

I Am a Dreamer Who No Longer Dreams

CAST BIOS

Carla Lopez-Speziale Rosa

Carla López-Speziale is a mezzosoprano with experience in opera, oratorio, as well as symphonic and chamber repertoire. She has been recognized for her “beautiful, warm voice with a secure and soft top and a powerful low register” by the Basler Landschaftszeitung in Switzerland.

Some of her most notable roles are Carmen in Bizet’s Carmen --a role she has performed in the United States, Mexico and China--, Dalila (Saint-Saëns’ Samson and Delilah), Azucena (Verdi’s Il trovatore), Isabella (Rossini’s L’italiana in Algeri), the Old Lady (Bernstein’s Candide), Bloody Mary (Rodgers & Hammerstein’s South Pacific) and Baba the Turk (Stravinsky’s The Rake’s Progress), a role she most recently performed with the Bellas Artes Opera in Mexico City and in the 50th edition of the International Cervantino Festival in Guanajuato.

Her symphonic performances include Mahler’s Second, Third and Eighth symphonies as well as Kindertotenlieder, Rückert Lieder and Des Knaben Wunderhorn, Prokofiev’s Alexander Nevsky, Brahms’s Alto Rhapsody, Bach’s Mass in B Minor, St. John and St. Matthew Passions and Wagner’s Wesendonck Lieder to name a few. She made her Boston debut singing the role of Rosa in Jacobs’/Sosa’s I Am a Dreamer Who No Longer Dreams in 2019 with White Snake Projects to critical acclaim.

During the pandemic she was featured as the Alto Solo in Mahler’s Second Symphony with the Orchestra for the Earth and the Self-Isolation Choir (UK) in a virtual performance presented by the Mahler Foundation and Marina Mahler.

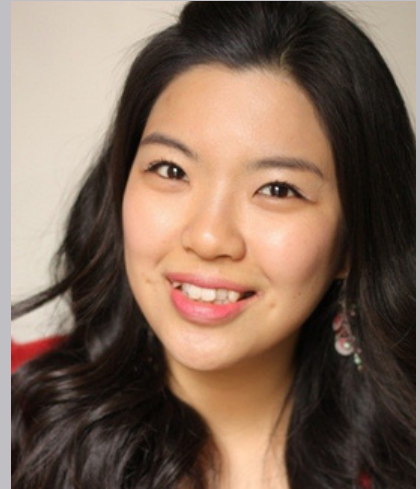
She has been a winner of competitions such as the Vincenzo Bellini in Italy, the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions in New York and the Carlo Morelli competition in her native Mexico, among others. Ms. López-Speziale holds a Bachelor of Music Degree from the National Conservatory in Mexico and as a Fulbright fellow, received Master and Doctor in Musical Arts Degrees from the Manhattan School of Music. <http://www.carlalopezspeziale.com/>



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Heejung Lee Singa

Soprano Heejung Lee was born in Seoul, South Korea. Earned her Bachelor of Music in voice with high honors from Seoul National University in South Korea, and her Master of Music in Vocal Arts from the Bard College Conservatory of Music, where she studied with Lorraine Nubar and performs regularly with renowned soprano Dawn Upshaw.



Lee was currently selected as a winner from the New York Riverside Opera Company, and also Grand Prize from Metropolitan International Competition in 2020. She has a second prize from Manhattan International Competition in 2016, and also has won the Barry Alexander International Vocal Competition in 2014 and she made her Carnegie Hall debut in New York City.

She was declared as the finalist in several international competitions such as the Montserrat Caballé Competition in Spain, the Marcella Sembrich International Voice Competition, the Mario Lanza and Elaine Malbin Vocal Competitions, and the New York Lyric Opera Theater International Competition.

Highlights of her performances also include the role of the Queen of the Night in the Seoul Festival's The Magic Flute and Ninfa e Pastore in the Performing Arts Theater at Bard. She also won the first place at the Overseas Dispatch Competition in 2006, gold medal at the Sungjung Music Competition in 2004, and first prize at the Music Journal Competition in 2004 in Korea.



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Kyrie Laybourn Gangster/Mother/Prosecutor

Soprano Kyrie Laybourn is currently in her second season as a Resident Young Artist with Tri-Cities and Syracuse Opera. In the 2023–24 season, she will perform the roles of Gangster/Mother/Prosecutor in Jorge Sosa’s *I Am A Dreamer Who No Longer Dreams*, Lewis’ Mother (Bellomy) in *The Fantasticks*, and Berta in *The Barber of Seville*.



Last season she portrayed Countess Almaviva in *The Marriage of Figaro*, Mrs. Gobineau in *The Medium*, and Edwina in *Mystery on the Docks*. Kyrie is devoted to connecting with her audiences—both on the operatic stage and in the recital hall—through intuitive and authentic interpretation.

Ms. Laybourn ardently chooses projects and programming that emphasize women’s voices. She is currently working on a recital project entitled “How Women Love” that explores the eight Greek forms of love from the female perspective—featuring poetry, music, and visual art created exclusively by women.

Previous projects include a workshop of Kamala Sankaram’s *Joan of the City*, an augmented-reality opera that tells the story of five houseless women and their journey to finding friendship and community.

Follow Kyrie on Instagram @kyrielaybourn or at kyrielaybourn.com.

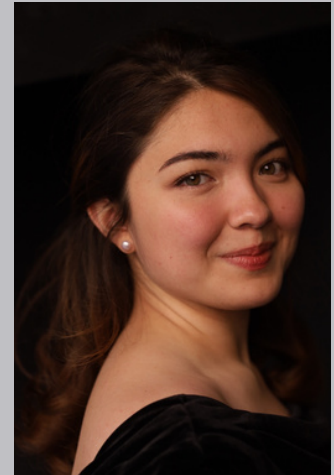


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Kelsey Watts Young Singa

Filipina-American soprano Kelsey Watts earned her M.M. Opera, B.Mus. Vocal Performance, and B.S. Chemistry degrees from Binghamton University. Kelsey has performed with Tri-Cities Opera in the roles of Clorinda in Rossini's *La Cenerentola* and Delia in Joe Illick's *Stone Soup*; with Delaware Valley Opera in the roles of Mimi in Puccini's *La bohème* and Gilda in Verdi's *Rigoletto*; and with Binghamton University's Opera Ensemble in the roles of Pamina in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, Sandrina in Mozart's *La finta giardiniera*, Gretel in Engelbert Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, and the Sorceress in Henry Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. As part of her graduate degree, Kelsey self-produced a performance of Jake Heggie's *Another Sunrise*, paired with a collection of songs written during, in response to, and by victims of the Holocaust.

Kelsey has performed as a soloist with the Philadelphia Chorus, the Binghamton University Symphony Orchestra as winner of Binghamton's Concerto Competition, the Binghamton Philharmonic, and the Binghamton University Wind Symphony. She won 1st place in the upper division of the Civic Morning Musicals Competition in 2021, placed 1st in her category at the Eastern Regional NATS competition in 2017, 2018, and 2019, and was a finalist in the Classical Singer competition, and a semi-finalist in the NATS National Competition in 2019.



Laura Forero Torres Young Rosa

Soprano Laura Forero Torres, was born in Cali, Colombia where she studied her bachelors in music performance. Laura performed her first opera as Ilia in *Idomeneo*, *Re Di Creta* and winning the *Concurso de la Banda Departamental*. After which she decided to go to the USA, to study for a MM in Opera Performance at Binghamton University. She has performed the roles of Drusilla in *L'Incoronazione di Poppea*; The Princess in *L'Enfant Et Les Sortilèges*; and Noemie in *Cendrillon*. Laura is performing the role of Young Rosa in *I Am A Dreamer Who No Longer Dreams* with Tri-Cities & Syracuse Opera.



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Marcello Cormio Conductor

Italian conductor Marcello Cormio has distinguished himself for his energetic style and engaging persona on the podium. His insightful approach to the score and refined musicianship—combined with a great sense of dramatic pacing—have gained him the favor of orchestras, opera companies, and audiences alike.

Cormio's work ranges from operatic and symphonic conducting to coaching singers to education at all levels. He has been active as a pianist, coach and conductor for over two decades, both in Europe and in the USA.

During the upcoming season, he will debut with Syracuse Opera conducting Jorge Sosa's *I am a dreamer who no longer dreams*. He will also appear as a guest conductor with the Santa Fe Pro Musica orchestra, and will lead a production of Puccini's *La rondine* at the Manhattan School of Music in New York.

Cormio has been a frequent guest conductor at the Sarasota Opera, leading productions of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (2023), Bizet's *Les pêcheurs de perles* (2022), Pergolesi's *La serva padrona* (2021). In the summer of 2021, he led a production of *La Traviata* with La Musica Lirica opera festival. The South Florida Classical praised him as "an assured hand in the pit, conducting the score with vitality while leaving the singers room to breathe in their solos" for *Così fan tutte* during Sarasota Opera's 2016 season. Cormio's "notable" conducting with Sarasota Opera in the 2014 season was praised for a "lovely, light touch with the music": "the young Italian drew vital and spirited playing, with the fizzing ensemble exciting yet with a fine balancing of solo voices, chorus and orchestra" (SFCR). At the Sarasota Opera he also counts a double bill of the rarely seen *Rita* by Donizetti and *Il segreto di Susanna* by Wolf-Ferrari among his credits with this company, as well as Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*.

As a symphonic conductor, Cormio has been recently named Music Director of the Lexington Chamber Orchestra, leading a highly successful inaugural concert in the 2023-2024 season.

He has appeared with orchestras around the United States and Europe, including the San Antonio Symphony, the Orchestra della Società dei Concerti di Bari, the Bacau Symphony, and the Orchestra Sinfonica del Conservatorio di Bari. In recent years, he has developed a fruitful artistic relationship with the Orchestra Sinfonica della Città Metropolitana di Bari, leading the orchestra in several cycles of performances as guest conductor. He has also served as cover conductor for the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. He has collaborated with the Irish Tenors, serving as conductor for their 2018 Christmas tour, and leading several performances to sold out auditoriums around North America.

Cormio's commitment to education has been constant and all-encompassing throughout his career. He currently devotes a considerable part of his time and energies to his work as Music Director of the Central Kentucky Youth Orchestras: there, he leads symphonic ensembles and oversees an El Sistema community program as well as several other impactful educational endeavors, sharing his inexhaustible passion for music with hundreds of young talents every year and contributing to building the future generations of orchestra musicians. He has also been on the faculty of the University of Kentucky as Director of the University of Kentucky Philharmonia orchestra.

In the educational realm, Cormio has also been active as an opera conductor and coach throughout his career, both at academic institutions and in summer music festivals. He has led productions of *L'elisir d'amore*, *Così fan tutte* and *A Room with a View* at the Michigan State University, as well as *Street Scene* at the West Virginia University, where he was the Head of the Opera Program in 2014-15. Among his credits are also opera scenes productions at the Manhattan School of Music and at the Indiana University School of Music, and Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* and *The Phantom of the Opera* with the University of Kentucky Opera Theatre.

He is sought after as a faculty at summer opera festivals, such the Savannah Voice Festival (conductor of *Hansel and Gretel*), the Bay View Music Festival (conductor of *Die Zauberflöte*), *Opera do Recife* (Brazil), *Prague Summer Nights* (Czech Republic), *Classic Lyric Arts - Berkshires*. He was also the Artistic Director of the *Opera Lucca Festival* in Lucca, Italy, for three editions.

Cormio holds graduate degrees in piano, composition, conducting, and musicology from Italian conservatories and universities, as well as a Master of Music degree from Indiana University and a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Kentucky.



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PRODUCTION PERSONNEL BIOS

Stefanos Koroneos **Stage Director**

Hailing from Greece, Stefanos Koroneos, General Director and Artistic Director of Teatro Grattacielo, is a passionate advocate for multidisciplinary arts and creative direction.

With a broad background as a performer, he possesses a deep understanding of the singer's perspective, enabling him to extract excellence from those he collaborates with. Koroneos focuses on consensus-building, whether in his directorial, collaborative, or administrative roles.



Noteworthy achievements include his highly acclaimed curation and direction of Mozart's *Idomeneo* and *Don Giovanni* in both Greece and the United States. Additionally, his visually captivating interpretation of Zandonai's *Giulietta e Romeo* in Battery Park City, NY garnered critical acclaim and earned him awards. Koroneos's upcoming projects feature two reprisals of *Don Giovanni*, as well as *Madama Butterfly*, *Carmen*, and *La Vestale*, scheduled at esteemed venues such as Light Opera of New Jersey, La Tech in Monterrey, Mexico, the Cultural Center of Crete, the Megaron Thessaloniki, and Teatro Grattacielo. Throughout his career, Koroneos has collaborated with opera's renowned directors and conductors, including Franco Zeffirelli, Fabrizio Melano, Moisés Kaufman, and Richard Bonyngue. Building upon their expertise and vision, he has developed a distinctive directorial style of his own.

As a former baritone, Koroneos has appeared in stages worldwide, performing at venues such as Teatro alla Scala, Teatro Regio di Torino, Bolshoi Theater, New York City Opera, Palm Beach Opera, Tampa Opera, Gotham Chamber Opera, Greek National Opera, Den Nye Opera Netherlands, Staatstheater Freiburg, and Theater Osnabrück.

John Cockerill **Assistant Conductor & Pianist**

Pianist and vocal coach, John Cockerill, is the Assistant Conductor for Tri-Cities Opera. He has also served on the music staff of Des Moines Metro Opera and Seagle Festival in Schroon Lake, NY. He holds an M.M. in Musicology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and an M.M. in Collaborative Piano from the University of Colorado-Boulder. Recent music direction credits include *La bohème*, *The Fantasticks*, *The Manchurian Candidate*, and *The Great Gatsby* at Seagle Festival, and *Stone Soup*, *Monkey and Francine in the City of Tigers*, and *Suor Angelica* for Tri-Cities Opera. John has also been active in musical theatre. He made his off-Broadway debut at the New York Musical Theatre Festival in 2017, and he was nominated for a Jeff Award for *Bonnie & Clyde* in Chicago. You can hear him as a featured pianist on the recording of Rosáa Crea's *The Great God Pan* (Navona Records, 2017).



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Jennifer Minor Director of Production

Jennifer Griffin Minor is the Director of Production, Rentals Coordinator, and Resident Lighting Coordinator. Jennifer holds an MFA in Lighting Design from Florida State University, and a BFA in Theatre Design and Production from Texas Tech University. She taught as a visiting professor on the MFA, BFA, and BA levels at Penn State, Florida State University, The College of William & Mary, and SUNY-Fredonia. She has toured with Urban Bush Women and Nebraska Theatre Caravan and worked as a Production Coordinator and Operations Manager for Industrial and Touring Companies. She has also worked as a consultant on theatrical upgrades for several Educational Institutions and Non-Profit Theatres. She has designed lights for an incredibly diverse variety of Theatre, Dance, Opera, Trade Shows, Corporate Events, and Industrials all over the United States, and most recently for Tri-Cities Opera, Syracuse Opera, Shreveport Opera, and the Opera Program at Binghamton University. She currently remains the resident Lighting Designer for Shreveport Opera, a freelance designer, and guest lecturer based out of Vestal, NY.



Cordelia Senie Stage Manager

Cordelia is a freelance stage manager working in NYC and Paris, and an alumna of the Juilliard Professional Apprentice Program. This is her Tri-Cities Opera and Syracuse Opera debut! Favourite credits include: Head Over Heels (Molloy/CAP21), Dido & Aeneas (Death of Classical/Greenwood Cemetery), Jose Rivera's Lovesong (Imperfect) (14th Street Y), The Rake's Progress (Juilliard), and Hamlet/Oresteia (Park Avenue Armory). Find her at csenie.wordpress.com



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AmarA*jk: Scenic Design **Amara Kolpakas: Scenic Charge Artist** **Jaelin Kolpakas: Properties Chief** **& Sound FX Designer**

AmarA*jk are thrilled to be working with a wonderful and talented team to bring this 23-24 season of opera to our audiences. It is a rare and wonderful thing for any designer to get to work on such varied, powerful, and relevant pieces as this season at Tri-Cities Opera | Syracuse Opera holds. AmarA*jk have been the scenic design team in-residence at Tri-Cities Opera since designing Iolanta in 2015. In addition to designing (and painting, and propping, and just this year designing puppets) at Tri-Cities Opera | Syracuse Opera, the pair have designed and worked for many Binghamton theatres as well as in Salt Lake City, Chicago, and Seattle.

Their favorite designs to date are Hydrogen Jukebox, Jerusalem, and the TCO Opera-Go-Round. Between working on productions, they maintain the sets and props that TCO rents to other opera companies across the world. All the collaboration of theatre drives both AmarA and Jaelin to continue creating and exhibiting their independent art. This past summer, AmarA painted live for four hours with different musicians at Binghamton Porchfest, supported by a Statewide Community Regrant. They have recently exhibited their art at Whole in the Wall and Old Barn Market. Their next exhibit of new works will be at the Bundy Museum in March 2024. AmarA spends her down time writing fiction, listening to audiobooks, and creating her garden (and Tri-Cities Opera's new herb garden!). Jaelin is very excited to begin learning to metal smith. She relaxes with video games and spends much of her time composing experimental instrumental music. They enjoy playing with their puppy, Kichi (who sometimes comes to the shops at TCO), and doing the bidding of their cat, Kirino. AmarAjk.com



Susan Johnson **Costume Coordinator**

Susan Johnson (Costume Designer) established a personal sewing business in 2001 and has successfully gained recognition in the Southern Tier with a varied and loyal customer base. This, along with 35 years as a professional business manager, Susan now manages the Tri-Cities Opera Costume Shop and has transformed it into a viable department, providing costume needs to opera companies nationwide. Susan graduated from the University of Maryland with a Bachelor of Science degree, through realizing her talent and passions for costume design and construction she is now devoting her energies to the fabric arts. For TCO Susan has designed Glory Denied (2017) Master Class (2018), the Tragedy of Carmen (2018) and Three Decembers (2019).

