



Michael Heaston, Judge



Emily Pulley, Judge



Ward Holmquist, Judge

Emily Pulley is a 1993 winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions and made her debut with the company the following season. Since then, she has sung nearly 200 performances there and continues to appear with other prestigious companies and symphonies across the country and around the world. She is especially well known for her interpretation of modern works and has participated in numerous world premieres, including the title role in Mark Adamo's *Lysistrata* for Houston Grand Opera, which she then reprised for New York City Opera. A *summa cum laude* graduate of West Texas A&M University, Ms. Pulley was selected as a Distinguished Alumna in 2014 and spent the following year on faculty there as an Artist in Residence, teaching private voice and directing the Opera Workshop program. She was awarded a Presidential Citation from her graduate school, the University of North Texas, and she will be teaching and performing there during the month of February.

Michael Heaston is a respected artistic administrator, collaborative pianist, and vocal coach. He was recently named Executive Director of the prestigious Lindemann Young Artist Development Program at the Metropolitan Opera. Prior to this appointment, he was the Director of the Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program, American Opera Initiative and Advisor to the Artistic Director at Washington National Opera at The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. He was also the Associate Artistic Director of The Glimmerglass Festival, where he oversaw the Young Artists Program and all matters of musical administration. He was named one of Musical America's top 30 Professionals of the Year for 2015. He spent six seasons at The Dallas Opera, where he was Head of Music Staff and Assistant Conductor for over 25 productions, some of which included: *Salome*, *Porgy & Bess*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Così fan tutte*, *The Lighthouse*, *Anna Bolena*, *Madama Butterfly*, and the critically-acclaimed world premiere of *Moby-Dick*. He also served as Score Consultant for the Metropolitan Opera's Emmy and Peabody Award-winning Live in HD movie theater transmission series for seven seasons.

Ward Holmquist, Artistic Director of the Lyric Opera of Kansas City from 1998-2015, led the company through innovative programming, exciting casting and thoughtful, strong conducting. Mr. Holmquist's formative training includes degrees from the Oberlin Conservatory, the University of Illinois at Urbana/Champaign with renowned accompanist John Wustman, and Fulbright Grant conducting studies at the Hochschule für Musik in Vienna. He began his professional career at the Houston Grand Opera as a member of the Houston Opera Studio as an apprentice pianist/coach/conductor. Over time he rose to the position of Resident Conductor of the main company, during which time he was involved in the world premieres of contemporary works by Stewart Wallace, Carlisle Floyd, John Adams and Philip Glass, among others.

New Entries



Chris Carr, Tenor



Jeffrey Luksik, Baritone