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PERA KANSAS

Stardust 2025

BATTLE FOR PROM QUEEN

11.15.2025 • City Arts • Wichita, KS

80's

Opera Night

2025-2026

FIRST NOWELL SOUNDING JOY

Rayvon T. J. Moore, Artistic Director and Conductor



December 13, 2025

7pm

Friends University
Riney Chapel

December 14, 2025

3pm

Holy Cross
Lutheran Church

www.wichitachamberchorale.org



Ann Walenta String Quartet



(816) 457-7818

walentastringquartet24@gmail.com

ABOUT THE QUEENS



PRINCE-SISSE VILHELMSSEN

Chacun a son Gout from **Die Fledermaus** | Strauss

A twice-removed cousin-in-law of Viennese royalty (which technically counts, no matter what the inheritance lawyers say), Sisse has spent her life observing how the upper crust operates and she knows exactly what she wants. While her classmates dismiss her as a "wannabe," Sisse possesses something they lack: the absolute certainty that she deserves a château, a tiara, and six men to carry her throne. Tonight, she's not asking for the crown—she's claiming it.



VIOLETTA ANDIE WALSH

Follie! Delirio vano è questo! - Sempre libera from **La Traviata** | Verdi

Where has she been? That's classified. Why is she back? To remind everyone who really runs this school. As President of the Italian Club and certified Glamorous Misfit, Violetta disappeared under mysterious circumstances and returned with a glow-up that defies physics. Too sophisticated for the cafeteria crowd and too fabulous to explain herself, she's here to prove that second acts are always better with fog machines and impeccable hair.



ELIZABETH "LIZZY" CRUE

Dich, teure Halle, grüß ich wieder from **Tannhäuser** | Wagner

President of the German Club and certified Rebel with a High Note, Lizzy Crue fled the prom scene years ago after a legendary band breakup that no one will talk about (but everyone remembers). Now she's back with a vengeance, ready to prove that comebacks are sweeter than first impressions. Part drama queen, part rock goddess, she's the girl who'd turn detention into a Wagnerian rock show. Her motto? More is more, and too much is just getting started.



SIOUXSIE NORMA SIOUX

Casta Diva from **Norma** | Bellini

Call her Norma at your own peril. This post-punk priestess of darkness has cultivated an air of mystery that would make Elvira jealous. Fashion icon, mystical enigma, and keeper of secrets no one else is cool enough to understand, Siouxsie believes curfews are for mortals and conformity is for cowards. When she's not invoking lunar deities or perfecting her eyeliner, she's reminding everyone that darkness isn't just a phase—it's a lifestyle.



CLAIR CUNEGONDE STANDISH

Glitter and Be Gay from **Candide** | Bernstein

Head Cheerleader, material girl, and living proof that suffering looks better with accessories. Clair has survived castles, catwalks, and more jewelry-related trauma than anyone should endure. Armed with Madonna's fashion sense and the efficiency of someone who only needs one

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Bridget Hille — Collaborative Pianist

A Wichita mainstay for three decades, Bridget Hille partners singers with lift, clarity, and unwavering preparation. An Independence native who took her first paid gig in seventh grade, she refined her craft in Emporia and at Wichita State. Opera work includes WSU Opera Theatre, Opera Workshop in the Flint Hills, and Bel Canto Institute (San Miguel de Allende). Kansas-bred focus and elegant musical architecture make Bridget a trusted engine for Opera Kansas's collaborative excellence.



Kaitlyn York — Mezzo-Soprano

A lifelong Kansan, mezzo-soprano Kaitlyn York is noted for vivid, heartfelt character work supported by exacting craft. Recent credits include Turandot (Lyric Opera of Kansas City) and Suor Angelica (Opera on Tap-KC). At Wichita State, she portrayed Magda in the North American premiere of The Path to Heaven (Gorb/Kaye). Additional roles include Dorabella (Cosi fan tutte) and L'Écureuil/La Chatte (L'enfant et les sortilèges). An M.M. graduate of WSU, Kaitlyn brings focus and finesse to Opera Kansas.

facebook.com/thekaitlynyork/



Mindi Trimble — Soprano

Hailed as "astonishing...thrilling to hear," Mindi Trimble brings leading-role experience from Long Beach Opera, Pacific Opera Project, and regional companies nationwide. Signature roles include Violetta (La Traviata), Pamina (The Magic Flute), and Juliette (Roméo et Juliette). A Californian with Kansas roots, she returns to the Sunflower State with seasoned artistry and audience rapport. Beyond the stage, she leads a thriving educational consultancy, helping students' voices carry—mirroring the clarity and intention she brings to Opera Kansas.

minditrimble.com/performing



Erin Gilmore — Dramatic Soprano

Kansas native Erin Gilmore is recognized for expressive command and assured stagecraft. Recent work includes Mrs. Gobineau (The Medium, Dramatic Voices Midwest); prior roles span La Badessa (Suor Angelica), Miss Jessel (Turn of the Screw), and Lady Billows (Albert Herring, 2025 European tour). An Emporia State alumna with graduate study at UMKC, her research depth shapes a community-centered ethos onstage and off. Based in Overland Park, Erin contributes rigor, range, and reliability to Opera Kansas.

wixsite.com/eringilmoresoprano



Georgeanne Elisabeth Yehling — Soprano

Georgeanne Elisabeth Yehling is the southern-fried soprano— a cross-genre storyteller whose singing and acting land with warmth and bite. With Opera Kansas, she's appeared as Ma Zegner (Proving Up), Pamina (Die Zauberflöte), Olive Ann Beech (Staggerwing), and Miss Hedgehog (Fantastic Mr. Fox); Wichita audiences also know her from Roxy's Downtown. A committed educator, she builds future voices while delivering memorable performances today. Georgeanne's blend of charm and precision energizes Opera Kansas stages and audiences.

georgeanneyehling.com



Carter Tholl — Lyric Coloratura Soprano

A Wichita State Opera Performance alum, Carter Tholl brings an agile, gleaming instrument across repertoire from Renaissance to now. Wichita audiences know her as a soloist with the Wichita Symphony, Music Theatre Wichita, Opera Kansas, Wichita Grand Opera, among others. Offstage, she advances the field as Development Director at Music Theatre Wichita and mentors a small studio. Precision, presence, and audience connection define Carter's work. Carter resides in East Wichita with her husband Mike, daughter Goldie, and dog Juniper.

cartertholl.com



Ann Walenta String Quartet — Ensemble

The Ann Walenta String Quartet represents Wichita State's top chamber standard: scholarship merit, disciplined rehearsal culture, and performance poise. The ensemble earned Third Place in the 22nd Konrad Wolff-Ilse Bing Chamber Music Competition, signaling rising national-caliber talent. Current members—Jesse Havener (violin), Savannah Collins (violin), Sophia Anderson (viola), and Lucas Roach (cello)—balance precision with expressive color. As Opera Kansas collaborators, they fortify our regional talent pipeline and elevate every program with unified, articulate playing.

instagram.com/annwalentastringquartet

SHOUTOUTS

Opera Kansas creates and shares bold, Kansas-rooted opera. We pair beloved titles with new work, bring performances beyond traditional stages, and employ regional talent with global standards of craft. Celebrating over four decades, we invite you to champion a movement that links minds, communities, and stories across the state. Partnership with Opera Kansas isn't transactional. It's transformational. Choose a giving level that speaks to your values.



Danielle Herrington (Josephine) in *H.M.S. Pinafore*.
Opera Kansas 2024–25 Season. Photo by Weldon Schloneger.

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*We are deeply grateful to the behind-the-scenes creatives
whose vision and dedication make these performances possible.*

Russell Adrian, Music Director & Conductor
Hannah Breaun, Stage Manager & Props Master
Kristin Chisham, Chorus Master
Emily Baldridge, Costumer
Joel Garber, Music Director & Conductor
Dan Harmon, Lighting
Simon Hill, Music Director & Conductor
Bridget Hille, Rehearsal Pianist
Mark Hunter, Lighting
Jesse Koza, Stage Director
Athena Magart, Technical Director
Natalie Neufeld, Assistant Stage Manager
Jonathan Ray, Music Director & Conductor
Lily Schloneger, Set Painting
Richard Shultz, Scenic & Lighting Design
Jordan Slusher, Technical Director, Scenic Design & Projections
John Stephens, Stage Director
Amanda Wen, Rehearsal Pianist

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OUR TEAM



"I'LL HAVE WHAT SHE'S HAVING"

DONELL LEOPOLD

EVENTS COMMITTEE CHAIR | BOARD SECRETARY

STARDUST exists because Donell believed in it—and built it with precision, creativity, and heart.

Although the rest of us tried our best to lend our skills, Donell did all the heavy lifting—blowing up 99 (thousand) Luftballons single-handedly!

A University of Kansas graduate known for delivering polished, impactful experiences that connect donors and celebrate Wichita's cultural life, Donell brought elegance, playfulness, and confidence to every decision.

Tonight's magic is hers.

Thank you, Donell!



ZEFFIN HOLLIS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

(917) 439-4477 mobile
zeffin@operakansas.org

Opera Kansas has lived in my imagination since my earliest days as a young singer in Wichita. Now, stepping into the role of Executive Director, I see both the weight of our history and the urgency of our future. My own journey—from performing over a hundred leading roles around the world to directing, teaching, and now leading—has shown me the power of opera to connect people, sharpen ideas, and spark pride in place.

The arts face a critical moment: audiences crave relevance, communities want connection, and sponsors expect real impact. Opera Kansas is ready to deliver. We're expanding where opera happens, who tells the stories, and how Kansans see themselves reflected onstage.

For forty years, Opera Kansas has proven its staying power. Today, we're writing a new chapter—one that belongs not only to artists, but to the communities we serve, to the partners who invest in cultural life, and to the generations who will inherit Kansas's cultural story.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Zeffin Hollis.

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