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FINGER LAKES OPERA ANNOUNCES 2022 TOMITA YOUNG ARTISTS AND PROGRAM UPDATES

ROCHESTER, NY, MARCH 2022 - After a competitive audition process with nearly 450 applications, Finger Lakes Opera, Inc. (FLO) is proud to announce the class of 2022 Tomita Young Artists. Their talents will be showcased in a variety of performances beginning in July 2022. Dates, times, locations, and ticket price information for all FLO's summer events will be released at the end of April.

The 2022 Tomita Young Artists are sopranos [Danielle Beckvermit](#) and [Kayla Hill Oderah](#), mezzo-soprano [Erika Danielle Vasallo](#), tenor [Robert Hartfield](#), baritone Geoffrey Schmelzer, bass [Jeremy Harr](#), and pianist Jenny Choo Kirby. In addition to performance opportunities, these remarkably talented artists will attend masterclasses and work with two guest vocal coaches: Jason Alexander Holmes, who currently serves as the Director of the Cincinnati Boys Choir, and [Cris Frisco](#), New York based coach and conductor who is the Director of the Handorf Company Artist Program at Opera Memphis. FLO also welcomes Emily Cuk, who was a Directing Fellow for Wolf Trap Opera's 2019 season, as a guest stage director for this year's 2022 Tomita Young Artist Program.

In order to support the growth and expansion of FLO's young artist program, the company is also pleased to announce the creation of a new staff position. Joining Founder and Artistic Director Gerard Floriano as a member of the year-round artistic staff, [Stephanie Havey](#), is the newly appointed Tomita Young Artist Program Director. Floriano raves about Havey saying, "FLO is thrilled to welcome Stephanie Havey as a member of the artistic staff." Havey, who served as stage director for FLO's 2021 outdoor production of *The Barber of Seville* added, "I am so pleased to join FLO in this new role. By working with each unique artist to facilitate successful performance opportunities and to promote their professional development, FLO will create a supportive and safe space for young artists to grow as they prepare for the next steps of their career."

Winner of the Adelaide Bishop Award and the OPERA America Director-Designer Showcase, Havey has staged productions for numerous opera companies and has a wealth of experience working with young singers at programs including Curtis Institute of Music, Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Mannes School of Music at The New School, Carnegie Mellon University, Manhattan School of Music, and Central City Opera.

About the Tomita Young Artist Program: In 2018, FLO established a young artist program to feature emerging musicians around the Finger Lakes region and beyond. In 2019, the program's excellence caught the attention of a local benefactor, who made a generous gift that transformed the program now called the Tomita Young Artist Program, named after one of the donor's dear friends. Today, the Tomita Young Artist Program has flourished into one of FLO's greatest assets. This year's 2022 Tomita Young Artists come to Rochester for a month-long summer residency program with numerous training and performing opportunities. In addition, the young artists get the chance to work alongside industry professionals in FLO's mainstage productions. Alumni of the Tomita Young Artist program frequently return to Rochester to be a part of community outreach events and educational programming. As the program continues to grow, FLO is proud to be a launching point for these amazing musicians' careers.

About Finger Lakes Opera: FLO produces fully staged operas of the highest caliber, engaging with a varied roster of professional artists, directors, and designers. Through the Tomita Young Artist Program, FLO offers training and performance opportunities to emerging artists from all over the world and across a variety of backgrounds. FLO seeks to cultivate and develop an understanding and appreciation of opera, bringing the art form to new and diverse audiences within the community and throughout the region. Founded in 2012 by current artistic director Gerard Floriano, FLO became an independent non-profit organization in 2017. Executive director Elizabeth G. Long was hired in 2019, marking the beginning of FLO's expansion and increased presence that continues today.

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