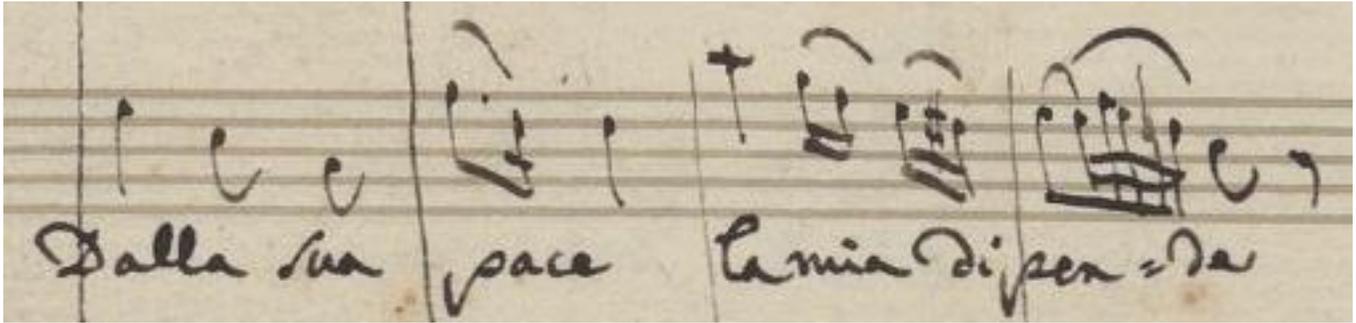
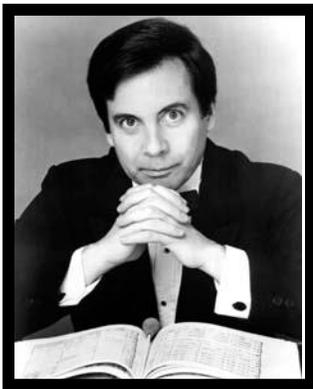


L O N G I S L A N D
O P E R A G U I L D
N E W S L E T T E R



MARCH 2017



Stony Brook Opera 2016-2017 Season

A letter from the Artistic Director of Stony Brook Opera

Our final show for the current season will be a fully staged production of Benjamin Britten's gripping opera *The Rape of Lucretia* (1946). Although for the past two seasons we have experimented with semi-staged concert performances for the Main Stage opera, this year, because of very good box office receipts from last year's *La Bohème* and several generous contributions from our Opera Guild members, we are able to offer a full production, with sets, costumes, lighting, furniture, and props. There will be two performances on the Main Stage of the Staller Center: Saturday, April 22 at 8 pm, and Sunday, April 23 at 3 pm, with pre-opera lectures in the Recital Hall one hour before each performance. The opera will be sung in the original English language, with projected titles as well. Timothy Long will conduct the Stony Brook Opera cast and members of the Stony Brook Symphony Orchestra.

Making his Stony Brook Opera debut is stage director Ted Altschuler, who has assembled an outstanding production team of Reid Thompson as set designer, Caitlin Rapoport as lighting designer, and Beth Goldenberg as costume designer. All of the designers are also making their Stony Brook Opera debuts. Mezzo soprano Kristin Starkey plays the title role of Lucretia, soprano Janani Sridhar that of Lucia, and alumna mezzo soprano Christine Free that of Bianca. Soprano Ju Hyeon

Han will sing the role of the Female Chorus, and tenor Jeremy Little that of the Male Chorus. To the best of our knowledge, Ju Hyeon Han will be the first blind singer to be cast in a leading role in an American Conservatory or University opera production! Baritone David Davani portrays Prince Tarquinius, while bass-baritone Alexander Hahn will sing the role of Lucretia's husband, Collatinus. Rounding out the cast is baritone Zen Kuriyama as Junius.

This issue of our *Newsletter* is devoted entirely to *The Rape of Lucretia*, and includes background articles about the *Rape of Lucretia* in history, literature and art, Britten's opera, including a synopsis, my interview with Ted Altschuler about his production and design concepts, and brief bios of our artists, with their photos. I am convinced that this will be a wonderful evening in the theater. Tickets for the Stony Brook performance are available at the Staller Center Box Office for \$20 each.

Finally, my sincere thanks to all of you who have made tax-deductible contributions to the Long Island Opera Guild in support of our 2016-2017 season. If you have been meaning to make a contribution but have not yet done so, it is still not too late. Please make your check out to the Stony Brook Foundation. Your tax-deductible contribution will be deposited in the Long Island Opera Guild account and will be used to help finance our full production of *The Rape of Lucretia* in April.

David Lawton



Benjamin Britten



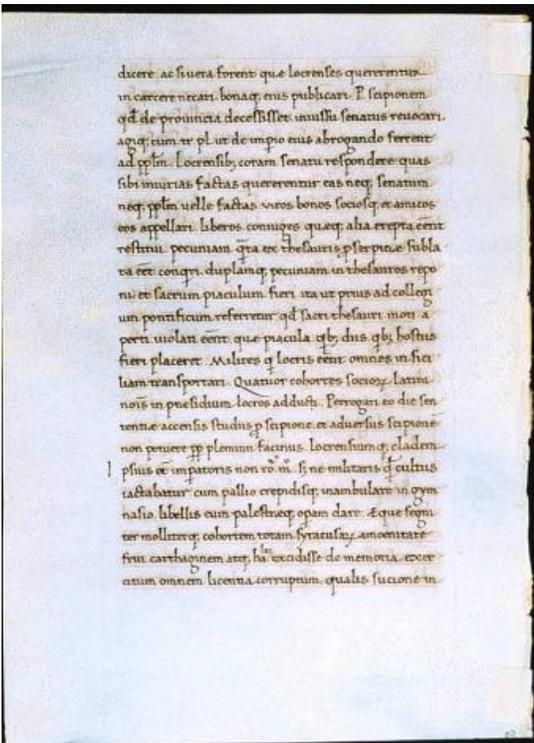
Botticelli, *The tragedy of Lucretia*, ca. 1500



Titian, *Tarquinius and Lucretia* (1571)



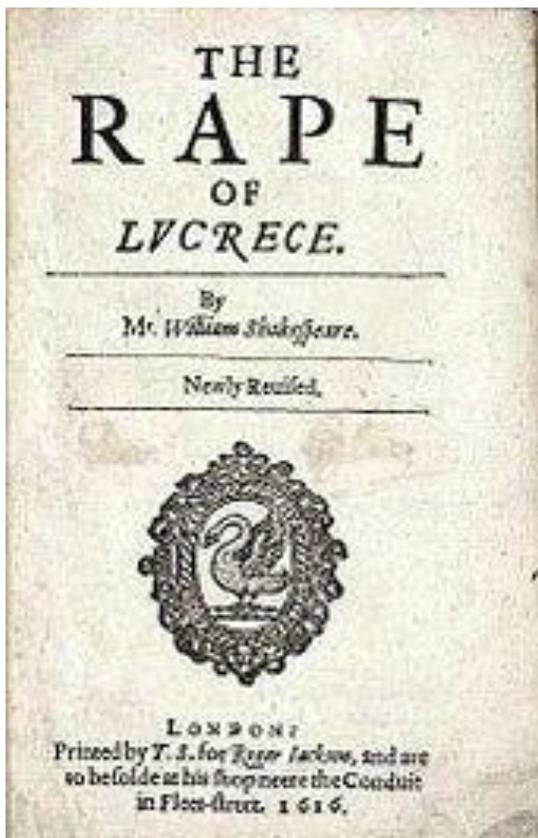
Rembrandt, *Lucretia* (1664)



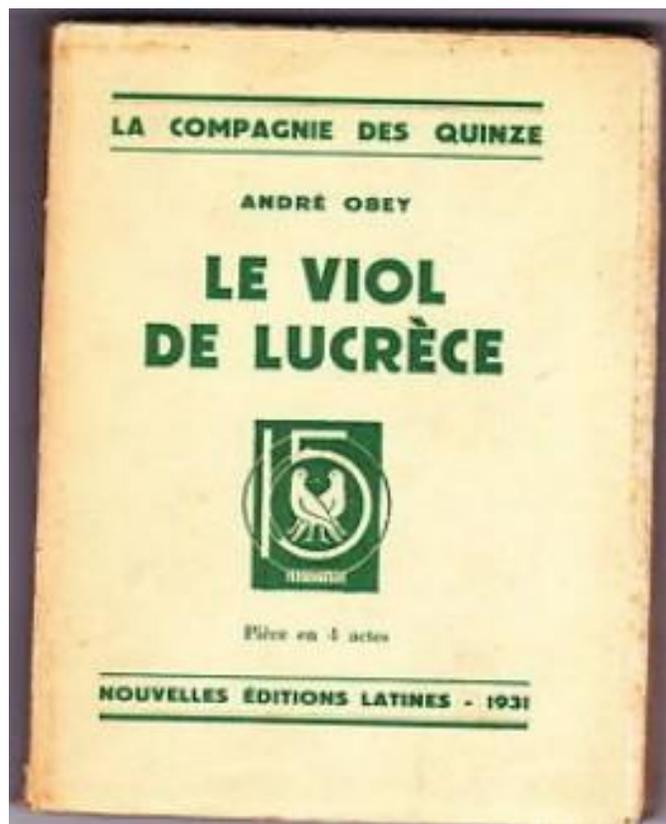
A 15th century manuscript of Livy's *History of Rome*



Scottish illuminated manuscript of Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Legend of Good Women*, after 1489



An early edition of Shakespeare's poem *The Rape of Lucrece*, 1616



Front cover of André Obey's play *Le viol de Lucrece*, 1931

The Rape of Lucretia in history, literature, and art

The subject of the opera is based upon an actual historical incident that took place in ancient Rome, about 510 B.C., and was first chronicled by the Roman historian Livy in his *History of Rome*, written between 25 and 8 B.C. The atrocious crime, and Lucretia's suicide following her rape by the Etruscan Prince Sextus Tarquinius caused a rebellion that overthrew the Roman monarchy and led to the founding of the Roman Republic. Early literary treatments of the story include Ovid in his *Fasti* (8 AD), and Saint Augustine in *The City of God*, published in 426 AD. Geoffrey Chaucer retold the story in his *The Legend of Good Women*, and Shakespeare in his narrative poem *The Rape of Lucrece*. Many celebrated painters also represented the story. Sandro Botticelli's painting *The tragedy of Lucretia*, painted in about 1500, has three panels. The left panel shows Tarquinius threatening Lucretia with a knife, the right panel her death, and the large central one popular revolt that led to the founding of the Roman republic. Titian's painting *Tarquinius and Lucretia* of 1571 represents Tarquinius with his dagger drawn to force Lucretia to give in to him, and Rembrandt's 1661 painting portrays Lucretia about to commit suicide (the three paintings are reproduced above).

The immediate source of Ronald Duncan's libretto for Britten's opera was André Obey's play *Le viol de Lucrece*, published and produced in Paris, 1931. Obey's play, which was strongly influenced by Shakespeare's poem, introduced the figures of the Female and Male Chorus, two characters who comment on the drama in the manner of a Greek Chorus. Britten and Duncan expanded the roles of these two characters in their libretto, and also endowed them with a Christian perspective.

Synopsis of the opera

The Male and Female Chorus describe the historical background to the story, and reveal their view of events to be that of a later, Christian era. The action is set in and around Rome immediately before the end of the reign of the Etruscan king Tarquinius Superbus in 510 BC. At a military camp outside the city his son, the prince Tarquinius Sextus, is drinking with two generals, Collatinus and Junius. They discuss an earlier, unfortunate bet, in which the constancy of various Roman wives was tried and found wanting. Of the married men (Tarquinius goes to brothels) only Collatinus can boast a wife, Lucretia, who was discovered sleeping alone in her husband's absence. Urged on by the malicious Junius, Tarquinius decides to prove Lucretia chaste by attempting her virtue himself, and rides off to Rome. There his arrival at her house produces consternation, but hospitality forces Lucretia to offer him a room for the night, despite her misgivings and those of her servants. Tarquinius's purpose, however, is made clear when he wakes her and forces himself upon her before leaving her house. The following morning her late appearance in a distressed, broken state is only slowly understood by her nurse Bianca and maid Lucia, and her husband is sent for. Collatinus arrives with Junius to hear the news, and despite his at least partial understanding of Lucretia's shame it is too painful for her to bear, and she stabs herself. Her death provides the impetus for the Romans to throw out the Tarquins. The Male and Female Chorus attempt to come to terms with these events in a Christian context.

--Synopsis from the Britten-Pears Foundation: <http://www.brittenpears.org/resources/the-rape-of-lucretia>

Note on the opera

A combination of post-war economic realities and aesthetic preferences encouraged Britten to develop the concept of chamber opera, employing a small cast without chorus and an orchestra of just thirteen players. His first work in the new medium was *The Rape of Lucretia*, first performed just over a year after Peter Grimes, in 1946. There is, however, no loss of colour and atmosphere – indeed the pared-down textures produced an intensification of Britten's operatic vision which was to serve him further in *Albert Herring* and *The Turn of the Screw*. With the roles of the Male and Female Chorus, who comment on the action 'out of time' (as in Greek tragedy) and the use of solo piano accompaniment to accompany recitative passages, Lucretia achieves a certain 'classical' poise and detachment. However, Lucretia and Tarquinius are flesh-and-blood characters driven by real human emotions and desires (Lucretia's music is surely some of Britten's most sheerly beautiful) and the result is an opera of great power and expressive richness.

--Note from the Britten-Pears Foundation: <http://www.brittenpears.org/resources/the-rape-of-lucretia>



Two of Beth Goldenberg's costume designs
for Stony Brook Opera's production of
The Rape of Lucretia



Reid Thompson's set model
for Stony Brook Opera's production of
The Rape of Lucretia

Interview with Ted Altschuler

After one of the early staging rehearsals for our production of *The Rape of Lucretia*, Ted and I found time to sit down and discuss his ideas on this work, his production concept, and various aspects of the design.

David Lawton (hereafter DL): We chose this great opera by Benjamin Britten primarily for two reasons. First, it is a powerful work that has been performed with great success by many conservatories as well as opera companies, and second, because we could put together a very good cast for it from the students currently in our program. Yet concerns were expressed both by the Music Department and the University Administration that the subject of this opera is a very controversial one, especially in the context of national conversations about sexual harassment and rape on college campuses. What are your thoughts on that, and how do you intend to address such issues in our production?

Ted Altschuler (hereafter TA): I would say that a rape on campus would be a potentially sensitive subject, but an opera condemning violence against women (and against humanity more broadly) most certainly is not. The production is an opportunity to make the campus's position clear to the students and the public, while looking the subject squarely in the face. I run an arts center on the Baruch College campus in Manhattan, and I taught at Juilliard for 9 years. If I taught on the Stony Brook campus, I wouldn't think it an extreme position to require students to go to some event during that week to educate them more fully. The opera itself could be one such event. This opera was Britten's response to the suffering of humanity following concerts he gave for the liberated prisoners of Bergen-Belsen. The opera asks the question -what makes it possible to live, to go on - after such violence against humanity? The opera, if anything, says that Lucretia's suffering is the suffering of all mankind. It is a widely performed opera. Glyndebourne just did it, directed by the well-known actress Fiona Shaw. Juilliard has done it twice in the last 12 years. I cannot promise precisely how it will be staged, but

I can tell you that there won't be nudity or overt sexual acting-out on stage. I have stressed to the cast already that rape is an act of violence, not of sex, and that the dynamic is in the realm of power in which violence is used to subdue a victim. It is the music that "evokes" the violence of the rape. Any action between the man and woman on stage will be physically stylized.

DL: With respect to casting, one of the reasons we chose this particular opera was that we were looking for a major role for our wonderful blind soprano, Ju Hyeon Han. She came to Stony Brook because we were the only institution to which she was admitted that had agreed to use her in our opera program. She took part very successfully in several of our scenes programs, but we really wanted to give her the experience of singing a major role in a fully staged production. I believe that this will mark the first time that a blind singer has performed a leading role in a university or conservatory program in this country. In my experience conducting her, she has such an extraordinary ear that conducting her feels no different from conducting a singer who can see and is looking right at you. She is perfectly in synch with everything that is going on musically. I know she has been having special coaching from a director who has extensive experience working with blind actors. You've had several preliminary cast workshops with her this past semester. How is she doing so far?

TA: Ju Yeon is a sensitive spirit and has a gutsy approach. She dives right in. As a director, I am interested in how individuals negotiate their world and I work to find expression for the role through their intellect, their sense of humor, their physicality. I don't think that there is some particular way people must use their faces or their bodies when they act - that's merely convention and, as such, I find it uninteresting. I know very little about the way blind people negotiate the world, so this rehearsal is an opportunity for my collaborators and me to learn about that. The process will be about discovering a language particular to Ju Hyeon as a person, who is not only blind, but is also a female, someone from Korea - many adjectives describe her. Nor does Ju Hyeon represent all blind

people - she is an individual.

In knowing that a blind human being was playing the female chorus, since Britten and Duncan wrote the chorus as intermediaries for the audience - characters who sit midway between the world of the audience and the world of the characters - that made me think about what her blindness might "mean" in that context. The design team and I have been thinking of each of the 3 groups of characters: - the soldiers, the women, and the chorus - as inhabiting their own worlds--worlds that blend into a poetic truth but are rooted in different eras. The world of the chorus is a post-war or post-destruction environment that mirrors the world in which Britten composed this opera - that of post World War II Europe. He conducted concerts for the liberated prisoners of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp and the impact on him was profound. He experienced such pain for their suffering and I think that this opera was born out of a question he asks through the chorus, which was, how in a world with such suffering do we find the strength to go on? We imagine the male chorus as having lost the use of one arm. One might see both his injury and her blindness, as something they both suffered in the context of war.

DL: I'm very impressed with the production team you have put together, and with the designs that they have sent me (see Beth Goldenberg's costume designs for Lucretia and Tarquinius and Lucretia and the photo of Reid Thompson's set model above). I understand that these designs were the result of extensive discussions between you and your team. Please tell us about the view of the opera that emerged from your discussions, and how these designs reflect them.

TA: I see the director's role as choosing an idea to transfer information and experience outlined by the score/text. He or she/ and collaborators answer the question who? is where? doing what? but more than that, my particular approach to work is to imagine as fully as I can the circumstances of these characters lives beyond their words and notes. To imagine the context and to encourage the actors belief in that imaginary world by discovering with them actions that involve them fully in it. I come in

and create contexts - what if you have just come in from the rain? what if your character is playing cards with his character and you really want to win? and let behaviors evolve out of that, rather than prescribing every step a character takes or every emotion they feel. I like those to arise from context so that they retain the complexity of human behaviors rather than simply illustrate ideas about the opera or play I'm directing. As for the discussions with my production team, it was important that the overall context of the opera was a world post-war, post-pain, because that was the circumstance out of which it was composed. The opera is about the violation of the human spirit, about the defiling of the beauty and goodness of the world and how we can bear to live in such a world. The opera poses that question.

We imagined the chorus as being archivists - the keepers of our history, of the stories of ourselves. They search their or our "archives" (the world's repository of stories) to look for an answer to this question. Since history is full of tragedy and life has gone on for millennia, perhaps these stories hold an answer to that question because, in their suffering, the chorus very much wants that answer. Their world is an office or library-like environment in a world evoking the flavor of post-WW II Britain. There are lots of files, papers, books, some of them are in bad shape, having been rescued from bombed buildings. The costumes evoke the tweeds of 1940s Britain and also of someone in the half- academic half-bureaucratic role of archivist.

Reid, Beth, Caitlin and I were influenced by a number of photos of post-war British German cities and struck how similar they were to photos of present day Afghanistan. That picture of destruction is timeless. We decided to root the world of the men - all soldiers - in a present-day war-torn environment, so that the world would not feel too distant, since the same suffering exists in our world today. The men's world is just prior to an anticipated battle, but in that tension and boredom that precedes the action. This means present-day details in the costumes and set - a quonset hut for the soldiers, i-phones instead of letters. War is war - it is soldiers missing their loved ones, temporary

environments, dust, mischief-making to relieve the boredom...

The world of the women, set in the home of Lucretia and Collatinus (one of the officers) in Rome, is a world of wealth and comfort, but one in the context of subjugation by the Etruscans. The world we are creating is domestic, but feels like a ruin - with a mosaic floor scattered with rubble - that ruin could reference the historical period - i.e., this story has unearthed this home archeologically, if you will. Or it could be ruined from war. The setting both evokes classical Rome and also the present. Caitlin's lighting design helps both differentiate between the atmosphere in each world - the temperature of the air, the sense of reality or un-reality or dreamy-ness - and helps unite these distinct environments in a single world - the world of this production.

Common to all three environments is rubble - although the total stage exists across the time period from Ancient Rome to present day - they are all post-war environments. This is a poetic rather than a realistic choice and that emanated from wanting to emphasize the action as a story, which is put into action by the chorus. It also admits the development of a physical language for the key event of the opera - the rape - that I hope will allow us to watch it for what it is: an act of violence and subjugation, not of sex. So many productions use beds and singers simulating either the sexual or the brutal aspects of rape. Rape, violence, and death on stage are not usually actual (at least we hope not) and everyone on stage and in the audience knows that. So realism is never the point. These will always be addressed via some stylistic means. Making a world that is clearly theatrical allows for a behavioral language that suits that environment, one that emphasizes what the characters do to and experience from one another but is not too literal.

DL: One interesting aspect of the dramaturgy of this opera is the presence of the Male Chorus and the Female Chorus. These two actors stand outside the action, sometimes narrating portions of the story, other times commenting upon it, and once or twice even attempting to intervene by addressing the

characters of the story directly. The idea of the Female and Male Chorus characters was taken from the French play *Le viol de Lucrece* by André Obey, on which Ronald Duncan based his libretto, but the Christian perspective of these two characters, introduced early in the work and maintained in their subsequent scenes, and especially in the epilogue, is unique to Britten's opera. After the premiere, this aspect of the opera was harshly criticized in some of the early reviews. What are your thoughts about this issue? Why do you think Duncan and Britten introduced this Christian perspective on a story that took place 500 years before Christ's birth?

TA: In the productions I have seen of this opera, I have never seen a solution I have liked to the idea of the chorus. They have always seemed static or abstract presences. I am hoping that by imaging a clear world for them in which they live lives that involve making tea, and carrying out a job, that the enactment of the story will be necessary to them, and they will seem engaged rather than passive.

As for the mention of Christ in the libretto, I don't see that reference as a religious perspective but as a cultural one. I am taking Britten and Duncan literally when the libretto says that the chorus lives after the action of the story has taken place; in fact, we are doing that in combining multiple time periods. Britten wanted to chorus to serve as an intermediary because he was evoking the past to understand his present time. In creating a third time period in this piece (our present era) we are taking that one step further, saying that we didn't learn to avoid this suffering after WWII either. War and suffering continue and whether we look at ancient history, recent history or modern times, people suffer terribly and somehow life continues. The mention of Christ calls attention to the juxtaposition of time periods, and we do that all the time. We refer to the year 1942 BC or AD - it's a reference to Christ, but culturally, not religiously. Christ was a religious reference for any Christians living in Britten's society - England is mostly, but not exclusively, Anglican (Britten himself was not particularly observant). Most important is that Christianity is a religion wherein the central symbol is a man who took the suffering of all mankind upon Himself. Christianity purports to offer the faithful

relief from their suffering as the reward for belief, however this opera does not depict a world in which any character appears to have found relief from suffering. In some ways, I think that Britten was afraid to leave the audience too low - this was performed in 1947, just after the war. The Female chorus asks whether Christ's sacrifice was in vain and whether all is suffering? The Male chorus answers, "It is not all... in his passion is our hope..." but the male chorus could sing that in any number of ways - simply as though believing it, hopefully, desperate for it to be true. The Male and Female chorus together say that they "try to harness song to human tragedy" - that's a beautiful aim but they say "try" not "we have done it." It trivializes suffering to say that all pain should vanish in a puff of smoke if you believe. Britten said himself that everything he wrote after Bergen Belsen was different from what he wrote before. He didn't recover, and that wouldn't be true; to do that we would have to

forget. At the same time, he wanted to offer the possibility of hope and the last words the chorus sing suggest that one might find that through music.

Meet our Performers



Bass-Baritone **Alexander Hahn's** (Collatinus) recent performances include his debut with the Beethoven Easter Festival of Warsaw as Pietro in *Simon Boccanegra*, Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Bronx Opera, Monterone with in *Rigoletto*

with Opera Theater of Connecticut, Le Bailli in *Werther* with Opera Company of Brooklyn, and the bass-baritone soloist in Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with EOS Orchestra of Beijing. Mr. Hahn's operatic credits include performances of Lorenzo in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, King René in *Iolanta*, Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte*, and the Sorcerer in *Dido and Aeneas*, as well as excerpted performances of Colline in *La Bohème*, Bartolo in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Frère Laurent in *Roméo et Juliette*, Banco in *Macbeth*, Dulcamara in *l'elisir d'amore*, and Superintendent Budd in *Albert Herring*, as well as many others with Mannes Opera, Chautauqua Opera, and Yale Opera. Equally at home in art song, Mr. Hahn has performed as a soloist in Chautauqua Opera's young artist recital series, Yale Opera's Liederabend concerts, and the Montreal International Vocal Arts Institute recital series. Mr. Hahn is a graduate of the Yale School of Music, where he earned both a Master's degree in Music and an Artist Diploma as well as being awarded the David L. Kasdon Memorial Prize, for the most outstanding singer in the School of Music. Mr. Hahn earned his Bachelor's degree in Music from Mannes College of Music. In February he appeared

as Golaud in our production of *Impressions de Pelléas*.



Described as a “first-rate tenor” with “a clarion lyric” voice (*New York Times*), tenor **Jeremy Little** (Male Chorus) has performed throughout the United States with such companies as The Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, Opera Theater of St. Louis, Des Moines Metro Opera, Florentine Opera, Anchorage Opera, The Juilliard Opera Center, and Wolf Trap Opera. He has been seen as Romeo in *Roméo et Juliette*, Nemorino in *L’elisir d’amore*, Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Alfredo in *La Traviata*, Fenton in *Falstaff*, and has been featured in concert and recital at Carnegie Hall, The Kennedy Center, and Merkin Hall. Jeremy created the title role in Lowell Liebermann’s *Miss Lonelyhearts* for Juilliard’s Centennial Celebration, and was a 2010 Grammy Nominee for his performance in the live recording of John Musto’s *Volpone*, garnering praise of “remarkable theatrical suavity, revealing a robust tenor to go with the rich characterization” (*Opera News*). After 8 years with the celebrated Metropolitan Opera Chorus, appearing in 150 performances each season, Jeremy is currently on sabbatical and is a doctoral student at Stony Brook University. In February he sang the title role in our production of *Impressions de Pelléas*.



Mezzo soprano **Kristin Starkey** (Lucretia) is currently working towards her D.M.A. in Vocal Performance at Stony Brook University. She has recently been seen as La Principessa (*Suor Angelica*) and Grimmerde (*Die Walküre*) with New York Lyric Opera, and as a featured soloist with One World Symphony singing *Field of the Dead*. Repertoire includes roles as Alisa (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Mrs. Grose (*Turn of the Screw*), Dalila, Carmen, Musette (Leoncavallo’s *La Boheme*), Oktavian, Hermia, Cenerentola, La Voix, Third Lady, and Arsamene. Recent performances include Il Tebro in Handel’s *O come chiare e belle* for Stony Brook Opera, and Erda (*Das Rheingold*), Rosette (*Manon*), and Maddalena (*Rigoletto*) with Opera Company of Brooklyn. In February she sang the roles of the Third Lady in Occasional Opera Company’s concert performance of Mozart’s *Die Zauberflöte*, and Geneviève in our production of *Impressions de Pelléas*.



Ju Hyeon Han

Soprano **Ju Hyeon Han** (Female Chorus), was born in Seoul, South Korea and went to New Zealand for her studies in 1997. While in New Zealand, she appeared in numerous concert and oratorio performances, including concerts with the Auckland Philharmonic orchestra, and soprano soloist for Handel's Judas Maccabaeus, Mozart's Requiem and Schubert's Mass in G. In 2008, Ju Hyeon received a Bachelor of Music Honors in Vocal Performance from the University of Auckland. Then she continued her studies in the United States, earning a Master of Music in Vocal Performance and in Vocal Pedagogy at New England Conservatory, and a Professional Studies Certificate in Voice at Manhattan School of music. Currently, Ju Hyeon is completing a Doctor of Musical Arts degree at Stony Brook University. While in the United States, Ju Hyeon has developed a passion for song recitals and early music, and has performed in numerous recitals and early music concerts. As a two-time participant with SongFest (2010, 2011), a fellow at the Steans Music Institute Ravinia Festival program for singers (2012), and a participant at the Amherst Early Music Festival (2014), Ju Hyeon has honed her singing craft in these various genres. Ju Hyeon has recently developed an interest in opera, appearing as Pamina in the Occasional Opera Company's concert performance of *Die Zauberflöte* in 2016. In April of 2017, Ju Hyeon will perform

the role of Female Chorus in Stony Brook University's production of *The Rape of Lucretia* by Benjamin Britten. Once Ju Hyeon completes her studies, she hopes to pursue a career as a concert singer specializing in art song recitals, contemporary music and oratorios. She is particularly interested in bringing song recitals to the wider community, developing recital programs that will appeal to a variety of audiences while still promoting music that is less well-known. Ju Hyeon also plans to teach, and has a special interest in working with under-privileged or special needs children and young adults.



Soprano **Janani Sridhar** (Lucia) is a seasoned performer of both operatic and concert repertoire. Previous operatic credits include *L'Elisir d'Amore* (Adina), Mrs Sem in *Noyye's Fludde*, La Bergère/La Chouette in *L'enfant et les Sortilèges*, *Die Zauberflöte* (Pamina), *La Traviata* (Violetta Valéry), *Madama Butterfly* (Kate Pinkerton), *Dido and Aeneas* (Dido), *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* (Antonia), *Cendrillon* (Clorinda), and *La Boheme* (Musetta). Competition credits include 1st place in University of Connecticut's Concerto Competition, the Amy Jane Cohen Encouragement Award-Connecticut Concert Opera, 3rd place in National Opera Association Vocal Competition, Young Artist Award in the Harold Haugh Competition, 1st place in the Youth Asian Music Competition, Gold with Distinction in the Youth Asian Music Competition, and 1st place in the Llangollen

Musical Eistedfodd. Janani is an alumna of the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and Manhattan School of Music and is currently pursuing her doctorate at Stony Brook University.



David John Davani (Tarquinius) is pursuing a master's degree in voice in the studio of Randall Scarlata at Stony Brook.

His performances include those with the Stony Brook Opera, the Art Song Preservation Society of New York's "Spring into Song" Series at the National Opera Center, solo appearances with the Stony Brook University Orchestra, as well as recitals at the Staller Center for the Arts at Stony Brook University and at the Mannes College of Music.

Since 2014, David has appeared in master classes with tenors George Shirley and Frank Lopardo, baritone William Stone, as well as Mikael Eliassen, Mark Markham, and Ted Altschuler. In addition, David has performed as a soloist at several festivals, including Curtis SummerFest and Mannes's Bernstein and Mendelssohn festivals.

He has won and placed in multiple national competitions including the Artist Concert Series of Sarasota's 2016 competition for voice, The Friday Woodmere Classical Music Club's 2016 Young Artist Competition, the 2015 American Prize for Art Songs, the 2015 Five Towns Music and Arts Foundation competition, the 2014 North Shore Chamber Choir Marilyn C. Lloyd award, and in

2013 was a National Young Arts Foundation award winner.



Baritone **Zen Kuriyama** (Junius) is currently a second-year Master of Music student in Voice Performance at Stony Brook University, studying with Randall Scarlata. Zen graduated with a B.A. in Music with highest honors from the University of Hawaii at Mānoa, where he was awarded the prestigious Presser Scholar Award and had a double focus in voice and musicology. At Stony Brook, Zen currently serves as a Graduate Teaching Assistant for MUS 307- Imaginative Worlds of Opera- and concurrently serves as the Graduate Assistant Conductor of the Stony Brook Chorale & Camerata Singers. Zen was a 2016 participant in the Ensemble Singing Intensive at the Amherst Early Music Festival, and was a 2016 Singing Fellow at the Norfolk Chamber Choir and Choral Conducting Workshop, under Simon Carrington. As a hobby, Zen is an amateur musicologist of the English Musical Renaissance, focusing particularly on the sound world of nationalistic music in the British Isles. Since Fall 2015, Zen has proudly served as a Staff Singer/Assistant Conductor of St. Peter's By-the-Sea Episcopal Church in Bay Shore, NY. Last year Zen sang the roles of Benoit and Alcindoro in our semi-stage concert performances of *La Bohème*.



Christine Free Rhodebeck, mezzo-soprano (Bianca), has consistently delighted audiences singing with passion, sensitivity, and charisma. Featured roles include Sesto in *La Clemenza di Tito*, Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Roméo in *I Capuleti ed i Montecchi*, Dorabella in *Così fan Tutte*, and Dido in *Dido and Aeneas*. Other operatic engagements include Antioco in the American premiere of Stradella's *La Forza Dell'Amor Paterno*, and Daniele in *La Susanna*, with Brandywine Baroque, the Second Lady in *Die Zauberflöte* with the Occasional Opera Company, Marie in *Il Dialoghi per la Passione*, and Euterpe in *Il Parnaso ed il Confuso* with Ridotto Opera. Christine garnered praise singing Monteverdi's *Lamento D'Arianna* as "a veritable mad song" (Early Music America) at the Boston Early Music Festival. Recital engagements include performances with Biber Baroque, solos in Brahms' *Neue Liebeslieder Waltzes* with the Roundhill Community Church, with pianist Jacob Rhodebeck at the *Le Petit Salon* concert series, in Switzerland at the *Wirzhaus*, and most recently at the *RiverArts* concert series. Christine is thrilled to return to Stony Brook Opera in the role of Bianca for this performance of Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*.

Timothy Long (conductor and music director) has been praised for his "sharp conducting" (Washington Post), and his orchestras have triumphed with displays of "breadth, depth and color" (Riverfront Times) and "brilliant playing" (Rocky Mountain News).

In recent seasons he has conducted *La Cenerentola* at Opera Colorado, *Dream Seminar* with the Companion Star Ensemble, concerts of Bernstein and Mozart with Jamie Bernstein at the Oregon Bach Festival and two operas of Dominick Argento, *Miss Havisham's Fire* and *A Few Words About Chekhov* at the Maryland Opera Studio, the latter with famed mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade. He also performed as a pianist and actor in the show, *Surviving Love*, at the Midtown International Theater Festival. Past performances have included the world premiere of *Shadowboxer* by John Chenault and Frank Proto for the Maryland Opera Studio, *Le Nozze di Figaro* at Boston Lyric Opera, *Così fan tutte* at Shreveport Opera, Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* at the University of Colorado at Boulder, *Madame Butterfly* at Opera Theatre of St. Louis, *Ariadne auf Naxos* at Wolf Trap Opera, Conrad Susa's *Transformations* for the Maryland Opera Studio, *Don Giovanni* at the Théâtre Municipal de Castres in France; and *The Music Teacher*, an off-broadway play/opera by Wallace Shawn and Allen Shawn for The New Group, which ran at the Minetta Lane Theater for seven weeks.

As a pianist, his performances have been described as “dramatic, fiery” and “dazzlingly forceful” (Rochester Democrat and Chronicle). He has performed throughout the world at venues such as the Aspen Music Festival, the National Museum of the American Indian, the Kennedy Center, Weill Recital Hall and Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall, the Kyoto International Music Festival, and the Castell de Sant Marçal in Barcelona, Spain. His collaborations with singers include recitals with Jennifer Aylmer, William Sharp, Susanne Mentzer, Thomas Meglitoranza, Christopheren Nomura and an appearance on NBC’s Today Show with Salvatore Licitra. His chamber music partners have included the Pacifica, Euclid and Chester string quartets. Bridge Records released Mr. Long’s recording as conductor and pianist, *The Music Teacher*, a play/opera featuring Parker Posey and Wallace Shawn in the leading roles. Mr. Long was formerly an Associate Conductor at New York City Opera and the Assistant Conductor for Robert Spano at the Brooklyn Philharmonic. He has held faculty positions at the Yale School of Music, The Juilliard School, the University of Maryland and the Aspen Music Festival and School.



Ted Altschuler (stage director) has directed more than 45 productions at New York City Opera, Rode Hoode (Amsterdam), Phoenix Repertory Theatre, Kaplan Penthouse, The Juilliard School, and others. Operas include: *La Calisto*, *Don Giovanni*, *Albert Herring*, *Così fan Tutte*, *Tell-tale Heart*, *Werther*. Plays include: *Broken Journey*, *Hot Fudge*, *Icarus’ Mother*, *Play with Repeats*, *In the Belly of the Beast*, *Road to the Graveyard*, *On the Verge*, and pieces inspired by artists Joseph Cornell, Georgia O’Keefe, and Virginia Woolf (the award-winning Chicago production of *Virginia*). Film: Assistant Director *A Trip to Bountiful*. Ted has taught acting internationally at conservatories and young artist programs. He served as Associate Director of Mint Theatre Company and now directs Baruch Performing Arts Center in New York.

**Stony Brook Opera
Dateline 2016-2017
Save the dates!**

Full production of Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*

(Three performances)

--Wednesday, April 19, 2017 at 12 noon, preview performance,
Berkner Hall, Brookhaven National Laboratory

--Saturday, April 22, 2017 at 8 p.m., Staller Center Main Stage,
Stony Brook

Sunday, April 23, 2017 at 3 p.m.: Staller Center Main Stage, Stony
Brook

**Benefit concert for Stony Brook Opera by Christine
Goerke, Saturday December 9, 2017 at 8 pm, Staller
Center for the Arts, Main Stage, with the Stony Brook
Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Timothy Long**

Dramatic soprano Christine Goerke, who received her AB in Music from Stony Brook University in 1995, and had her first operatic experience with Stony Brook Opera, singing the leading roles of Asteria in Handel's *Tamerlano* and Fiordiligi in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, has just won a prestigious *Opera News Award*. An article about her in the current issue of *Opera News* describes her present status in the opera profession as "the dramatic soprano of choice in opera houses around the world, thanks to the power and shading of a heroic voice matched by a heroic stage personality." Christine will be starring at the Met next season in the title role of Richard Strauss' formidable *Elektra*. Her benefit concert for Stony Brook Opera will include "The dance of the seven veils" and Salome's monologue from Strauss' *Salome*, and the immolation scene from Wagner's *Götterdämmerung*. The concert will mark the first time she is singing these two roles in the New York area.

Don't miss this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to hear her in person in her triumphant return to her alma mater.