

Intimacy & Imagination

the vocal music of Tony Solitro

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Tony Solitro is an active composer of concert and stage music. Commissions include works for Utah Opera (*Burial*, Golden Spike Commission), Boston Opera Collaborative (*She's Fabulous*, *Triangle*, *A Case of Anxiety*, *Crush*), MIFA Victory Players (*Canción Exaltada*), and Network for New Music (*Automata*).

"Delightfully executed with sidesplitting hilarity" (The Theater Times), Tony's mythology-infused comedy *Triangle* was featured on Fort Worth Opera's 2019 *Frontiers* Showcase and was presented during the National Opera Association's 2019 Conference in Salt Lake City as one of three finalists for the Dominick Argento Chamber Opera Competition. Commissioned by Boston Opera Collaborative and premiered in partnership with Boston New Music Initiative, *Triangle* was praised for its "spiky, smashing, blasting" orchestrations and hailed "a standout favorite" (the Intelligencer). In his 2016 vignette *She's Fabulous*—a "wonderfully humorous" satire featuring two bitter opera divas—Solitro conjured "spastically dramatic and emotionally volatile music ... juxtaposing lush arias with brisk recitatives" (the Intelligencer).

Tony earned his Ph.D. as a recipient of the George Crumb Music Fellowship from the University of Pennsylvania and his M.M. from the Longy School of Music on a Nadia and Lili Boulanger Scholarship. Awarded the Grand Prize in the David Walter Composition Competition (International Society of Bassists), Tony's string quintet *Shadow Confrontations* was composed for bassist Joseph Conyers (Principal, Philadelphia Orchestra) and was recorded with the Daedalus Quartet. Additional honors include fellowships and artist residencies from Yaddo, Djerassi, I-Park, Brush Creek, Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts, Willapa Bay AiR, VCCA, the Anderson Center for Interdisciplinary Studies, and The American Opera Project.

Tony currently serves on faculty at the Longy School of Music of Bard College, where he teaches orchestration, songwriting, and leads an opera creation workshop, facilitating collaboration between composers, singers, and instrumentalists.

To hear recordings, see videos, and explore his composition catalogue, visit www.tonysolitro.com.

Jean Anderson, piano

Dr. Jean Anderson is a nationally-known vocal coach and pianist. She is the principal opera coach at Boston Conservatory, where she also coaches art song and teaches courses in operatic recitative and aria studies. She also teaches graduate art-song courses and works with collaborative pianists at Boston University. She is active as musical advisor, pianist, and coach for the Boston Opera Collaborative, and is the organist and choir director at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Scituate, MA. She is currently a part of the summer *Canto Vocal Programs* faculty. She has been a coach at *Berklee College of Music's Summer Opera Intensive* in Valencia, Spain, a coach and pianist at *University of Alaska's Summer Arts Festival* in Fairbanks, Alaska, and a coach at *Northern Arizona University's summer opera program Flagstaff in Fidenza* in Fidenza, Italy. She has worked with Boston Lyric Opera, the Tanglewood Music Festival, The Boston Symphony Orchestra, Opera Providence, Harvard University Summer Chorus, the Harvard-Radcliffe Chorus, Back Bay Chorale, the Orpheus Singers, Brandeis University choruses, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She serves as several schools of music including Rollins College, University of Texas, University of Connecticut, and Northern Arizona University. She collaborates regularly with her husband, baritone David Small, and is well known as a collaborative pianist. Jean is the author of the book *The Young Classical Singer's Toolbox*.

Marie-Elise Boyer, piano

Marie-Elise Boyer is a French pianist currently pursuing a DMA in Collaborative Piano at the New England Conservatory in Boston, under the musical guidance of Cameron Stowe and Jonathan Feldman, as well as artists such as Tanya Blaich, Kayo Iwama and Margo Garrett. She is the recipient of a scholarship by the Ken and Barbara Burnes Scholarship Fund.

She previously completed her studies in Accompaniment and Vocal Coaching at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, where she was awarded two Masters with Distinction. She participated in the Creative Voices class led by Sarah Walker, where she worked closely with singers and composers.

Marie-Elise has been working as a vocal coach for 9 years in German theaters, including the Staatsoper Hamburg and the Staatstheater Nürnberg. Additionally, she worked with Cape Town Opera's Young Artist Program in 2018.

Her passion for Art Song led her to reach the Final of both Nadia et Lili Boulanger competition in Paris with Eva Ganizate in 2009 and Concours International de Mélodie Française in Toulouse with Sophie Boyer in 2013. She won the First Prize in the Elsa Respighi competition in Verona, Italy, in October 2018, with Canadian Soprano Leah Gordon.

Marie-Elise formed with her sister Sophie Boyer the duo *Les Boyer Sisters*. Together, they recorded newly composed songs on poems by Lucien Guérinel for a recording that was released in 2020. They also designed a program around women composers for a salon recital that is featured on [medici.tv](https://www.medicivt.com/).

Corrine Byrne, soprano

Hailed as a “distinguished” “rising star” who sings “to great acclaim,” and gives “delightful performances,” Boston and New York-based soprano Corrine Byrne has quickly become a sought-after interpreter of repertoire from the Medieval to the Baroque era, and music by today’s most daring composers. Byrne’s recent roles include Miranda (*The Onion* by Eric Sawyer), Lorelei (*Mallory* by Nathaniel Parks), Roya (*We the Innumerable* by Niloufar Nourbakhsh), Filia (*Jepthe*), Anna (*Die Todsünden*), Doctor (*The Scarlet Professor* by Eric Sawyer), Cathy (*The Last Five Years*), Gretel (*Hansel and Gretel*) and Anima (*Ordo Virtutum*). Byrne was a young artist with the Boston Early Music Festival and the Lucerne Festival Academy, and has made solo appearances with the American Classical Orchestra, New York Chamber Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, REBEL Baroque Ensemble, Symphony New Hampshire, the Lake George Music Festival Orchestra, Mountainside Baroque, One World Symphony, Plymouth Philharmonic Orchestra, Kansas City Baroque Consortium, the Madison Bach Musicians, Network for New Music, Amherst Symphony, West Shore Symphony, Harrisburg Choral Society, Westchester Oratorio Society, Lorelei Ensemble, the Harvard Radcliff Collegium Musicum, the Newburyport Chorale Society, the Susquehanna Valley Chorale. Byrne sang alongside the Tallis Scholars with the Carnegie Hall Chamber Chorus, and sings regularly on Emmanuel Music’s Bach Cantata series.

Byrne is a co-founder of Ensemble Musica Humana and The Byrne:Kozar:Duo, recently featured on NPR and a nationally broadcast episode of American Public Media’s *Performance Today*, and whose recording of ‘Bring Something Incomprehensible Into This World’ was featured in the *New Yorker Magazine*’s 2017 Notable Recordings. She is also a core member of ground-breaking vocal ensemble Cut Circle, and of the early music collective Polyphemus. Byrne is a member of Beyond Artists, a coalition of artists that donate a percentage of their concert fee to organizations they

care about. Byrne supports the Cares Foundation and South Shore Habitat for Humanity through her performances. She is currently serving as a faculty member and Chair of Vocal Studies at the Longy School of Music at Bard College.

Wayman Chin, piano

Pianist and Longy Dean Emeritus Wayman Chin has performed widely throughout the United States, Asia, and the United Kingdom. In the United States, his concerts include performances at Princeton University, the Curtis Institute of Music, Jordan Hall and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, the Honolulu Academy of Arts and the Old First Concert Series in San Francisco. In the Far East, Mr. Chin has appeared at Tsuen Wan Town Hall in Hong Kong, and in the Philippines, on the Sala Foundation concert series, at the residence of the US Ambassador in Manila and at Soochow University in Taipei.

Wayman Chin's playing has been described as, "*transcendental, long lines spun like glorious gold thread,*" "*ferociously concentrated, intense, focused, and musically astute*" (Boston Herald), "*vividly characterized and atmospheric,*" (Stamford Mercury, U.K.) and "*sheer magic ... every note is colored.*" (the Freeman, Philippines).

An advocate of new music, Wayman Chin has premiered a number of works by noted composers, including those of Scott Wheeler, Marti Epstein, Meyer Kupferman, Jeremy Van Buskirk, and Paul Brust; he has also introduced several works of Aaron Jay Kernis to Boston audiences. Of Chin's performance of Kernis' *Valentines*, David Cleary of 21st Century Music wrote, "*Wayman Chin traversed the formidable challenges of the piano part with conspicuous success. His highly demonstrative performing style excellently suited the work's forthright nature.*"

Sarah Callinan, soprano

Praised for her 'pure, lustrous voice' and 'Lucille Ball-like energy,' soprano Sarah Callinan has performed a wide variety of roles. Some favorites include Despina (*Così Fan Tutte*) with Opera Carolina, Blondchen (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*) with Arizona Opera, Rosina (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*) and the title role in *La Fille du Régiment* with Connecticut Concert Opera, Gilda (*Rigoletto*) and Amina (*La Sonnambula*) with Salt Marsh Opera, Norina (*Don Pasquale*) and Valencienne (*The Merry Widow*) with Cape Cod Opera. She sang the role of Blondie in the "Star Trek" production of *The Abduction from the Seraglio* with Salt Marsh Opera, she appeared in the Texas premiere of *The Hotel*

Casablanca as Veronique with Abilene Opera, and sang the role of Marianne in *The New Moon* and Helen de Vazquez in Victor Herbert's *Orange Blossoms* with Light Opera of New York. A recording of *Orange Blossoms* was released in 2015 on the Albany Records label.

This season she will be the soprano soloist for the Pergolesi *Stabat Mater* with the Connecticut Virtuosi Chamber Orchestra, and she will return to the Sanibel Music Festival with Opera Theater of Connecticut for *Andrew Lloyd Webber: Superstar of Song and Stage*. Most recently, Ms. Callinan sang Adele in *Die Fledermaus* with VOX New England at Mechanics Hall, she sang with the Massachusetts Symphony Orchestra for both their annual Holiday Concert and their *Magically Mozart* Concert in the Park series, and she sang for MA Governor Charlie Baker's inaugural ball. She is a frequent guest soloist with Dan Gabel and The Abletones (an authentic 18-piece Big Band) and is featured on their latest album *By the Fireside*. Ms. Callinan is also the leader of the new Moon Maids, a vocal group that was originally founded in 1945 and performed with Vaughn Monroe and his orchestra.

A native of Worcester, MA, Callinan attended the Hartt School of Music, and graduated Magna cum laude from the University of Connecticut with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Music and a Performer's Certificate in Voice. In addition to her performance schedule, she maintains an active voice studio in Worcester. When she's not making music, Sarah enjoys road trips, creative writing, refurbishing antique furniture, and exploring local trails with her intrepid terrier Finch.

Ann Moss, soprano

Soprano Ann Moss is an acclaimed recording artist and champion of contemporary vocal music who performs and collaborates with a dynamic array of living composers and chamber ensembles. Highlights of the 2022-23 season include Samuel Barber's *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* with the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, Gérard Grisey's *Quatre chants pour franchir le seuil* with the After Everything Ensemble, and a concert tour supporting her recent album of compositions by Hildegard von Bingen. Moss's high, silvery, flexible voice has been singled out by *Opera News* for "beautifully pure floated high notes" and by *San Francisco Classical Voice* for "powerful expression" and "exquisite phrasing." Mike Telin of *Cleveland Classical* writes, her "long fluid lines are exquisite." In addition to working closely with well-known composers such as Jake Heggie, Kaija Saariaho, John Harbison and Aaron Jay Kernis, Ann seeks out and performs music by emerging voices at forums and festivals across the USA.

As co-founder and former Artistic Director of new-music repertory group CMASH, Ann Moss has been personally responsible for the creation and premiere of over two hundred art songs, vocal chamber music and operatic works. She has been a featured soloist with San Francisco Symphony, San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, Redwood Symphony, Orchestra Without Borders, UC Berkeley Symphony Orchestra; West Edge Opera, Solo Opera, SF Lyric Opera, Berkeley Opera; San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, Left Coast Chamber Ensemble, Earplay, Eco Ensemble, Composers in Red Sneakers, After Everything Ensemble, Composers, Inc., Ninth Planet, Music of Remembrance; the Ives, Alexander, Lydian and Hausmann String Quartets; and at FENAM, CNMAT, CCRMA, PARMA, Other Minds, Fresno New Music, Hot Air, Bear Valley, and Switchboard Music Festivals.

Moss has released two portrait albums, *Currents* (2013, Angels Share Records), and *Love Life* (2016, ASR), both produced by multi-GRAMMY® award winner Leslie Ann Jones at Skywalker Sound. Other recent releases include *Nancy Bachmann: Wild Swans* (2023, Navona), *Lifeline* (2022, ASR), and *Autumn Winds* (2020, Ravello). She can also be heard on releases from Albany, Arsis, Naxos and Jaded Ibis Productions. Ann Moss has lectured about vocal composition at institutions including MIT, UC Davis, NYU Tisch School For The Arts, Sacramento State University, and CSU Los Angeles, and has delivered vocal masterclasses at University of Houston Moores School of Music, Longy School of Music of Bard College, University of Texas San Antonio, San Diego State University and Baldwin-Wallace University Conservatory, among others. A native of Boston and a graduate of Hampshire College, the Longy School of Music of Bard College, and San Francisco Conservatory, Ann Moss divides her time between her work in the San Francisco Bay Area and her home in Boston with her husband, jazz violinist / classical violist Justin Ouellet. Ann is a Reiki practitioner, enthusiastic Yogi, and pursues a lifelong interest in Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Omar Najmi, tenor

Boston-based artist Omar Najmi splits his time between composition and performance, maintaining a busy schedule as an operatic tenor. Praised as “a world class voice in every respect,” Najmi recently made his international debut creating the title role in Joseph Summer’s operatic adaptation of *Hamlet* with Bulgaria’s State Opera Rousse. Other recent and upcoming engagements include Rodolfo in *La Boheme* with Opera Steamboat, Shakur in *Thumbprint* with Portland Opera, Tybalt in *Romeo and Juliet* with Boston Lyric Opera, Lord Byron in the world-premiere of *The Thrilling Adventures of Lovelace and Babbage* with Guerilla Opera, Alfredo in *La Traviata* with MassOpera, Gastone in *La Traviata* with Boston Youth Symphony Orchestras, tenor

soloist in *St John Passion* with Emmanuel Music, Tito in *La Clemenza di Tito* with Opera Steamboat, Bilal in *This Is Not That Dawn* with Catalyst New Music, and featured soloist in Boston Lyric Opera's virtual concert series *B.*, highlighting works by Asian and Asian-American composers/poets.

Najmi enjoys a long-standing relationship with Boston Lyric Opera where he began his professional career as an Emerging Artist (2013-2015). He has performed over 15 productions at the company, and he served as their first ever Emerging Composer in the 2020/2021 season. His other operatic engagements have included Opera Colorado, Chautauqua Opera, Annapolis Opera, Opera Saratoga, Opera Maine, Opera NEO, Opera Fayetteville, Opera North, Odyssey Opera, American Lyric Theater, and more.

In 2022, Najmi and his husband Brendon Shapiro co-founded Catalyst New Music - an organization dedicated to fostering, developing, and producing new works. Catalyst's first project - presented with the support of The Boston Foundation's Live Arts Boston grant - was a concert performance of Najmi's new opera *This Is Not That Dawn*, a drama set during and after the Partition of India. Visit www.catalystnewmusic.com for more info.

Tyler Reece, baritone

Baritone Dr. Tyler Reece is on the Vocal Studies faculty and serves as Associate Dean of Enrollment and Student Life at Longy School of Music of Bard College. He has performed extensively as a recitalist, as well as on the operatic and concert stages, primarily in the Dallas-Fort Worth, Santa Barbara, and Boston areas. Dr. Reece is the winner of numerous awards through the National Association for Teachers of Singing (NATS) for his interpretation and performance of art song. An advocate for the LGBTQ+ community, his work is focused on the intersection of gender, sexual identity, and the modernization of performance practices in classical music. Originally from Aspen, Colorado, Reece attended Luther College (BA), the University of North Texas (MM), and the University of California, Santa Barbara (DMA).

Brianna J. Robinson, soprano

Soprano Brianna J. Robinson, whom The Boston Globe proclaimed as, "...a radiant voice and presence" is a native of Ravenna, Ohio. She is a former Jane and Steven Akin Emerging Artist with Boston Lyric Opera where she covered and performed roles such as Lucy in Gregory Spears' *Fellow Travelers*, Mimì (cover) in

Puccini's *La Boheme*, Lena in Ana Solokovic's *Svabda* and covered several roles in Paul Ruders' *The Handmaid's Tale*. She recently stepped on stage as Julie in Rhiannon Giddens and Michael Abels' 2023 Pulitzer Prize-winning opera, *Omar*.

In the 2023-2024 season, Ms. Robinson makes her Carnegie Hall debut with The Cecilia Chorus of NY in Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Dona nobis pacem*. She also returns to Boston Lyric Opera as Jennette in Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-George's *The Anonymous Lover*, also covering the role of Leontine. In January of 2024, she will compete in the New England Regionals of The Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition. Last season, she made multiple concert debuts with several orchestras, including the Akron Symphony Orchestra, Claflin Hill Symphony Orchestra/New World Chorale, and the Handel and Haydn Society in the powerful performances of 'Crossing the Deep'. She made her international debut in Ruse, Bulgaria in 2021 creating the role of Ophelia in the world premiere of Joseph Summer's *Hamlet*.

Ms. Robinson is a proud graduate of Ohio Wesleyan University and the Eastman School of Music.

Brendon Shapiro, piano

Pianist, vocal coach, and conductor, Brendon Shapiro, is a champion of vocal music of the 20th and 21st centuries. He is passionate about the way music can help to shine a light on stories and perspectives that have not historically been represented on American stages, and he specializes in working closely with singers and composers to create effective performances for audiences of all backgrounds.

Brendon is an alumnus of LA Opera's Young Artist Program where he worked with such artists as Renée Fleming and Susan Graham and played a key role in the musical preparation of the world premiere of Matthew Aucoin's *Eurydice*, along with many other productions. He returned to LA Opera in 2022 to work on Rhiannon Giddens' and Michael Abels' *Omar*. He is also a regular at Boston Lyric Opera where he has served as pianist and coach for *Omar*, *Bluebeard's Castle*, *The Rape of Lucretia*, *Pagliacci*, and *Cavalleria Rusticana*.

Brendon has joined the music staff for various productions at San Francisco Opera, Bard Summerscape Festival, Opera Omaha, Odyssey Opera, Opera Maine, and many other opera companies across the country. Additionally, he served as assistant conductor at Boston Conservatory for several recent productions.

Brendon is a co-founder and co-artistic director of Catalyst New Music, where he music directed for the workshop performances of Omar Najmi's *This is Not That Dawn* and *En la ardiente oscuridad*, and produced and performed in the recital series FUSE: Collaborations in Song, a collaboration with Boston Singers' Resource, a non-profit organization in which Brendon also leads as Executive Director. Brendon also maintains an active coaching schedule in the Boston area.

David Small, baritone

Baritone David Small continues to enjoy a vibrant career in opera and concert, having performed over 70 different opera roles in nearly 60 operas, including *Rigoletto*, *Tosca* (Scarpia), *Traviata* (Germont), *Boheme* (Marcello), and *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Figaro, which he performed well over 100 times). He has been featured as soloist with the Cincinnati May Festival Orchestra, Austin Symphony, St. Louis Symphony, Rochester Philharmonic, and Fort Wayne Philharmonic in works such as *Elijah*, Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem*, Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, Bloch's *Sacred Service*, and Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater*. Mr. Small has collaborated with conductors James Conlon, Anton Coppola, Peter Bay, Valery Ryvkin, Victor DeRenzi, Dr. Robert Larsen and many others. An avid recitalist, he has performed recitals with Anton Nel, Jean Anderson, Joachim Reinhuber, Steve Wogaman, John Novacek, and Eugene Cline, and has sung Schubert's complete *Winterreise* 13 times (and counting).

David retired from The University of Texas at Austin after 21 years of service and moved to Boston in 2020. He was invited to join the voice faculty of The Boston Conservatory at Berklee in 2021 and also serves as Artist Teacher of Voice for The Longy School of Music of Bard College. In 2011 he was selected as one of 4 NATS Master Teachers and his students have been finalists in the Metropolitan Opera National auditions, the International Verdi Baritone Competition, among others. He earned a Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance from DePauw University's School of Music while studying with Thomas Fitzpatrick (protégé of American baritone, Mack Harrell) and earned an Artist Diploma in Opera and an MM in Voice Performance from the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music, under the tutelage of the great Italian basso Italo Tajo.