



## MEROLA OPERA PROGRAM ANNOUNCES 2025 MEROLA ARTISTS

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (17 December 2024) – One of the most prestigious opera training programs in the world, San Francisco’s acclaimed **Merola Opera Program** has selected 28 artists from a pool of nearly 1,300 international applicants to participate in its 2025 program. This year’s cohort of participants hail from China, Malaysia, New Zealand, and South Korea, as well as across the United States and Canada.

“We are thrilled to welcome these exceptionally talented artists for what promises to be a remarkable summer,” said San Francisco Opera Center Artistic Director **Carrie-Ann Matheson** and General Manager **Markus Beam** (Merola ’02). “The 2025 Merola participants will benefit from an immersive program that includes musical, dramatic, and linguistic training from our world-renowned faculty. In addition, they’ll be provided with training in leadership skills, mental and physical wellness, financial literacy, and career management. Our mission is to deliver comprehensive training for our artists, empowering them with the skills and resources needed to build a sustainable and successful career in the arts.”

“We are excited to welcome this extraordinary group of artists to San Francisco for a summer of transformative growth,” said Merola Executive Director **Sean Waugh**. “As they embark on this journey, they join a thriving community of over 1,700 distinguished alumni and hundreds of passionate supporters who are united by a shared dedication to the future of opera. Merola not only equips artists with technical mastery, leadership skills, and resilience but also provides a lifelong network of peers and mentors, ensuring participants’ success in an ever-evolving opera landscape.”

Public performances for the 2025 Merola Summer Festival will be announced in the spring. The public can find more information about the 2025 participants, including bio highlights and headshots at [merola.org](https://merola.org).

The 2025 Merola Opera Program artists include:

### **Sopranos**

Ariane Cossette, *Toronto, Ontario, Canada*  
Alexa Frankian, *Oakville, Ontario, Canada*  
Sofia Gotch, *Oakland, California*  
Song Hee Lee, *Seoul, South Korea*  
Eva Rae Martinez, *Doylestown, Pennsylvania*  
Charlotte Siegel, *Toronto, Ontario, Canada*

### **Mezzo-Sopranos**

Meg Brilleslyper, *Colorado Springs, Colorado*  
Sadie Cheslak, *Duluth, Minnesota*  
Ruby Dibble, *Kansas City, Missouri*  
Ariana Maubach, *Toronto, Ontario, Canada*  
Anna Maria Vacca, *Providence, Rhode Island*  
***(list continues on the following page)***

**Tenors**

Emmanuel Fonoti-Fuimaono, *New Zealand*  
Wesley Harrison, *Windsor, Ontario, Canada*  
Minghao Liu, *Qingdao, Shandong, China*  
Tristan Tournaud, *Nashville, Tennessee*  
Jin Yu, *Jiangsu, China*

**Baritones**

Benjamin Dickerson, *Milton, Vermont*  
Gabriel Natal-Baez, *Toa Alta, Puerto Rico*  
Joeavian Rivera, *Orlando, Florida*

**Bass-Baritones**

Wanchun Liang, *Shijiazhuang, China*  
Justice Yates, *Leesburg, Florida*

**Bass**

John Mburu, *Warwick, Rhode Island*

**Pianists/Coaches**

Brian Cho, *Mississauga, Ontario, Canada*  
Brian McCann, *Freehold, New Jersey*  
Deven Shah, *Erie, Pennsylvania*  
Tzu Kuang Tan, *Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia*  
Dain Yule Yoon, *Seoul, South Korea*

**Stage Director**

Elio Bucky, *San Francisco, California*

The **Merola Opera Program** is widely regarded as the foremost opera training program for aspiring singers, pianists, and stage directors. Merola nurtures the opera stars of tomorrow through master classes and private coaching with opera's most accomplished singers, conductors, and directors. Participants also receive training in operatic repertoire, languages, diction, acting, stage movement, and professional development. Offered free of charge to all participants, the Merola Opera Program is unique in the industry in many ways, providing curricula and added focus on training the "whole" artist, through personal and leadership development, financial planning, mental and physical health & wellness, and public relations and branding. It is the only young artist program to provide financial support to developing artists for five years following their participation, offering aid for essential career development expenses including coaching, language classes, and audition travel. Learn more at [merola.org](http://merola.org).

-30-

**MEDIA:** Paige D'Encarnacao, CBCO Public Relations & Marketing  
[paige@cb-pr.com](mailto:paige@cb-pr.com) | 415-570-2623

**PHOTOS:** Downloadable high-res photos are available here:  
<https://cbpr.co/press/Merola2025>