



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

**AMBER WAGNER, SOPRANO, AND REGINALD SMITH, JR., BARITONE,
MAKE THEIR NEW YORK RECITAL DEBUTS: A JOINT PROGRAM AT THE MORGAN
LIBRARY AND MUSEUM ON SUNDAY, APRIL 2, 2017, AT 4:00 PM, CONCLUDING
THE 2016-17 SEASON OF THE GEORGE LONDON FOUNDATION FOR SINGERS**

**Amber Wagner, a 2010 George London Award Winner, Debuts as Senta in
Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman* at The Metropolitan Opera April 25**



Amber Wagner ([download](#) in hi-res), Reginald Smith, Jr. ([download](#) in hi-res)

Soprano **Amber Wagner**, a 2010 George London Award Winner, and baritone **Reginald Smith, Jr.**, who won his George London Award in 2015, make their New York recital debuts at the final program in the **George London Foundation Recital Series**, and the final event in the foundation's season, on Sunday, April 2, 2017, at 4:00 pm. Alan Darling is the recital's pianist; a reception with the artists follows the concert.

The George London Foundation for Singers, named for the great American bass-baritone, has been honoring, supporting, and presenting the finest young opera singers in the U.S. and Canada since 1971, and the recital annual series presents pairs of outstanding singers, many of whom were winners of a George London Award, the prize of the foundation's annual vocal competition.

Amber will sing songs by Richard Strauss and Samuel Barber and “Du bist der Lenz” from Wagner’s *Die Walküre*. Reginald will perform Carlisle Floyd’s *Pilgrimage*, a solo cantata on Biblical texts; songs by Chausson; and “Nemico della patria” from Giordano’s *Andrea Chénier*. They will conclude the program with the duet “Ciel! Mio padre!” from Verdi’s *Aida*. (The full program is below.)

Amber Wagner will make her debut in the role of Senta in the Metropolitan Opera’s production of *The Flying Dutchman* conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin April 25-May 12. This past December, she made her Australian debut, singing the role of Sieglinde in Opera Australia’s *Die Walküre*, The Guardian saying that “as the doomed twin lovers, Bradley Daley and Amber Wagner are revelatory.” After his 2015 George London Award win, Opera News said, “Reginald Smith, Jr. , has one of the most exciting baritone sounds to come along in years. His voice is ample and thrillingly dramatic.” And this past summer he appeared in *La Bohème* with Wolftrap Opera, eliciting praise from The Washington Post for his “playful and righteous Marcello. His resounding bass and all-star acting grounded the cast throughout.”

The **George London Foundation’s 2016-17 season** also included the 46th annual George London Foundation Awards Competition, at which on February 17 five singers – **Aaron Blake**, tenor; **Michelle Bradley**, soprano; **Errin Duane Brooks**, tenor (the George London-Kirsten Flagstad Award for a potential Wagnerian singer); **Will Liverman**, baritone; and **Lara Secord-Haid**, soprano (the George London Award for a Canadian singer) – were proclaimed the winners of the 2017 George London Awards.

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. As The New York Times noted recently, “this prestigious competition...can rightfully claim to act as a springboard for major careers in opera.”

Visit www.georgelondon.org.

Amber Wagner (2010 George London Award), a native of Oregon, was recently featured in Opera News as one of 25 artists poised to break out and become a major force in classical music in the coming decade. The Chicago Tribune has praised Ms. Wagner for her “gleaming, ample and effortless sound,” adding that she possesses “[a] gorgeous, creamy tone... This is one remarkable voice.” This season in Europe she will reprise the title role in Strauss’s *Ariadne auf Naxos* for her debut with Opéra national de Lorraine à Nancy and she will return to the Orquesta Filarmónica de Jalisco in Guadalajara, Mexico for her first recording of select Wagner works. In 2015-16, she made her debut at the Bayerische Staatsoper in the title role of *Ariadne auf Naxos*, opposite Jonas Kaufmann and conducted by Kirill Petrenko, a role she later reprised

for her company debuts with Minnesota Opera, about which the Star-Tribune said, “And thank Zeus, Minnesota Opera found in Amber Wagner a dramatic soprano of no small power who can actually play comedy,” continuing to praise her “sumptuous sound, gleaming high notes and impressive breath control, all delivered with such conviction.” The season also saw her company debut with Palm Beach Opera in the same role, and a performance of the Verdi Requiem with the Los Angeles Master Chorale. http://imgartists.com/artist/amber_wagner

Reginald Smith, Jr. (2015 *George London Award*), an Atlanta native who has been praised by the New York Times as “a passionate performer,” was also a Grand Finals winner of the 2015 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. A recent graduate of the Houston Grand Opera Studio, this season he has made his company debut with Opera Memphis as Count Almaviva in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Dallas Opera as Bonzo in *Madame Butterfly*, and Opera Carolina as Giorgio Germont in *La Traviata*, and joined the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra for Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony conducted by Marin Alsop. In 2015-16 he made his company debut with Toledo Opera as Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly*, about which the Toledo Blade said, “In his local debut, baritone Reginald Smith, Jr., revealed great vocal and dramatic range as Sharpless.... Smith’s control over his powerhouse of a voice allows for richness balanced with clarity and delicacy. His acting was equally subtle. This is a singer to track into the future.” Previous operatic roles include *La Bohème* (Marcello), *Die Fledermaus* (Falke), Gounod’s *Roméo et Juliette* (Capulet), *Porgy and Bess* (Jake/Lawyer Frazier), *The Pirates of Penzance* (The Pirate King), and *Rigoletto* (Marullo) among others. The concert stage has Mr. Smith in performances of Brahms’ *Ein Deutches Requiem*, Mendelssohn’s *Elijah*, Mozart’s Requiem and *Coronation Mass*, Britten’s *Rejoice in the Lamb*, the Fauré and Duruflé Requiem, Schubert’s Mass in G, Schoenberg’s *Ode to Napoleon Bonaparte*, Handel’s *Messiah*, and *Roméo et Juliette* by Berlioz. www.reginaldsmithjr.com

[Sunday, April 2, 2017, at 4:00 pm](#)

*Gilder Lehrman Hall at The Morgan Library & Museum
225 Madison Avenue at 36th Street, New York City*

The George London Foundation Recital Series presents
AMBER WAGNER, Soprano
REGINALD SMITH, JR., Baritone
Alan Darling, Piano

- R. STRAUSS “Zueignung”
 “Morgen”
 “Beim Schlafengehen”
 “Cäcilie”
 Amber Wagner & Alan Darling
- C. FLOYD *Pilgrimage*, Solo Cantata on Biblical Texts:
 “Man that is born of a woman”
 “Save me, O Lord, for the waters are come unto my soul”
 “O Lord, thou hast searched and known me”
 “Praise the Lord, O my soul”
 “For I am persuaded”
 Reginald Smith, Jr. & Alan Darling
- WAGNER “Du bist der Lenz” from *Die Walküre*
 Amber Wagner & Alan Darling
- GIORDANO “Nemico della patria” from *Andrea Chénier*
 Reginald Smith, Jr. & Alan Darling
- BARBER “Sure on this shining night”
 “Sleep now”
 “Nocturne”
 Amber Wagner & Alan Darling
- CHAUSSON “Le Charme”
 “Sérénade italienne”
 “Les Papillons”
 “Le Colibri”
 Reginald Smith, Jr. & Alan Darling
- VERDI “Ciel! Mio padre!” from *Aida*
 Amber Wagner, Reginald Smith, Jr., and Alan Darling

Tickets: \$50

Call (646) 461-3578, e-mail info@georgelondon.org

www.georgelondon.org

www.themorgan.org

March 8, 2017