version of the opera premiered at Indiana University in 1948. Set in a small Appalachian town, the plot is presented as a flashback with the beginning of the opera being the night before a teenager named Brack Weaver is to be executed. The plot centers around a love triangle between Brack, a young girl named Jennie, and the businessman Thomas Bouché. An argument between the two men over Jennie, ends with the death of Bouché, which the town blames on Brack. The night before Brack is to be executed, he sneaks out to spend his last hours with Jennie before he turns himself in to the authorities.

“They’re lookin’ for me Jennie”

In this scene Brack has snuck out of jail to meet Jennie and spend his last hours with her.

**Morgan Christianson as *Jennie* (Natalia Gonzalez/cover)
Jackson Whitfield as *Brack***

Street Scene was composed by Kurt Weill (1900-1950) in 1946 with lyrics by Langston Hughes (1901-1967). It premiered in Philadelphia that same year. The opera is based on the Pulitzer Prize-Winning 1929 play “Street Scene” by Elmer Rice. The opera won a Tony Award after premiering on Broadway and has found a home in the canonic performance repertoire of opera companies across America. It features more than thirty roles as a group of tenants in a lower east side apartment building in New York within a twenty-four-hour period of time in the early 20th century. In the central tragic portion of the plot, the tenant Frank Maurrant is driven mad by rumors of his wife’s infidelity and murders his wife and her lover. Meanwhile Frank’s daughter Rose dreams of being a performer and escaping.

“We’ll Go Away Together”

After Rose Maurrant tells her friend Sam Kaplan about her boss offering her a performance contract if she goes away with him, Sam suggests she run away with him instead and the two joyously imagine their new life together in this Act II duet.

**Ninfa Garcia as *Rose* (Emma Bachman/cover)
Larry Cotton as *Sam***

The Ghosts of Gatsby is a one-act opera with a prologue composed by Evan Mack (b. 1981) to a libretto by Joshua McGuire (b. 1980). The world premiere was performed at Samford University in Alabama. The opera was also chosen as the winner of the National Opera Association composition award. Set in the French Riviera, the plot centers around Zelda and her husband F. Scott Fitzgerald, whose marriage is strained while Scott writes his novel, *The Great Gatsby*. Zelda is confronted by past and future versions of herself, forcing her to face her failed dreams.

“Zelda, I wrote my ending”

In this duet, Scott and Zelda argue when Zelda tries to get her husband to take a break from his writing to pay attention to her. The confrontation escalates when the subject of Zelda’s infidelity comes up.

**Haley Leathers as *Zelda* (Katelyn Gabler/cover)
Micah Nicolai as *Scott* (Israel Jimenez/cover)**

The Scarlet Letter is an opera in two acts composed by Lori Laitman (b. 1955) in 2008 to a libretto by David Mason (b. 1954). The opera was commissioned by the University of Central Arkansas where the world premiere was produced in 2008. The opera was inspired by Nathaniel Hawthorne’s famous 1850 novel “The Scarlet Letter.” The plot focuses on Hester Prynne, a young woman charged with adultery and forced to where the scarlet letter ‘A’ on her clothing. Hester’s lover, the community minister Arthur Dimmesdale, cannot bear the weight of guilt and exposes the truth to the community, after which he dies.

“Our Eden Here is Love”

In this Act II duet, Hester and Arthur meet in the forest to plan their escape.

**Emma Bachman as *Hester* (Ninfa Garcia/cover)
Larry Cotton as *Arthur***

The Boor is a one-act comic opera by Dominick Argento (1927-2019) written and premiered in 1957 during his Ph.D. at the Eastman School of Music, to a libretto by John Olon-Scymgeour (1929-2004). The plot centers around a young widow mourning the death of her husband while her servant tries to comfort her. The widow’s neighbor, “The Boor,” comes to collect money that the widow’s husband owed him. Their argument regarding the money escalates into a duel with pistols, however, during the confrontation the two realize they have romantic feelings for each other.

“Come, madam, let’s be done with winter”

In this duet in scene one, the widow mourns the loss of her husband while her servant encourages her to let go of her grief and move on.

**Bailey Ables as the *Widow* (Haley Leathers/cover)
Morgan Christianson as the *Servant* (Kori Nunn/cover)**

Candide is a two-act comic operetta composed by Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990). The work underwent multiple revisions, and the libretto was the result of many contributors including Lillian Hellman (1905-1984), Richard Wilbur (1921-2017), John Latouche (1914-1956), Dorothy Parker (1893-1967), Stephen Sondheim (1930-2021), John Mauceri (b. 1945), John Wells (1936-1998) and Bernstein. The work premiered on Broadway in New York City in 1956. The plot centers around the title role, *Candide*, who is a young man raised to enjoy an optimistic philosophy of life. Within the course of the plot, he has many adventures with a large cast of characters and grows past his naivete, realizing that his sheltered upbringing no longer reflects the true nature of the world.

“Best of all Possible Worlds”

In this scene from Act I, *Candide*, *Cunegonde*, *Maximilian*, and *Paquette* are being taught an optimistic philosophy of life by their tutor *Pangloss*.

Jackson Whitfield as *Pangloss* (Carter Hallums/cover)
Emma Bell, Natalya Gonzalez, and Kori Nunn
perform the roles of *Cunegonde*, *Maximilian*, and *Paquette*

“The Promise of Living”

In Act I from ***The Tender Land*** by Copland, after the two drifters Top and Martin arrive at the Moss home, Grandpa Moss offers them farm work and the three men, along with Laurie and Ma Moss, express how working and sharing together lead to a joyful life of prosperity.

Full Company

Fini

Thank you for attending our performance.

APSU Opera is open to all students and designed to give students the opportunity to explore their vocal and dramatic excellence. Each fall the Opera Workshop class is open to all who wish to join us to explore singing and acting for the stage. The class culminates in a concert with piano at the end of the semester. Each fall, auditions take place for the spring production which is fully staged with costumes and performed with the APSU Orchestra.

Please join us for our Spring production with orchestra of
***The Ghosts of Gatsby* by Evan Mack on**
Friday, April 25 (7:30pm), Saturday, April 26 (7:30pm) and Sunday, April 27 (3pm), 2025
Visit APSUOpera on Facebook for more information.

Dr. Penelope Shumate

APSU Director of Opera



Praised by The New York Times for singing with “bell-like clarity and surpassing sweetness,” The New York Concert Review for “her sparkling coloratura perfection,” and in Opera News magazine, “the mellifluous soprano Penelope Shumate puts her lines across with sincerity and attractive lucidity,” Dr. Shumate’s recent engagements include numerous soprano soloist appearances at Carnegie Hall and David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center in New York. She can be heard as the soprano soloist on “Messiah Refreshed” (Signum Records) recorded at historic Abbey Road Studios with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in London, as the soprano soloist on “As the fireflies watched . . . chamber music of James M. Stephenson” (Klavier Records), and as the soprano soloist in the upcoming release of *La Pasión según San Marcos* (Summit Records). She can also be heard in the title role of “Kassandra” (Parma/Navona Records), a new opera for which she also created the role in the world premiere at Opera in the Heights. She also presented the opera at the National Opera Association and the College Music Society’s conferences.

This 2024-2025 season marks Dr. Shumate’s twentieth soloist appearance at Carnegie Hall in New York City where she will perform as the soprano soloist in *One World* by Sir Karl Jenkins. Other recent New York soloist performances at Carnegie Hall and David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center include performing as the soprano soloist in *Messiah* by Handel, *Carmina Burana* by Orff, *Kindness* by Hayes, and *Requiem* by Mozart with Distinguished Concerts International New York. Her additional upcoming and recent professional soloist debuts and return engagements include appearing with Paducah Symphony Orchestra in Mahler’s *Symphony No. 4* and Orff’s *Carmina Burana* in Paducah, Kentucky, with Lansing Symphony Orchestra in *Carmina Burana* in Lansing, Michigan, with Alabama Symphony Orchestra in *Messiah* in Birmingham, Alabama, with Shenandoah Valley Bach Festival in Bach’s cantata *Weichet nur, betrübte Schatten*, BWV 202, in Harrisonburg, Virginia, with Gateway Chamber Orchestra in *La Pasión según San Marcos* by Golijov, *Symphony No. 2* by Mahler, *Magnificat* by Bach, and *Gloria* by Zelenka, in Clarksville, Tennessee, with Gulf Coast Symphony Orchestra in Haydn’s *Lord Nelson Mass*, with Rapides Symphony Orchestra in Mahler’s *Symphony No. 4*, with Opéra Louisiane as Hélène in *Hell’s Bell (Le Timbre d’Argent)* in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and with Muddy River Opera as Gilda in *Rigoletto*, Violetta in *La Traviata*, and Adina in *L’Elisir d’Amore* in Quincy, Illinois. Her “Bach to Broadway” recital performances include appearing at Chicago’s Fourth Presbyterian Church 2025 Concert Series and recently at Clarksville’s Roxy Theatre and the First Presbyterian Church. At the Classical Singer Magazine 2025 national convention in Chicago, she will be serve as a Masterclass clinician, performer, presenter, and judge. Dr. Shumate is managed by Encompass Arts in New York City.

As a professional opera singer her performed roles include Adina in *L’Elisir d’Amore*, Pamina and Papagena in *The Magic Flute*, Micaëla in *Carmen*, Laurie in *The Tender Land*, Hélène in *Hell’s Bell (Le Timbre d’Argent)*, Annabella and the Aunt in *Helen*, Violetta in *La Traviata*, Galatea in *Acis and Galatea*, Adele in *Die Fledermaus*, Musetta in *La Bohème*, Konstanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Hanna in *The Merry Widow*, Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, Belinda in *Dido and Aeneas*, Lisa in *Sonnambula*, Miss Silverpeal in *The Impresario*, and Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi*, among many others. As a professional concert soloist, she has performed *Messiah*, *The Creation*, *Vesperae Solennes de Confessore*, *Symphony No. 9* (Beethoven), *La Pasión según San Marcos*,

Carmina Burana, *Magnificat* (Bach and Vivaldi), *Te Deum* (Dvořák), *Symphony No. 2* (Mahler), *Requiem* (Mozart, Verdi, Fauré, Rutter), *Missa in Tempore Belli*, *Benedicite*, *Dona Nobis Pacem*, *Stabat Mater* (Mealor), *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, *Elijah*, *Theresienmesse*, *St. Nicolai Mass*, *Coronation Mass*, and *Dixit Dominus* (Vivaldi), among others.

She has performed with opera companies and orchestras across America including Opera Company of Philadelphia, Opera Roanoke, Des Moines Metro Opera, Utah Festival Opera, Annapolis Opera, Opera on the James, Opera in the Heights, Opéra Louisiane, Muddy River Opera Company, Santa Fe Symphony Orchestra, Oklahoma Philharmonic, Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra, Heartland Festival Orchestra, Gateway Chamber Orchestra, Rapides Symphony Orchestra, Acadiana Symphony Orchestra, Berkshire Choral Festival, Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, and the Kennett Symphony Orchestra, among many others. She is an award winner with the Gerda Lissner Foundation, The American Prize, the Camille Coloratura Awards, the MacAllister Awards, the Marie E. Crump Vocal Arts Competition, the New Jersey Association of Verismo Opera Vocal Competition, and the Annapolis Opera Vocal Competition, among others.

As the Opera Director at APSU, her credits include *The Magic Flute* by Mozart, *Gallantry* by Moore, and *A Game of Chance* by Barab. Her production of *Cendrillon* by Viardot, for which she was a national finalist with honorable mention in stage direction with the American Prize, was the first opera sung in French in the history of the APSU Opera program. She also directed the opera scenes concerts “American Opera Adventures,” “Baroque Blast,” “Operetta Opulence,” and “Belle Voci.”

Prior to APSU, she served as the Director of Opera Workshop and Associate (Tenured) Professor of Voice at Western Illinois University where she also taught Applied Voice, Vocal Literature, Vocal Pedagogy, and English/Latin/Italian/German/French Lyric Diction. At WIU, she won the Provost’s Award for Excellence in Scholarly/Creative/ Performance/Professional Activities and was a two-time winner of the College of Fine Arts and Communications Dean’s Award for Excellence in Creative/Performing Activity.

Visit www.penelopeshumate.com to learn more about her performing, directing, and teaching.

Special Thanks

Bailey Ables, Ralph Acosta, Luke Anderson, Emma Bachman, Michael Borowitz, Morgan Christianson, John Douglas, “Frank” Ferri, Craig Fields, Michelle Fraley, Clarissa Gunn, Carter Hallums, Jake Heggie, Ryan Jones, Mackenzie Kelly, Leanna Kirchoff, Lori Laitman, Kevin Loveland Jr., Evan Mack, Sean McCully, Dugg McDonough, Kori Nunn, Rick Piersall, Nathan Robertson, Jeffrey Thomas, Ian Underwood, Jackson Whitfield, and the Center of Excellence for the Creative Arts (CECA)



Upcoming Events

Nov. 25	APSU Wind Ensemble	7:30 p.m.
Nov. 26	APSU Student Recital	12:45 p.m.
	APSU Guitar Ensemble	7:30 p.m.
	Ben Truex Sr. Composition Recital <i>in Heydel Hall</i>	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 2	APSU Symphonic Band	7:30 p.m.
Dec. 3	APSU Flute Studio Recital <i>in Heydel Hall</i>	2:30 p.m.
	Inaugural HapPeay Holidays Showcase	6 & 8 p.m.
	<i>Tickets required: \$5/ea. Or 2 pantry items each</i>	
	<i>Debit/Credit Card: <u>APSU Marketplace</u></i>	
	<i>Cash/Check/Cards: n Music Dept. Office:</i>	
	<i>Office hours M-F 8am to 3:30pm (office closed Nov. 27-29)</i>	
Dec. 4	APSU String Studio Recital	5:30 & 7:30 p.m.
Dec. 5	APSU Chamber Trio Recital	5 p.m.
Dec. 8	Andrew Miller Sr. Viola Recital <i>in Heydel Hall</i>	5:30 p.m.
Dec. 9	Clarksville Youth Orchestra (<i>Community School of the Arts</i>)	7 p.m.
Dec. 10	Antonio Witter Sr. Percussion Recital	5:30 p.m.

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