



Contact: Jennifer Wada Communications
718-855-7101
jennifer@wadacommunications.com
www.wadacommunications.com

WINNERS OF THE 2018 GEORGE LONDON AWARDS ARE ANNOUNCED

Soprano Lauren Margison, Mezzo-Sopranos Raehann Bryce-Davis, Rihab Chaieb & Emily D'Angelo, Baritone Benjamin Taylor, and Bass-Baritone Lawson Anderson Win \$10,000 Top Award at the 47th Annual George London Foundation Awards Competition

New York, NY – February 16, 2018 – The winners of the 47th annual **George London Foundation Awards Competition** for young American and Canadian opera singers were announced at the conclusion of the competition's final round this evening, which took place before an enthusiastic audience at Gilder Lehrman Hall at The Morgan Library & Museum in New York City.

A total of \$83,000 was given in awards. From more than 150 applicants, 72 singers were heard over three days of auditions, and 17 were selected as finalists. Of these, six were selected as winners of **George London Awards** of \$10,000 each. Three singers received \$5,000 awards and the remaining eight finalists were given awards of \$1,000 each.



George London Foundation President Nora London, second from left in front, with 2018 George London Award winners (front, left to right) Raehann Bryce-Davis, Lauren Margison, Benjamin Taylor, (rear, left to right) Lawson Anderson, Rihab Chaieb, and Emily D'Angelo ([photo](#) by Mark Von Holden)

The **George London Foundation** and **George London Awards** are named for the great American bass-baritone (1920-1985), who devoted much of his time and energy in his later years to the support and nurturing of young singers. The announcement was made by George London's widow, Nora London, the foundation's president, who said in her remarks, "On this day, even after so many years, I always think

of George. Supporting talented singers is as important today as ever – maybe more, at this difficult time.”

GEORGE LONDON AWARDS (\$10,000 each):

Lawson Anderson, bass-baritone (31, Atlanta, GA) – *George London Award in memory of Kirsten Flagstad, sponsored by the New York Community Trust*

Raehann Bryce-Davis, mezzo-soprano (31, Keene, TX) – *George London Award*

Rihab Chaieb, mezzo-soprano (30, Montreal, Quebec) – *George London Award for a Canadian singer, sponsored by Marjorie Laughery*

Emily D’Angelo, mezzo-soprano (23, Toronto, Ontario) – *George London Award in memory of Leonie Rysanek*

Lauren Margison, soprano (25, Toronto, Ontario) – *George London Award sponsored by Lloyd E. Rigler – Lawrence E. Deutsch Foundation*

Benjamin Taylor, baritone (29, Waldorf, MD) – *George London Award*

\$5,000 AWARDS FROM THE GEORGE LONDON FOUNDATION:

Samantha Gossard, mezzo-soprano (29, Sidney, OH) – *Award sponsored by The Howard and Sarah D. Solomon Foundation*

Daniel Moody, countertenor (28, Cincinnati, OH) – *Award sponsored by the George London Foundation*

Amy Owens, soprano (30, Brookfield, WI) – *Award sponsored by the Miriam and Arthur Diamond Charitable Trust and Barbara Brookes*

\$1,000 AWARDS FROM THE GEORGE LONDON FOUNDATION:

Martin Bakari, tenor (31, Yellow Springs, OH) – *Award in memory of Jacklyn Elyn, sponsored by Mark Elyn*

Deanna Breiwick, soprano (30, Seattle, WA) – *Award in memory of Irwin Scherzer, sponsored by The Irwin S. Scherzer Foundation*

Sarah Coit, mezzo-soprano (27, Spring Hill, FL) – *Award in memory of Herbert Frank, sponsored by David Shustak*

Anna Dugan, soprano (25, Cranford, NJ) – *Award in memory of Jacklyn Elyn, sponsored by Mark Elyn*

Madison Leonard, soprano (25, Cour d’Alene, ID) – *Award sponsored by a Friend of the George London Foundation*

Jana McIntyre, soprano (26, Santa Barbara, CA) – *Voce di Meche Award, sponsored by Meche Kroop*

Aaron Short, tenor (30, Olathe, KS) – *Award in memory of Theodore Uppman, sponsored by Alfred Hubay*

Corrie Stallings, mezzo-soprano (30, Benicia, CA) – *Award in memory of Vera Stern, sponsored by Alfred Hubay*

This year’s panel of judges included soprano Harolyn Blackwell, mezzo-soprano Rosalind Elias, George London Foundation President Nora London, tenor and voice professor George Shirley, and baritone Richard Stilwell (who won a George London Award at the first competition, in 1971). The competition pianist was renowned collaborative pianist Craig Rutenberg.

The 2017 George London Award winners were sopranos Michelle Bradley and Lara Secord-Haid, tenors Aaron Blake and Errin Duane Brooks, and baritone Will Liverman .

Since 1971, the annual competition of The George London Foundation for Singers has given more than 300 awards, and a total of more than \$2 million, to an outstanding roster of young American and

Canadian opera singers who have gone on to international stardom – the list of past winners includes Christine Brewer, Joyce DiDonato, Renée Fleming, Christine Goerke, Catherine Malfitano, James Morris, Matthew Polenzani, Sondra Radvanovsky, Neil Shicoff, and Dawn Upshaw.

One of the oldest vocal competitions in the United States and Canada, the George London Foundation Awards Competition offers among the most substantial awards. As is seldom the case in musical competitions, no fee is charged to the applicants or competitors, a pianist is provided for the competition rounds, and prizes are awarded immediately.

The **George London Foundation's 2017-18 season** concludes with a duo recital:

- **Heidi Melton**, soprano, the 2009 George London-Kirsten Flagstad Award winner, and **Kyle van Schoonhoven**, the winner of the Nicolai Gedda Memorial Award at the 2017 George London competition, with pianist Craig Rutenberg. *Sunday, March 4, 2018, at 4:00 pm at The Morgan Library & Museum*

The Legacy of George London

The goal of the London Foundation, the support and nurturing of young singers, was an abiding interest of the great American bass-baritone George London, who devoted a great part of the time and energy of his later years to this purpose. "Remembering his difficult road to success, George wanted to devise a way to make the road a little easier for future generations of singers," said George London Foundation President Nora London. Initially created under the auspices of the National Opera Institute, the George London Awards program has been administered since 1990 directly by the Foundation as a living legacy to George London's own exceptional talent and generosity.

2018 George London Award Winners

Lawson Anderson, bass-baritone (31, Atlanta, Georgia), is a former management consultant with PwC. He graduated with majors in music and economics from the University of Virginia in 2009, and with an M.B.A. from Columbia Business School in 2015. Recent performances include the title role of *Don Giovanni* in New York and Cleveland, Figaro (*Le nozze di Figaro*) in Berlin, and Rocco (*Fidelio*) in Mexico City. He will reprise Figaro at the Nevill Holt Opera Festival in England and at the Music Academy of the West under James Conlon in Santa Barbara in the summer of 2018 and will sing Falke and Colline with Opera Tampa in the upcoming season. He is a student of Valentin Peytchinov and currently resides in New York City. www.lawsonanderson.com

Raehann Bryce-Davis, mezzo-soprano (31, Keene, Texas), has been hailed by *The New York Times* for her "striking mezzo soprano" and by the *San Francisco Chronicle* for her "electrifying sense of fearlessness." She joins Theater an der Wien for her first performances of Wellgunde in *Der Ring des Nibelungen* in the 2017-18 season. She also sings performances of Elgar's *Sea Pictures* at the Musikverein in Vienna, joins the New York Oratorio Society in the world premiere of Paul Moravec's *Sanctuary Road* in her Carnegie Hall debut, and sings Verdi's Requiem with St. George's Choral Society. Ms. Bryce-Davis is the 2017 1st Place and Audience Prize-winner of the Concorso Lirico Internazionale di Portofino competition. Last season, she joined the ensemble of Opera Vlaanderen where she sang Nezhata in *Sadko*, Kristina in *The Makropulos Affair*, and Mary in *Der fliegende Holländer*. As recent participant in San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program, she sang Eboli in selections from Verdi's *Don Carlo* and Santuzza in Mascagni's *Cavalleria Rusticana*. Ms. Bryce-Davis is Third Prize winner of the 2016 International Hans Gabor Belvedere Singing Competition and Winner of the 2016 Richard F. Gold

Career Grant, the 2015 Ninth International Hilde Zadek Competition at the Musikverein in Vienna, the 2015 Metropolitan Opera National Council Pittsburgh District, and the 2015 Sedat Gürel - Güzin Gürel International Voice Competition in Istanbul. www.raehannbrycedavis.com

Rihab Chaieb, mezzo-soprano (30, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, 2013 George London Encouragement Award), the 2016 winner of the Gerda Lissner International Vocal Competition and a member of the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Program, has earned strong praise for her dramatic charm and vocal clarity. She is a former member of the Canadian Opera Company's Ensemble Studio and participant in San Francisco Opera's Merola Program where she made important role debuts as Sesto (*La clemenza di Tito*) and Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*) respectively. A Glyndebourne Festival debut as Mércédès in David McVicar's production of *Carmen* under Jakub Hruška was followed by an acclaimed Metropolitan Opera debut last season as Zulma in Rossini's *L'italiana in Algeri* with James Levine. Further roles include Flora (*La traviata*) at Glyndebourne, Cretan Woman (*Idomeneo*) at The Met, Tebaldo (*Don Carlo*) at Opéra National de Bordeaux as well as Juno and Ino (*Semele*) in Toronto. This season sees Rihab Chaieb create the role of the Fairy Prince in the world premiere of David Hertzberg's *The Wake World* in her company debut with Opera Philadelphia, and return to The Met as the Sandman (*Hansel and Gretel*), Lola (*Cavalleria rusticana*), and Laura (*Luisa Miller*). www.rihabchaieb.com

Emily D'Angelo, mezzo-soprano (23, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2015 George London Encouragement Award), described as having "a voice hued like a polished teak" by *The New York Times*, is a member of the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program. The Canadian-Italian mezzo-soprano has been seen recently at the Spoleto Festival dei Due Mondi as Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro*, at the Canadian Opera Company as Zweite Dame in *Die Zauberflöte*, and at the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis as Annio in *La clemenza di Tito*. A winner of the 2016 Metropolitan Opera National Council Audition Finals, D'Angelo was also First Prize winner of the 2017 Gerda Lissner International Voice Competition, the 2017 Innsbruck International Cesti Competition for Baroque Opera, the 2017 Canadian Opera Company Quilico Awards Competition, the 2016 American National Opera Association Competition, and was featured on CBC's annual list "Hot 30 Under 30 Classical Musicians." This season includes performances of *Die Zauberflöte* in concert with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, performances and a recording of Vaughn Williams's *Serenade to Music* with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and her role debut as Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* at The Glimmerglass Festival. In February 2019, she will make her role debut as Dorabella in *Così fan tutte* at the Canadian Opera Company. This season also includes recitals at the Park Avenue Armory and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. D'Angelo received her Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance from the University of Toronto where she was the winner of the Norcop Prize in Song, and the Tecumseh Sherman Rogers Graduating Award. She was a fellow at the Ravinia Festival Steans Institute, and is a graduate of the Canadian Opera Company Ensemble Studio. www.emilydangelo.com

Lauren Margison, soprano (25, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2017 Nicoletta Valletti Award from the George London Foundation), is making her mark on opera and competition platforms worldwide. The 2018-19 season sees Lauren joining the prestigious Ensemble Studio of the Canadian Opera Company. She is a current member of the Atelier Lyrique de l'Opéra de Montréal, where her roles have included Clorinda in *La Cenerentola*, and Soeur Mathilde in *Dialogues des Carmélites* on the main stage, and Missia in Atelier Lyrique's production of *La Veuve joyeuse*. Lauren was a finalist in George London Foundation Competition (2017) and she was also the youngest finalist in the prominent Meistersinger Vocal Competition in Nürnberg (2016). In the summer of 2017, she sang Micaela in *Carmen* with the Brott Music Festival, Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* with Highlands Opera Studio, (where she appeared as Marguerite in *Faust* the previous year) and appeared in concert with the PRISMA Festival in Strauss's

Four Last Songs. A versatile soprano, she has been featured by the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, the Toronto Jazz Festival, the Ottawa Chamber Music Festival, Hannaford Street Silver Band, Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts – Richard Bradshaw Amphitheatre and the Ottawa Choral Festival Gala. Lauren continues her vocal training under the tutelage of her parents, tenor, Richard Margison, and stage director and violist, Valerie Kuinka. <http://deanartists.com/artist/lauren-margison-2/>

Benjamin Taylor, baritone (29, Waldorf, Maryland) is a first-year Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist in 2017-18. He is scheduled to perform Sciarrone in *Tosca*, Brian in *The Long Walk*, and Captain Gardiner in *Moby-Dick*. Mr. Taylor received his Master of Music degree from Boston University, where he also earned his Performer's Certificate with Boston University's Opera Institute. While at B.U., he performed the roles of Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte*, Escamillo in *La tragédie de Carmen*, Prior Walter in *Angels in America*, Alvaro in *Florencia en el Amazonas*, Coyle in *Owen Wingrave*, and Des Grieux in *Le portrait de Manon*. For the past three summers Mr. Taylor has been a Gerdine Young Artist (2015, 2016) and Richard Gaddes Festival Artist (2017) at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, where he performed as Fiorello in *The Barber of Seville*, Cowardly Giant in *Shalimar the Clown*, and Yamadori in *Madama Butterfly*. In 2016, Mr. Taylor also performed as Marcello with Crested Butte Festival, and Yamadori in Berkshire Opera's inaugural season. This summer, he will be a Young Artist with The Glimmerglass Festival. Mr. Taylor received his Bachelor of Arts degree at Morgan State University where he sang Tom in *Blue Monday* with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. www.benjaminctaylor.com

The George London Foundation for Singers

Nora E. London, President

John Hauser, Executive Director

www.georgelondon.org