

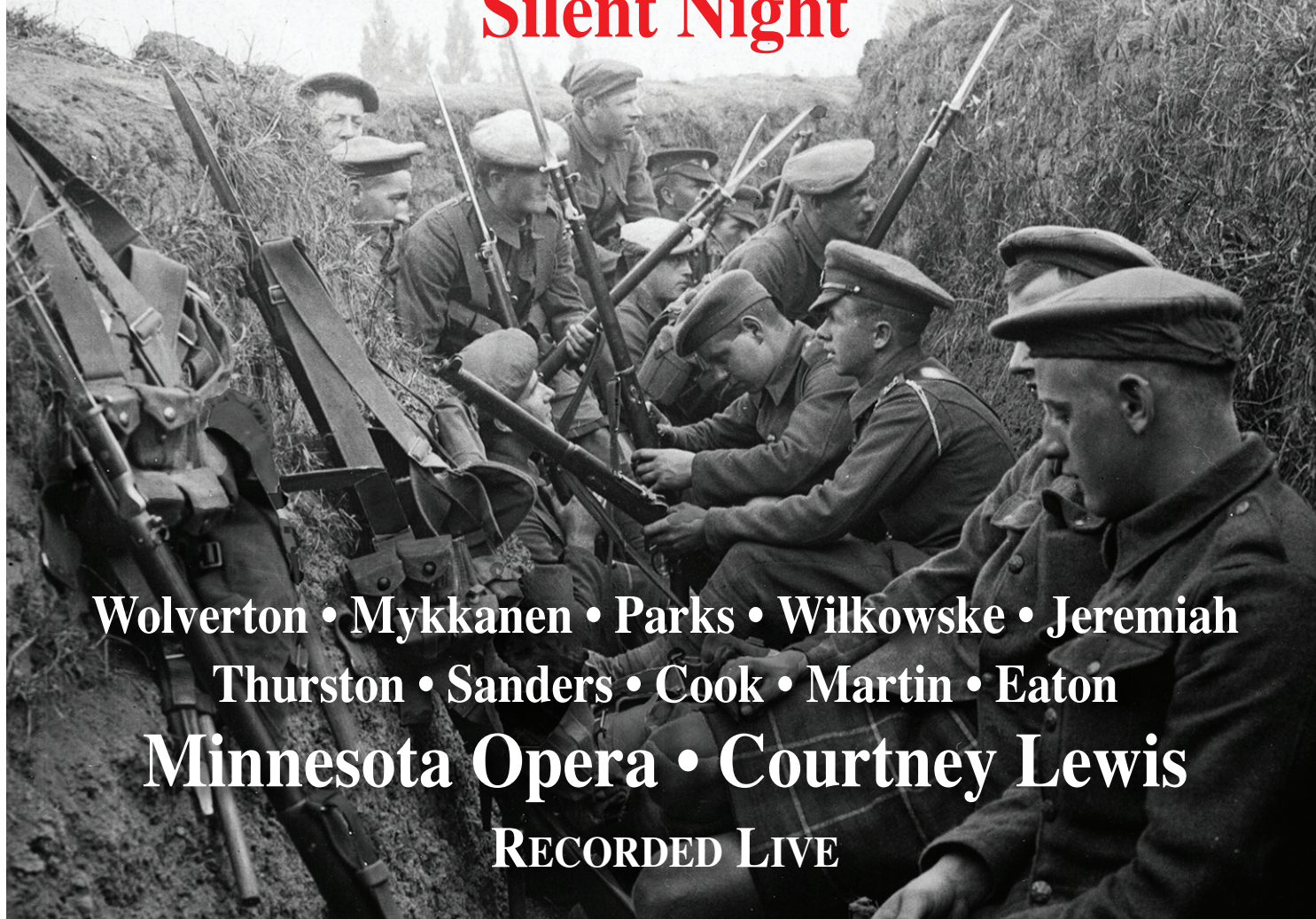


AMERICAN OPERA CLASSICS



KEVIN PUTS
MARK CAMPBELL

Silent Night



Wolverton • Mykkanen • Parks • Wilkowske • Jeremiah

Thurston • Sanders • Cook • Martin • Eaton

Minnesota Opera • Courtney Lewis

RECORDED LIVE

Kevin
PUTS
(b. 1972)
Silent Night

Opera in two acts (2011)

Libretto by Mark Campbell (b. 1953)

Based on the screenplay by Christian Carion for the motion picture *Joyeux Noël*
produced by Nord-Ouest Production

By arrangement with the publisher Aperto Press (BMI). Sole Agent: Bill Holab Music

Sung in English, French, German, Italian and Latin

Anna Sørensen Karin Wolverton, Soprano
Nikolaus Sprink Miles Mykkanen, Tenor
Lt. Audebert Edward Parks, Baritone
Ponchel Andrew Wilkowske, Baritone
Lt. Horstmayer Joshua Jeremiah, Baritone
Lt. Gordon Christian Thurston, Baritone
Jonathan Dale Christian Sanders, Tenor
Father Palmer Troy Cook, Baritone
Kronprinz Stephen Martin, Tenor
William Dale Charles H. Eaton, Baritone
British Major Nicholas Davis, Baritone
French General Wm. Clay Thompson, Bass
Madeleine Audebert Danielle Beckvermit, Soprano
German General Matthew Opitz, Tenor
A French Sentry Charles H. Eaton, Baritone
A German Sentry Clark Weyrauch, Tenor
Scottish, German and French Soldiers
..... Members of the Minnesota Opera Chorus

Minnesota Opera Chorus
Andrew Whitfield, Chorus master
Minnesota Opera Orchestra
Courtney Lewis, Conductor

Act I

71:02

Prologue

1	Ogni notte (<i>Anna, Nikolaus, German General, German Soldiers</i>)	2:50
2	Jonathan! (<i>Palmer, Jonathan, William, Scottish Soldiers</i>)	1:52
3	Ne pars pas si tu (<i>Madeleine, Audebert, French Soldiers</i>)	1:15
4	One more week here in Glasgow (<i>William, Jonathan, Palmer, Nikolaus, Audebert, Scottish, German and French Soldiers</i>)	1:24

Scene 1

5	Come on, brother (<i>Jonathan, William</i>)	4:16
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Scene 2

6	How many? (<i>Gordon, Palmer, Jonathan, A Scottish Soldier</i>)	2:16
7	Combien? (<i>Audebert, A French Soldier, French General, Ponchel</i>)	4:59
8	Blessés: Grabert, Pierre (<i>Audebert</i>)	3:29
9	Sleep... (<i>Scottish, French and German Soldiers</i>)	3:29
10	Anna, meine Anna (<i>Nikolaus</i>)	1:27
11	Interlude: Night Becomes Day	1:14

Scene 3

12	Christbäume (<i>Horstmayer, Nikolaus, A German Sentry, A German Soldier</i>)	3:28
13	Regardez ça (<i>French Soldiers, Ponchel, Audebert</i>)	4:56
14	Mother, William and I have received your package (<i>Jonathan, Palmer</i>)	2:07

Scene 4

15	Per una notte sola! (<i>Anna, Nikolaus, Kronprinz</i>)	1:42
16	Komm, Frühling! (<i>Anna, Nikolaus</i>)	3:00
17	Sieht aus wie der Balkon, auf dem wir uns begegnet sind (<i>Anna, Nikolaus</i>)	6:21

Scene 5

18	And where did you find that?! (<i>Palmer, A Scottish Soldier</i>)	1:06
19	Many the miles I have travel'd (<i>Palmer, Gordon, Ponchel, Horstmayer, Nikolaus, Scottish Soldiers</i>)	2:10
20	Hab Freude im Herzen, O Christenheit! (<i>Nikolaus, Ponchel, Gordon, Palmer, Horstmayer, A French Sentry, Audebert, Scottish Soldiers</i>)	1:45
21	Dormi, Jesu (<i>Nikolaus, Horstmayer, French Soldiers, Gordon, Scottish Soldiers, German Soldiers, Ponchel, Audebert</i>)	2:51

22	Gentlemen... (<i>Gordon, Nikolaus, Audebert, Horstmayer, Ponchel, German, Scottish and French Soldiers, Palmer, Anna</i>)	6:18
23	I can still hear you... (<i>Jonathan, A German Soldier, Palmer, Gordon, Nikolaus, Audebert, Horstmayer, Ponchel, Scottish Soldiers</i>)	2:35
24	Dona nobis pacem (<i>Anna, Palmer</i>)	4:11
Act II		47:36
Scene 1		
25	Interlude – Was soll das? (<i>German Soldiers, Gordon, Palmer, Horstmayer, Audebert</i>)	5:47
26	Well, here we are (<i>Gordon, Horstmayer, Audebert, Ponchel</i>)	5:29
Scene 2		
27	Interlude: Burying the Dead	3:38
28	Irgendwo, irgendwann (<i>Anna</i>)	5:00
Scene 3		
29	Despicable! (<i>British Major, Kronprinz, French General</i>)	2:39
30	Well, I'm afraid that's it (<i>Gordon, Horstmayer, Audebert</i>)	1:49
Scene 4		
31	Ich erhielt gerade Nachricht (<i>Horstmayer, Anna, Nikolaus</i>)	3:57
32	Nous demandons (<i>Anna, Nikolaus, Audebert, Ponchel</i>)	2:52
33	It was the most amazing thing (<i>Scottish, German and French Soldiers, Jonathan, Audebert</i>)	2:29
Scene 5		
34	I don't have to tell you (<i>British Major, Palmer</i>)	2:24
35	Ponchel. Que s'est-il passé? (<i>Audebert, Ponchel</i>)	1:41
36	Make me a channel of Your peace (<i>Palmer</i>)	1:18
37	Si vous êtes venu me faire la morale... (<i>Audebert, French General</i>)	3:00
38	In zwei Tagen (<i>Kronprinz, Horstmayer, A French Soldier, A German Soldier, A Scottish Soldier</i>)	5:32

Kevin Puts (b. 1972) • **Mark Campbell** (b. 1953)

Silent Night (2011)

A Story that Sings

Do you remember the first time you sat in an opera house and wondered why a particular story worked so magnificently as an opera? For me, it was a production of *La bohème* by the Metropolitan Opera, which I saw in Cleveland when the company was on tour back in the early 1970s. Sitting in the back row of the cavernous Cleveland Auditorium, the explosion of voices on stage, supported by the magnificent orchestra, pinned me to the back of my seat and I was hooked on opera for life. Since then, I have often asked myself what it was about those early experiences of opera that caused my heart to pound and the tears to fall. Of course, there was that magical synergy between music and text, amplified by the human voice, but there was also something in the story that resonated with me – something that *sang*.

As artistic director of Minnesota Opera for more than 30 years, I have continuously searched for stories that *sing*. It was this imperative that inspired me to choose John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* for production during the 2006–07 season. It became one of Minnesota Opera's most successful productions. As I read Steinbeck's novel, I was able to hear the life and death struggles of the Joad family set to music. It seemed the type of story Verdi might have chosen early in his career: a small group of people fighting for their lives while events around them challenge their resolve.

A similar feeling came across me in the summer of 2007 while I was watching the 2005 French war epic, *Joyeux Noël*, a fictionalised account of the Christmas truces on the Western Front in December 1914. Christian Carion's moving screenplay tells of the ordinary people, thrown together by the First World War, finding hope amid the cruelest of conflicts. None of the characters in the movie are kings and queens; they are everyday people forced to fight in a war they have no control over. As I watched the drama unfold and experienced the depictions of soldiers exposed to unimaginable terror, I heard the

story sing. I heard it again when the frontline was breached and common humanity prevailed, and again when the final opera, *Silent Night*, was staged and two characters, reunited at the Front, find a connecting force in music.

I set about engaging a team that could turn this sprawling movie into an opera. Eric Simonson, who had helped me realise *The Grapes of Wrath* so brilliantly, was engaged as stage director. I listened again and again to Kevin Puts' music before bringing him on as composer. Although he had never written an opera before, I detected a strong sense of narrative in his music and a fearless connection with the human heart. Finally, I brought in the experienced librettist Mark Campbell to create a text that distilled the movie's sweeping themes for the theatre and captured the emotional events of the screenplay with an economy of words. While I acknowledge that team, I must also mention the generous support of Minnesota Opera's New Works Initiative in the making of *Silent Night*. The opera simply wouldn't have happened without them.

Together, we created a story that sings. Profoundly. Stirring. Memorably. *Silent Night* premiered in 2011, won the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 2012 and entered the modern opera repertory, all with astonishing speed. To date, the opera has played at more than 20 opera companies around the world and continues to rivet audiences and, I hope, give them the same feeling *La bohème* gave me in Cleveland all those years ago. I am confident that this extraordinary recording will give you the same experience.

Dale Johnson

*Commissioning Artistic Director,
Minnesota Opera*

Synopsis

Prologue – Late summer, 1914

War is declared. At a Berlin opera house, the announcement disrupts the careers and relationship of international opera singers Anna Sørensen and Nikolaus Sprink when Nikolaus is conscripted. In a small church in Scotland, the declaration inspires dreams of heroism in William, who demands that his younger brother Jonathan immediately enlist with him – as their priest, Father Palmer, looks on helplessly. In the apartment of the Audeberts in Paris, the news angers Madeleine who excoriates her husband for his decision to fight while she is pregnant with their first child. Amid the fervor of nationalistic songs, the men prepare to depart for war.

Act I

In and around a battlefield in Belgium, near the French border, just before Christmas

Scene 1 – December 23, late afternoon

A horrific battle is fought between the Germans and the French and Scottish. Nikolaus violently stabs a man to death then despairs at his own brutality. William is shot and Jonathan must leave his brother behind to die.

Scene 2 – December 23, evening

In the Scottish bunker, the battle over, Lieutenant Gordon assesses the number of casualties. Father Palmer attempts to offer solace to Jonathan through prayer. In the French bunker, Lieutenant Audebert is reprimanded by the French General for having retreated. After the General leaves, Audebert tells his *aide-de-camp*, Ponchel, of his regret at losing his only photograph of his wife. Alone, Audebert tallies the casualties and dreams about Madeleine and their child who he has not yet seen. Finally, he sings of his desire for sleep, a sentiment echoed by all the soldiers. As snow begins to fall, covering the war dead strewn across no man's land, the soldiers slowly begin to drift off. Alone

in the German bunker, Nikolaus expresses his despair at the cost of war.

Scene 3 – December 24, morning

In the German bunker, Lieutenant Horstmayer reveals to Nikolaus that he has received a directive from the Kronprinz to join one Anna Sørensen in a concert at the nearby chalet that evening. Nikolaus departs, excited that he will be reunited with Anna after many months apart. The French soldiers receive crates of wine, sausages and chocolates from the quartermaster and open them jubilantly. Ponchel, a barber by trade, gives Audebert a haircut. Ponchel reminisces about drinking coffee each morning with his mother, who lives only an hour away by foot. In the Scottish bunker, Jonathan writes a letter to his mother, not mentioning his brother's death.

Scene 4 – December 24, early evening

At the chalet of the Kronprinz, Anna and Nikolaus perform a duet. Alone after the performance, Anna tells Nikolaus she has arranged for them to spend the night together and is angry when he says he must return to his fellow soldiers. She vows to accompany him back to the battlefield.

Scene 5 – December 24, night

The Scottish soldiers drink whisky and play a bagpipe while Father Palmer sings a sentimental ballad about home. Nikolaus arrives with Anna and, in response to the ballad, sings a rousing Christmas song. Emboldened, he climbs to the top of the bunker and holds aloft a Christmas tree as a gesture of goodwill. Against the protestations of their superiors, soldiers from all sides stand. Nikolaus ventures out into no man's land. Eventually, the three lieutenants agree to a ceasefire – but only for this one evening. Soldiers emerge from their bunkers and approach one another across no man's land. They share their provisions, their photographs, and their experiences. Anna appears and the soldiers are

awed by the sight of a woman. Father Palmer recites Mass, while Jonathan finds his brother's body and vows to take revenge. At the conclusion of Mass, Anna sings "Dona Nobis Pacem". Father Palmer urges the men to "go in peace" as bombs explode in the distance.

Act II

Scene 1 – December 25, dawn

The following morning, Jonathan attempts to bury his brother. The truce officially over, a German sentry prepares to shoot him, but Father Palmer and Lieutenant Gordon intervene. Witnessing the scene, Horstmayer suggests it is time to give all the dead a dignified burial. The three lieutenants agree to extend the truce.

Scene 2 – December 25, late morning, early afternoon

As Father Palmer delivers the last rites, the soldiers form a processional to bear the bodies away. Anna looks on with Nikolaus and promises that he will not suffer the same fate.

Scene 3 – December 25, all day

Meanwhile, news of the ceasefire has reached headquarters. The British Major, Kronprinz and French General react with anger and disbelief.

Scene 5 – December 25, evening

As Lieutenant Horstmayer prepares to return to war, Nikolaus berates him for his allegiance to the Fatherland. Horstmayer arrests Nikolaus for insubordination, but Anna firmly takes Nikolaus' hand and leads him across no-man's land while Horstmayer orders his men to shoot. Reaching the French bunker unharmed, Nikolaus demands asylum for Anna and himself.

December 26, late morning

The British Major berates the Scottish soldiers for participating in the Christmas truce and announces their transfer to the front lines. When a German soldier is seen crossing the battlefield, the Major orders for him to be killed. Jonathan obeys and shoots the man, who turns out to be Ponchel. The French General tells Audebert he is to be transferred as punishment for consorting with the enemy. Audebert informs the French General – his father – that he has learned he has an infant son named Henri. They vow to survive the war for the child's sake.

The Kronprinz angrily announces that the German soldiers are being deployed to Pomerania. As the soldiers are taken off in a boxcar, they hum the Scottish ballad they heard in the bunker on Christmas Eve. The battlefield is now empty. Snow begins to fall once more.

Silent Night opened at the Ordway Theater, Saint Paul, Minnesota, on November 12, 2011.

2011 World Premiere

Eric Simonson, Stage Director
Michael Christie, Conductor
Francis O'Connor, Set Design
Kárin Kopischke, Costume Design
Marcus Dilliard, Lighting Design
Andrzej Goulding, Projections
C. Andrew Mayer, Sound Design

2018 Live Recording

Kerry Masek, Production Stage Manager
Doug Scholz-Carlson, Fight Director
and Assistant Stage Director
Jake Fedorowski, Jamie K. Fuller,
Jerry K. Smith, Assistant Stage Managers

Kevin Puts

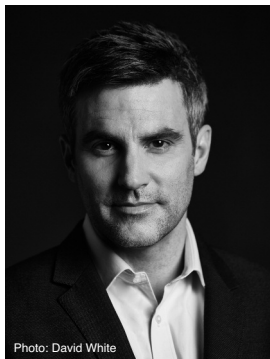


Photo: David White

Winner of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for his debut opera *Silent Night*, Kevin Puts' works have been commissioned, performed, and recorded by leading ensembles and soloists throughout the world, including Joshua Bell, Yo-Yo Ma, Dame Evelyn Glennie, the Metropolitan Opera, the New York Philharmonic, the Tonhalle Orchester (Zurich), the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and the Miro Quartet. *The City* was co-commissioned by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra in honor of its 100th anniversary and by Carnegie Hall in honor of its 125th anniversary. *The Brightness of Light*, written for soprano Renée Fleming and baritone Rodney Gilfy and based on the personal letters of Georgia O'Keeffe, had its world premiere by the Boston Symphony Orchestra led by Andris Nelsons at Tanglewood and has been performed widely thereafter. *The Hours*, with a libretto by Gregory Pierce and based on the novel by Michael Cunningham, was commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera and will star Joyce DiDonato, Renée Fleming and Kelli O'Hara. Puts is currently a member of the composition department at the Peabody Institute and director of the Minnesota Orchestra Composer's Institute.

www.kevinputs.com

Mark Campbell

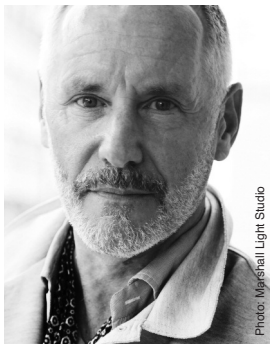


Photo: Myrshail Light Studio

The work of Pulitzer Prize and GRAMMY Award winning librettist/lyricist Mark Campbell is at the forefront of the contemporary opera scene in this country. Campbell has written 39 opera librettos, lyrics for seven musicals and text for six song cycles and two oratorios. His best-known works are *Silent Night*, *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs*, *As One*, *The Shining*, *Elizabeth Cree*, *Sanctuary Road*, *Stonewall*, *Later the Same Evening*, *The Nefarious*, *Immoral but Highly Profitable Enterprise of Mr. Burke & Mr. Hare*, *Volpone*, *Rappahannock County*, *The Manchurian Candidate*, *Volpone*, *Bastianello/Lucrezia*, and *Songs from an Unmade Bed*. Other awards include the first Kleban Foundation Award for Lyricist, two Richard Rodgers Awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, three Drama Desk nominations, a Jonathan Larson Foundation Award, a NYFA Playwriting Fellowship, and the first Dominic J. Pellicciotti Award. Campbell is involved in the training of future generations of librettists and composers and serves as a mentor to the American Opera Project, American Lyric Theater and the American Opera Initiative. In 2020, he also created and funded the first award for librettists in the history of opera: the annual Campbell Opera Librettist Prize.

www.markcampbellwords.com

Karin Wolverton



Photo: Christopher Shearer

Hailed for her 'lovely warm tone, easy agility and winning musicality' (*Opera News*), Karin Wolverton premiered the role of Anna Sørensen. She performs frequently with Minnesota Opera as well as with the opera companies of Utah, Arizona, Omaha, Austin, Pittsburgh, Tulsa, Madison, Opera Santa Barbara, and Des Moines Metro Opera. A champion of new works, Wolverton has starred in numerous world premieres including *Riders of the Purple Sage* and *The Grapes of Wrath*. She made her Carnegie Hall debut with the Minnesota Orchestra under the baton of Osmo Vänskä and has performed with the Phoenix, Jacksonville, Eugene, Dayton and Rochester symphonies, and the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra.

www.karinwolverton.com

Miles Mykkanen

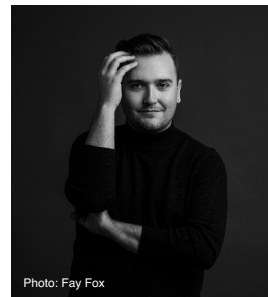


Photo: Fay Fox

Miles Mykkanen has garnered recognition on the world's stages for his 'focused, full-voiced tenor' (*The New York Times*). Past collaborations include performances with the Canadian Opera Company, The Cleveland Orchestra, Metropolitan Opera, National Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Opera Philadelphia, and with the symphonies of Atlanta, Detroit, Lausanne and Pittsburgh. He has also appeared at the Mostly Mozart, Ravinia and Tanglewood festivals. Mykkanen enjoys robust relationships with the Marlboro Music Festival, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and New York Festival of Song, and has given many performances in collaboration with Steven Blier, Margo Garrett, Malcolm Martineau, Ken Noda, Mitsuko Uchida, Roger Vignoles and Brian Zeger.

www.milesmykkanen.com

Edward Parks



Photo: Leslie Hassler

Baritone Edward Parks, a native of Indiana, Pennsylvania, received his Bachelor of Music degree from Oberlin Conservatory, his Master of Music degree from Yale University, and is an alumnus of the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artists Program. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut in 2009, was a winner of the 2008 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, and was awarded third prize in Placido Domingo's Operalia Competition. He attracted considerable international acclaim for his portrayal of Steve Jobs in the world premiere of *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs* with Santa Fe Opera, the recording of which earned him a GRAMMY Award.

www.edwardparksbaritone.com

Andrew Wilkowske



Photo: Twin Cities Headshots

Andrew Wilkowske, baritone, premiered the role of Ponchel to great acclaim at Minnesota Opera in 2011. He reprised the role at Opera Philadelphia, Cincinnati Opera, Lyric Opera Kansas City, Atlanta Opera, and Austin Opera. Other premieres include *Lucy* with Milwaukee Opera Theatre and Urban Arias; *The Invention of Morel* with Chicago Opera Theater and Long Beach Opera; *The Rivals* with Skylight Music Theatre; and *The Grapes of Wrath* with Minnesota Opera. Wilkowske co-created the rock recital *Guns N' Rosenkavalier* with composer John Glover and librettist Kelley Rourke.

www.andrewwilkowske.com

Joshua Jeremiah



Photo: John Pankratz

Praised for his 'warmly appealing, burnished baritone' (*Opera Today*) and lauded as 'rich-voiced' (*New York Times*), Joshua Jeremiah continues to bring celebrated performances to theaters around the world. Professional highlights include the title role of *Rigoletto* (Houston Grand Opera, Arizona Opera, Sacramento Opera); the title role of Wolf Trap Opera's GRAMMY nominated production of *Volpone*; Aaron Greenspan in *Ricky Ian Gordon's Morning Star* (On Site Opera); Lassiter in the world premiere of *Riders of the Purple Sage* (Arizona Opera); Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Hawaii Opera Theatre); and the title roles of *Gianni Schicchi* and *Macbeth* (Opera Company of Middlebury).

www.JoshuaJeremiahBaritone.com

Christian Thurston

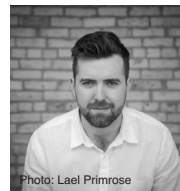


Photo: Lael Primrose

New Zealand baritone Christian Thurston is a graduate of the Minnesota Opera Resident Artist Program, the Manhattan School of Music, the New Zealand Opera Emerging Artist programme, and the New Zealand School of Music. Notable performances include the title role in *Don Giovanni*, Marcello in *La bohème*, Steward in *Flight*, Marquis D'Obigny in *La traviata*, Lieutenant Gordon in *Silent Night*, and Count Almaviva in *The Marriage of Figaro*. Thurston has made appearances with the Wellington Opera, Minnesota Opera, New Zealand Opera and Theatre Latté Da.

www.christianthurston.com

Christian Sanders

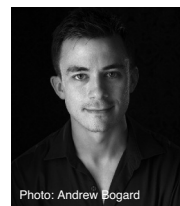


Photo: Andrew Bogard

Christian Sanders has been described as 'a powerful tenor and strong stage communicator' and 'theatrically astute' by the *Wall Street Journal*. He has appeared on many of the world's finest operatic stages such as the Château de Versailles Spectacles, Santa Fe Opera, Utah Opera, The Glimmerglass Festival, and Des Moines Metro Opera. An accomplished performer of American operatic literature, Sanders' notable performances include Timothy Laughlin in *Fellow Travelers*, Bill in *Flight*, Tobias Ragg in *Sweeney Todd*, Bégearss in *The Ghosts of Versailles*, and Jonathan Dale in *Silent Night*. He currently resides in San Diego, California.

www.christiansanderstenor.com

Troy Cook



Photo: Andrew Bogard

Commended for his 'technically flawless performance' by *Opera News*, American baritone Troy Cook has been heralded throughout his career for his vocal suave demeanour and vibrant stage presence. His many and varied performances include appearances with the Metropolitan Opera; Washington National Opera; Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; Teatro San Carlo, Naples; Opera Pacific; La Monnaie, Brussels; Opera Philadelphia; Austin Opera; Santa Fe Opera; Florida Grand Opera; Minnesota Opera; and The Dallas Opera. An acclaimed interpreter of new works, he created the role of John Cree in *Elizabeth Cree*, as well as Father Palmer in *Silent Night*.

www.troycookbaritone.com

Stephen Martin

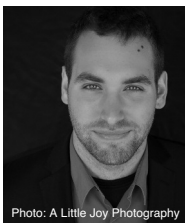


Photo: A Little Joy Photography

Stephen Martin has enjoyed operatic engagements throughout Italy, China and the United States with favourite roles such as Alfredo in *La traviata*, Rodolfo in Puccini's *La bohème*, Hoffmann in Offenbach's *The Tales of Hoffmann*, Jean Valjean in *Les Misérables*, and premiering the role of Ray Schalk in Joel Puckett's *The Fix*. He has performed with Santa Fe Opera, The Glimmerglass Festival, Sarasota Opera, Minnesota Opera, Opera in the Rock, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Flint Symphony Orchestra, Saginaw Symphony, Conway Symphony Orchestra and others. He holds degrees in voice performance and music theory pedagogy from Michigan State University.

www.stephenmartintenor.com

Charles H. Eaton

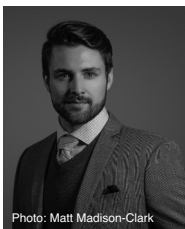


Photo: Matt Madison-Clark

American baritone Charles H. Eaton has made notable appearances as Rothstein and Gorman in the world premiere of *The Fix* with Minnesota Opera, Carl-Magnus in *A Little Night Music* with Madison Opera, the English Ambassador in *The Ghosts of Versailles* at the Château de Versailles Spectacles, and Marcello in *La bohème* with the Lakeland Opera. He is a graduate of prestigious young artist programmes at The Glimmerglass Festival, Opera Colorado, and Des Moines Metro Opera, a recent finalist in the Lotte Lenya Competition and Opera Ithaca Vocal Competition, and a district winner of The Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

www.charleseatonbaritone.com

Nicholas Davis

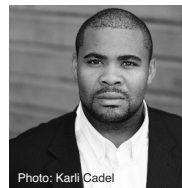


Photo: Karli Cadel

Nicholas Davis has appeared with Seattle Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Chicago Opera Theater, Michigan Opera Theater, The Glimmerglass Festival, Minnesota Opera, Opera Omaha, Opera Ithaca, On Site Opera, Shreveport Opera and Theater Latté Da. His roles include The Reverend in the premiere of *Blue*, Minskman in *Flight*, Senator Potter in *Fellow Travelers*, Fred McMullin in *The Fix*, Ford in *Falstaff*, Harlekin in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Crown in *Porgy and Bess* and the title role in *The Marriage of Figaro*. He has appeared in concert with the Jackson Symphony, Kentucky Symphony, Karlovy Vary Symphony Fort Street Symphony, National Theater of Prague Orchestra, and the Chicago Sinfonietta.

www.nicholascdavis.com

Wm. Clay Thompson



Photo: Daniel Welch

Bass Wm. Clay Thompson has gained recognition in opera houses and competitions worldwide. He has performed with prominent houses such as Santa Fe Opera, Minnesota Opera, Arizona Opera, Château de Versailles Spectacles, Kentucky Opera, Wolf Trap Opera and The Glimmerglass Festival, in roles including Leporello (*Don Giovanni*), Figaro (*The Marriage of Figaro*), Olin Blich (*Susannah*), Colline (*La bohème*), Paléon (*Thais*), Dottore Grenvil (*La traviata*), Count Ceprano (*Rigoletto*), Prince Gremin (*Eugene Onegin*), Noye (*Noye's Fludde*), Collatinus (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Harašta (*The Cunning Little Vixen*) and Zuniga (*Carmen*).

www.wmclaythompson.com

Danielle Beckvermit



Photo: J. Demetrie Photography

Soprano Danielle Beckvermit, born and raised in Kingston, NY, was a grand finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and made her mainstage Carnegie Hall debut in 2018. A graduate of Mannes School of Music and the State University of New York, Fredonia, she has sung a wide range of roles, including Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*, Alice in *Falstaff*, and the title role in *Susannah*. Beckvermit was the grand prize winner in The Annapolis Opera Competition and The Orpheus Vocal Competition, and an apprentice artist with Santa Fe Opera. She completed a two-year residency with the Minnesota Opera in 2020.

www.daniellebeckvermit.com

Minnesota Opera

Founded in 1963, Minnesota Opera has paved a bold, illustrious path. As an artistic pioneer, its dedication to excellence and inventive vision make it a steadfast leader in the opera community and beyond. Each year the company reaches more than 400,000 people through its mainstage productions, groundbreaking education and training programs, community engagement, radio broadcasts, and digital content. Since its inception, Minnesota Opera has produced more than 45 new operas that have been seen around the world. A pioneering movement in new opera when it was launched in 2008, the company's New Works Initiative continues to invigorate the operatic art form with an infusion of contemporary works, while fulfilling the organization's commitment to artistic growth, leadership, and innovation. Together with the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and The Schubert Club, Minnesota Opera is a member of the Arts Partnership and performs on the stage of the Ordway. mnopera.org



Minnesota Opera Chorus

Since its founding in 1963, the Minnesota Opera Chorus has been an integral part in establishing the Minnesota Opera's reputation as one of the finest opera companies in the United States. Led by chorus master Andrew Whitfield, this eclectic group is made up of about 200 of the finest vocalists in the Twin Cities and surrounding areas. Their work has been featured in PBS telecasts of the world premieres of Kevin Puts and Mark Campbell's *Silent Night* and Douglas J. Cuomo and John Patrick Shanley's *Doubt*, and praised as 'the heroes of the evening' by *Opera News* for a production of *La fanciulla del West*. mnopera.org/chorus



Minnesota Opera Orchestra

The Minnesota Opera Orchestra comprises professional musicians from the greater Twin Cities Metro region, many of whom play regularly with Minnesota Orchestra, The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Minnesota Ballet, as well as for Broadway touring productions. The ensemble provides artistic continuity from production to production, performing an expansive range of diverse repertoire. The musicians have worked collaboratively with the creative teams in the development of several new works, including *Silent Night*, and have featured nationally on two PBS Great Performances specials: *Silent Night* (2011) and *Doubt* (2019). Reviewing the Orchestra's 2019 performance of *The Barber of Seville*, the *Pioneer Press* wrote: 'Minnesota Opera Orchestra brings out all of the whimsical sweetness of Rossini's score, acting as the musical engine that keeps this comedy skipping gleefully forward and making sure that the focus on fun is unwavering.' mnopera.org/orchestra

Courtney Lewis



With clear artistic vision, subtle musicality and innovative programming, Courtney Lewis has established himself as one of his generation's most talented conductors. The 2020–21 season marks his sixth as music director of the Jacksonville Symphony, and his contract has been extended until 2023–24. From 2008 to 2014 he directed Boston's Discovery Ensemble, and he has served as associate conductor of the New York Philharmonic and Minnesota Orchestra and was a Dudamel Fellow with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He directed the Jacksonville Symphony at the 2020 *SHIFT: A Festival of American Orchestras*, and since debuting in 2008 with the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra he has appeared with the Atlanta Symphony, San Diego Symphony, Washington National Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Minnesota Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony, Hallé Orchestra, Lausanne Chamber Orchestra and Ulster Orchestra, among others.

www.courtneylewis.com

Kevin
PUTS
(b. 1972)

Silent Night

Opera in two acts (2011)

Libretto by Mark Campbell (b. 1953)

Anna Sørensen Karin Wolverton, Soprano
Nikolaus Sprink Miles Mykkanen, Tenor
Lt. Audebert Edward Parks, Baritone
Ponchel Andrew Wilkowske, Baritone
Lt. Horstmayer Joshua Jeremiah, Baritone
Lt. Gordon Christian Thurston, Baritone
Jonathan Dale Christian Sanders, Tenor
Father Palmer Troy Cook, Baritone

Minnesota Opera Chorus
Andrew Whitfield, Chorus master
Minnesota Opera Orchestra
Courtney Lewis

1–24 Act I **71:02** **25–38 Act II** **47:36**

A full track and cast list can be found inside the booklet.

The libretto can be found inside the slipcase, and may also be accessed at www.naxos.com/libretti/669050.htm

Recorded live: 10–18 November 2018 at Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, Saint Paul, Minnesota, USA

Producer, engineer and editor: Adam Abeshouse

Booklet notes: Dale Johnson

Publisher: Aperto Press (BMI) • Sole Agent: Bill Holab Music

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Cover: Highland Territorials about to go ‘over the top’



AMERICAN OPERA CLASSICS

Kevin Puts is one of America’s most exciting and important composers. His first opera, *Silent Night*, with a libretto by Mark Campbell, was commissioned by Minnesota Opera. It premiered in 2011 and went on to win the Pulitzer Prize. A work of profound and sweeping emotional power, it has since entered the modern operatic repertoire with remarkable speed, enjoying world-wide performances. The opera is based on Christian Carion’s screenplay for the 2005 French war film *Joyeux Noël*, and its fictionalised subject is the series of Christmas truces on the Western Front in 1914.

WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING

www.naxos.com

Playing
Time:
1:58:38