



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**BRITTEN & BRAHMS – Saturday, March 18, 2023, 7:30 pm**  
**Garde Arts Center, 325 State St., New London, CT 06320**

### **Soloist Bios:**

#### **Gene Stenger, tenor for Britten:**

Hailed as an “impressive tenor” (The New York Times) who sings with “sweet vibrancy” (The Cleveland Plain Dealer) Gene Stenger is one of the country’s most called upon Bach specialists who is also heralded for his performances of oratorios by Handel, Haydn, Mendelssohn, and Mozart.

Gene’s 2022-2023 season includes solo debuts with both the Helena Symphony (Handel’s Messiah), and Canticum Novum (Bach’s Mass in B Minor) and returning solo appearances with the Buffalo Philharmonic (Mozart’s Coronation Mass), Eastern Connecticut Symphony (Britten’s Serenade), Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra (Handel’s Messiah), Colorado Bach Ensemble (Handel’s Messiah, & Bach’s St. Matthew Passion), Baldwin Wallace University’s Bach Festival (Mass in B Minor), the Handel Society of Dartmouth College (Britten’s Serenade, & Mozart’s Coronation Mass), TENET Vocal Artists (Bach’s Magnificat, & Easter Oratorio), and Bach Vespers at Holy Trinity New York (BWV 62, 243, 126, & 249).

Stenger’s 2021-2022 season featured solo debuts with the Portland Symphony (Bach’s St. Matthew Passion), New Haven Symphony (Handel’s Messiah), Eastern Connecticut Symphony (Summer Concert Gala), the Providence Baroque Orchestra (Bach’s Magnificat, & Schütz’s Musikalische Exequien), and the Harvard-Radcliffe Collegium Musicum (Monteverdi’s Vespers). Gene made return appearances as a soloist with the Virginia Symphony (Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9), the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra (Handel’s Messiah), Bach Society of St. Louis’s Bach Festival (Mass in B Minor), the Charlotte Bach Festival (Ascension Oratorio), the Handel Society of Dartmouth College (Haydn’s Creation), the GRAMMY® nominated True Concord Voices & Orchestra (Bach’s Mass in B Minor, Haydn’s Paukenmesse, Close-Up Recital Series), Bach Collegium at St. Peter’s New York (Handel’s Messiah), and Bach Vespers at Holy Trinity New York (BWV 60, 92, 181, & 249).

Originally from Pittsburgh, PA, Gene holds degrees from Yale University’s School of Music, and Institute of Sacred Music, Colorado State University, and Baldwin Wallace University Conservatory of Music. He currently resides in New Haven, CT, where he serves as instructor of voice at Yale University.

#### **Matthew Muehl-Miller, horn for Britten:**

A native of Charleston, Illinois, french horn player Matthew Muehl-Miller has been praised by the press as “especially fine”(The Day), “with rock-solid horn playing” and “... played with golden honey tones” (South Coast TODAY).



Having previously served as principal horn of the Hartford Symphony Orchestra, Matt has also performed with the Louisiana Philharmonic, New World Symphony, Rhode Island Philharmonic, New Bedford Symphony, and Boston Philharmonic among others. Past summer engagements include appearances at various music festivals: Tanglewood Music Center, Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, Round Top Festival, the National Repertory Orchestra, and the Aspen Music Festival. He was also heard at many concert halls across the nation, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, Meyerson Symphony Center, and Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts.

Currently, Matt is the principal horn of the Coast Guard Band and the Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra. He also serves as the fourth horn at Springfield Symphony Orchestra. He teaches at Eastern Connecticut State University and the University of Rhode Island.

Matt began his horn studies in fifth grade with Kazimierz Machala at the University of Illinois, and he spent a summer at Interlochen Center for the Arts. Matt was accepted to The Juilliard School and completed his bachelor's degree as a student of Julie Landsman. In between schooling, Matt won positions with New Haven Symphony, Hartford Symphony, Springfield Symphony, and Syracuse Symphony. He later furthered his studies and earned his master's degree at the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University under the guidance of William VerMeulen.

When he is not working, Matt enjoys being a father in addition to playing board games with friends. He loves dogs and enjoys reading.

## **Sarah Joyce Cooper, soprano for Brahms**

Soprano Sarah Joyce Cooper has been hailed for her “meltingly beautiful” (Opera News) singing and “alluring” (Don & Catharine Bryan Cultural Series) stage presence. This spring, Ms. Cooper looks forward to making her debut with Tri-Cities Opera in Binghamton, NY as a resident artist. She will appear as Clorinda in Rossini’s *La Cenerentola* and as Sally in the new opera *Stone Soup*, by Joe Illick. She will later appear with the Cape Cod Chamber Orchestra in a performance of Barber’s *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*. In addition to several other solo recitals, Ms. Cooper looks forward to returning to MassOpera to perform in its *Mirror Cabaret* show, featuring scenes from *Little Women* and *Roméo et Juliette*.

Previous performances include *La Charmeuse* in *Thaïs* (Maryland Lyric Opera), *Juliette* in *Roméo et Juliette* (Opera Western Reserve), *Violetta* in *La Traviata* (MassOpera), *Mimì* in *La Bohème* (Opera Theater of Cape Cod/ Boston Opera Collaborative), *Micaëla* in *Carmen* (Prelude to Performance), *Zerlina* in *Don Giovanni* (Boston Opera Collaborative), *Pamina* in *Die Zauberflöte*, and *Countess* in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Savannah Voice Festival). Ms. Cooper has also appeared as a soloist with the Eastern Connecticut Symphony Orchestra, the Maryland Lyric Opera Orchestra, and the Radcliffe Choral Society at Harvard University. In 2019, she was invited to perform as a



soloist with the Du Bois Orchestra in the historic world premiere of Florence Price's long-lost cantata, Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight. Ms. Cooper was also recently invited to join the roster of Convergence Ensemble, an organization of established musicians and performers committed to "exceptional quality music experiences for audiences... throughout New England." In 2020, Ms. Cooper performed as a soloist in A Concert for Equity in the Arts, a critically-acclaimed, live-streamed benefit concert for the Sphinx Organization, hosted by world-renowned bass, Morris Robinson.

As a competition winner, Ms. Cooper earned first place in both the Coeur d'Alene Symphony Young Artists Competition and the Westminster Choir College Voice Scholarship competition in 2016. In 2018, she earned first place in the The American Prize Competition for Opera and Operetta and second place for Art Song. That same year, she made her Carnegie Hall debut as a top prize-winner in the Talents of the World International Competition, performing arias alongside soloists from the Bolshoi Theater and La Scala Opera in the Talents of the World International Festival. Ms. Cooper has also received awards from the George London Foundation and Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and was nominated for a study grant from the Sarah Tucker Foundation. Most recently, she was awarded first place in the 2021 International Rocky Mountain Music Festival, based in Toronto, Canada.

Ms. Cooper completed her Bachelor's Degree in French at Princeton University, where she first began to develop the foundation for her "mastery of French style" (Opera News) while conducting research for her undergraduate thesis on sacred themes in the mélodies, romances, and cantiques of Gabriel Fauré. She earned her Master of Music Degree in Vocal Performance and Pedagogy from Westminster Choir College, where she received the Gwynn Moose Cornell Endowed Award, given to the student who shows the most promise for a career in vocal performance.

In addition to performing, Ms. Cooper serves as volunteer Executive Assistant for Help!ComeHome!, a 501c3 organization dedicated to meeting the needs of under-served communities throughout the US in Jesus' Name. Ms. Cooper is a regular volunteer with the organization, offering both her musical and administrative skills to further its mission. In June 2018, she planned, programmed, and performed in A Nod to Our Neighbors, a benefit concert and the first major fundraiser for Help!ComeHome!

In her free time, Ms. Cooper enjoys gardening, playing cello, and being active outdoors. A former competitive gymnast, she was awarded top prizes at the annual Massachusetts State Championship meet while competing for the Gymnastics Academy of Boston.

### **Eliam Ramos, baritone for Brahms:**

Eliam Ramos has a rich full lyric bass-baritone voice. He began his training and graduated from the Conservatory of Music of Puerto Rico. He made his professional debut in 2011 as Il Commendatore in the opera *Don Giovanni* from W. A. Mozart with Teatro de la Ópera de Puerto Rico, directed by the tenor Antonio Barasorda. Since then his artistic engagements have included the role of Balthazar in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, the Fauré *Requiem*,



and a Gala of Zarzuela for the Puerto Rico Symphonic Orchestra. Other notable performances include the Mozart *Requiem* with the Puerto Rico Philharmonic Orchestra, Luis Nogales in the zarzuela *Luisa Fernanda*, Don Pedro in the zarzuela *El Barberillo de Lavapiés*, a pirate in the operetta *Cofresí* by Rafael Hernández, and also various concerts, recitals, master classes, and opera summer programs. Ramos has also participated in several opera and zarzuela ensembles. As part of the Opera Workshop of the Conservatory in Puerto Rico, he performed the role of The Superintendent in the opera *Albert Herring* by Benjamin Britten, Der Tod in *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* by Victor Ullman and the Priest in *Die Zauberflöte* by W.A. Mozart.

In 2013 he made his way to New York City and with the Brooklyn College Opera Workshop, performed the role of Lord Sidney in Rossini's *Il Viaggio a Reims* and Sparafucille and Monterone in Verdi's *Rigoletto*. Eliam also sang the role of Ben in *The Telephone* by Gian-Carlo Menotti. Additional New York operatic appearances consist of the role of El Prior in the zarzuela *La Dolorosa*, the Gala of Zarzuela at the Centro Español de Queens and an Opera and Ballet Concert in Astoria, Queens.

Ramos' international performances have been the title role in Donizetti's *Don Pasquale* in Spain, Leporello in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* in Israel and the title role of Hans Werner Henze's *El Cimarrón* in Mexico.

Mr. Ramos will be featured in several productions of *La Bohème* in the fall season of 2022. He sang Schaunard with Soo Theatre in Michigan. He will cover Marcello at Opera in Williamsburg. This season, he will be a resident soloist with Her Dimmock's "Bach in Baltimore". He will sing Bah Cantata 182 Cantata 2, and Cantata 112. Mr. Ramos also is engaged with The Metropolitan Opera Guild to sing Germont's arias in Verdi's *La Traviata* on October 19. A busy New York artist, Eliam is always singing concerts and recitals.