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The George London Foundation for Singers 2022-23 Season: Raehann Bryce-Davis and Benjamin Taylor in Recital, and the 51st George London Foundation Competition for American and Canadian Opera Singers

The George London Award is raised to \$12,000



Raehann Bryce-Davis, Benjamin Taylor

The George London Foundation for Singers presents three events at The Morgan Library & Museum in the 2022-23 season: the 51st annual George London Foundation Competition for American and Canadian opera singers, one of the opera world's most prestigious competitions, and two recitals showcasing recent winners: rising stars mezzo-soprano Raehann Bryce-Davis and baritone Benjamin Taylor, who both won their George London Awards in 2018.

The George London Award is an honor that has been given to hundreds of the best young singers since 1971. The award and the George London Foundation are named for the legendary Canadian-American bass-baritone who was one of the greatest opera singers of 20th century. For the 2023 competition, the amount of the George London Award is being raised from \$10,000 to \$12,000.

Mezzo-soprano **Raehann Bryce-Davis** performs in recital with pianist Jeanne-Minette Cilliers on **Sunday, October 2, 2022**. Raehann just made her Metropolitan Opera debut in May as Baba the Turk in *The Rake's Progress*, the New York Observer saying, "In her Met debut Raehann Bryce-Davis embraced with relish the brassy scene-stealing histrionics of Baba the Turk, Tom's bearded bride. The American mezzo has recently been garnering notice for her dramatic roles but she clearly enjoyed showing off another

side of her talents.” Of her performance as Azucena in the Los Angeles Opera’s September 2021 production of *Il trovatore*, Parterre Box said, “the biggest surprise of the evening came from our Azucena mezzo-soprano Raehann Bryce-Davis. ...nothing could have prepared me for her portrayal of Verdi’s Romani sorceress. In a part I thought to be overplayed by almost everyone she presented a completely original interpretation that was fearless on nearly every level.”

The **George London Foundation Competition Finals** is a public event taking place on **Friday, February 17, 2023**, at which roughly a dozen singers compete for six George London Awards of \$12,000 each. Those finalists who do not receive George London Awards receive Encouragement Awards of \$2,000. Since 1971, the annual competition of The George London Foundation for Singers has given more than 300 awards to an outstanding roster of young opera singers who have gone on to international stardom. As The New York Times recently noted, “this prestigious competition ... can rightfully claim to act as a springboard for major careers in opera.” Michael Fennelly is the event’s pianist.

Baritone **Benjamin Taylor** performs in recital with pianist Katelan Terrell on **Sunday, April 16, 2023**. Benjamin also made his Metropolitan Opera debut this past season, in the role of Chester in the acclaimed season-opening production of Terence Blanchard’s *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*. He also made debuts with Michigan Opera Theatre and Spoleto Festival USA in *La bohème* in the role of Schaunard. In November, his performance as Papageno in *The Magic Flute* with Pittsburgh Opera elicited this from the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette: “Saturday evening’s purest delight was Benjamin Taylor, an alumnus of the opera’s renowned resident artist program. ... Taylor’s voice is a supple and robust baritone that he wielded with Mozartian lightness. ... Put simply, he killed on opening night.”

The Legacy of George London

The goal of the George London Foundation, the support and nurturing of young singers, was an abiding interest of the great bass-baritone George London. “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. 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 Joyce DiDonato, Renée Fleming, Christine Goerke, Catherine Malfitano, James Morris, Eric Owens, Matthew Polenzani, Sondra Radvanovsky, Neil Shicoff, and Dawn Upshaw.

On February 25, the winners of the 2022 George London Awards were announced: mezzo-soprano Megan Moore, tenor Eric Ferring, and baritones Blake Denson, Erik Grendahl, and Timothy Murray. The event is available to watch on [the George London Foundation’s YouTube channel](#).

The George London Foundation Recital Series, which began at the Morgan in 1995, was established to give grantees exposure and experience, and, in many cases, a New York recital debut. And since 2010, the foundation has sponsored a program which gives scholarships to selected vocal students in the pre-college programs of The Juilliard School and the Manhattan School of Music.

www.georgelondon.org.

Raehann Bryce-Davis has been hailed by The New York Times as a “striking mezzo soprano” and by the San Francisco Chronicle for her “electrifying sense of fearlessness.” In the 2021-22 season, Ms. Bryce-Davis made notable house debuts at the Metropolitan Opera in Stravinsky’s *The Rake’s Progress*, at La Monnaie de Munt, Brussels, as La Zia Principessa in *Suor Angelica*, and at the Glimmerglass Festival

singing Azucena in *Il trovatore*. She returned to both Los Angeles Opera and the Staatstheater Nürnberg as Azucena in *Il trovatore*, and to Opera Ballet Vlaanderen as Der Komponist in *Ariadne auf Naxos*. On the concert stage, she joins Chineke! for a BBC Proms performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony conducted by Kevin John Edusei in September 2022.

As a producer/performer Bryce-Davis has released "To the Afflicted," her first music video, which received much critical acclaim and was chosen as an official video for World Opera Day. Her second digital short, "Brown Sounds," was co-produced with LA Opera and Aural Compass Projects, and won Best Music Video at film festivals around the globe including the New York International Film Awards, New York Cinematography Awards, Hollywood Boulevard Film Awards, the Anatolian Short Film Festival, and the Silk Road Film Awards - Cannes. Raehann Bryce-Davis is a co-founder of the Black Opera Alliance and is an advocate for social justice in opera. www.raehann.com

Benjamin Taylor began the 2021-22 season making his debut at The Metropolitan Opera in *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* (Chester) followed by debuts with Michigan Opera Theatre and Spoleto Festival USA in *La bohème* (Schaunard), Cincinnati Opera for the world premiere of *Castor and Patience* (West), North Carolina Opera for *Sanctuary Road* (William Still), Baltimore Concert Opera for *Adriana Lecouvreur* (Michonnet), and a return to Pittsburgh Opera for *The Magic Flute* (Papageno). Additionally, he will workshop *Factotum* (Garby) at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. Last season he participated in *Opera on the GO!*, the educational production of the Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and made debuts with Fargo-Moorhead Opera in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Figaro), Opera Orlando in *The Secret River* (Augustus), and Des Moines Metro Opera for *Pique Dame* (Tomsky), *Platée* (Satyre), and *Fellow Travelers* (Tommy McIntyre).

Benjamin is a graduate of the Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist Program and was a Gerdine Young Artist and Richard Gaddes Festival Artist at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis. Additional performances include *La bohème* (Marcello) with Crested Butte Festival and *Madama Butterfly* (Prince Yamadori) for Berkshire Opera's inaugural season. Benjamin received his Master of Music from Boston University and his Performer's Certificate with Boston University's Opera Institute. He received his Bachelor of the Arts at Morgan State University where he sang in *Blue Monday* (Tom) with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. www.benjaminctaylor.com

George London Foundation for Singers 2022-23 Season

Sunday, October 2, 2022, at 4:00 pm
The Morgan Library & Museum
George London Foundation Recital
RAEHANN BRYCE-DAVIS, Mezzo-soprano
Jeanne-Minette Cilliers, Piano
Tickets: \$55

Friday, February 17, 2023, at 4:00 pm
The Morgan Library & Museum
51st ANNUAL GEORGE LONDON FOUNDATION COMPETITION
Final Round and Awards Announcement
Tickets: \$55

Sunday, April 16, 2023, at 4:00 pm
The Morgan Library & Museum
George London Foundation Recital
BENJAMIN TAYLOR, Baritone
Katelan Terrell, Piano
Tickets: \$55

Tickets and information: info@georgelondon.org

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Nora E. London, President
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June 15, 2022