

Schubertiade 2021 Biographies (in order of appearance)

Martha Fischer is Professor of Piano and Collaborative Piano at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She has recorded extensively as a collaborative pianist on the Naxos and Summit labels to critical acclaim. A singer as well as pianist, Fischer has performed unique recitals of art song in which she accompanies herself. With her husband, Bill Lutes, she founded Schubert ensembles in Boston and Washington, D.C. Their interpretation of Schubert's "Fantasie in F minor" was described by the *Washington Post* as "an energetic performance bursting with heartfelt intensity." A dedicated teacher, Ms. Fischer has presented papers and served on national panels devoted to the pedagogy of collaborative piano. She also served as Artistic and Music Director of Opera for the Young and on the faculty of the Interlochen Arts Camp. A native of Plymouth, Michigan, Fischer holds degrees in piano from Oberlin College and the New England Conservatory of Music.

Bill Lutes is an independent piano teacher. From 2000 to 2011 he was Artist-in-Residence at the UW/Madison School of Music where he served as vocal coach for the University Opera. As pianist he has performed nationally as soloist and collaborative musician. Mr. Lutes received degrees in piano performance from the Universities of Kentucky and Wisconsin-Madison, and the Artist's Diploma from the New England Conservatory of Music. He frequently collaborates with his pianist/singer wife, Martha Fischer, in concerts of the piano duet and two-piano literature. Their 2-CD set of *Four-Hand Piano Works by Robert Schumann* will be released on February 7, 2020 on the Centaur Label. For 12 years, Mr. Lutes also served as classical music host and producer for Wisconsin Public Radio. He is a popular lecturer on music and has presented music appreciation courses for the Smithsonian Institution's Resident Associates Program and has been heard on the airwaves as a panelist on the Metropolitan Opera Quiz.

Australian-born **Katrin Talbot** is a photographer, poet, and violist who often combines these three areas. Her work has appeared in the *New York Times* and she has presented multimedia concerts of her collaborative work in New York City, Miami, and Bucharest. A coffee-table book of her photographs, a photo essay of Schubert's *Winterreise* published by the University of Wisconsin Press, won a national American Library Association 'Best of the Best of University Presses' award. Her photography has appeared in many national exhibits in museums and galleries and has won several national prizes. Her music-related photography has been used by the Metropolitan Opera, the Boston Symphony, the San Francisco Opera, Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Lincoln Center, and has appeared in many newspapers, magazines and literary journals.

Cheryl Bensman-Rowe, mezzo-soprano, has performed in North and South America, Europe and Japan, received a Grammy for *Music for 18 Musicians* by Steve Reich (Nonesuch). A former member of The Waverly Consort, and Western Wind Vocal Ensemble, she has performed with the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, Israel Philharmonic, at Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, Ravinia, Wiener Festwochen, Madison Opera, Madison Bach Musicians, Token Creek, and Present Music. She has recorded for Nonesuch, ECM, and CBS Masterworks. She is the former Artistic Director of the Handel Aria Competition and currently maintains a private voice studio in Madison. Ms. Bensman-Rowe and her husband, Paul Rowe, are Co-Artistic Directors and founders of the Madison Early Music Festival, which takes place this July, celebrating 20 seasons at the UW-Madison Arts Institute and Mead Witter School of Music.

Michael Roemer currently resides in Knoxville, TN, where he freelances as a vocal coach/collaborative pianist for UT-Knoxville students and opera studio. Most recently, Michael served as Music Director and Organist at St. Paul's Catholic Church in North Canton, OH and performed with the Canton Symphony Orchestra as soloist in Haydn's *Missa in tempore belli* and *Carmina Burana*. He also served as the collaborative pianist for Cleveland Chamber Choir. Having performed in the 2020 Schubertiade, Michael is delighted to encore a virtual performance. Michael is a Wisconsin native and received his Master's degree from UW-Madison and Bachelor's degree from UW-Whitewater.

Jennifer D'Agostino is currently an Adjunct Associate Professor of Applied Voice at University of Tennessee-Knoxville. Jennifer received her DMA at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in Voice Performance with a minor in Opera Production. She completed her Master's Degree as a member of the Knoxville Opera Studio with the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, and her Bachelor's Degree from Baldwin-Wallace College Conservatory of Music. Praised as being "simply gripping" a performer with "beauty and expression," D'Agostino frequently performs in genres both the classical and contemporary. She is currently on the board of the New York Singing Teacher's Association, as well as the Editor-in-Chief of *VOICEPrints*, NYSTA's scholarly peer-reviewed journal.

Tenor **Daniel O'Dea** completed his Doctor of Musical Arts in Voice at the University of Wisconsin-Madison as a Collins Fellow. He was nominated for a Grammy in 2016 and won in 2019 for his work with acclaimed chamber choir The Crossing. He received his AD in Opera from the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music, MM in Voice from CCM and BM from Westminster Choir College. He has performed with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Des Moines Metro Opera, Cedar Rapids Opera, Aspen Opera Theater and Opera Naples. He has appeared locally with Madison Choral Project, Opera for the Young, Madison Bach Musicians and Token Creek Music Festival.

Soprano **Jamie-Rose Guarrine** is acclaimed for her "utterly thrilling, agile voice" and brings "pathos, beauty, and heartbreaking skill" to her performances. She has performed on the stages of the Los Angeles Opera, Minnesota Opera, Santa Fe Opera, Wolf Trap Opera, Opera Philadelphia, Chicago Opera Theater, Florentine Opera, Utah Opera, Madison Symphony and Madison Opera, The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, National Symphony Orchestra of Costa Rica, Santa Fe Symphony, among many others. Dr. Guarrine has presented masterclasses to young singers throughout the U.S., and proudly serves as Assistant Professor of Voice at UMASS Amherst.

Julia Rottmayer, soprano, is active in the stage, concert, and teaching arenas. Having toured nationally, Dr. Rottmayer enjoys singing art song recitals and chamber music with repertoire ranging from Bach to Berg. Recent favorite stage and concert performances include Brahms' *Requiem*, Mozart's *Grand Mass in C*, Tippett's *A Child of Our Time*, Pamina in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, and the title role in Poulenc's *Les Mamelles de Tirésias*. Dr. Rottmayer maintains a private voice studio and is a member of the voice faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Past appointments include President of Central Florida NATS and Assistant Professor of Voice at Rollins College.

Hailed by *The New York Times* for her "radiant, liquid tone," and "exquisitely phrased" singing and by *Opera UK* for "a sound of remarkable purity," soprano **Sarah Brailey** enjoys a career that resists specialization. Recent projects include Handel's *Messiah* with The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, performing with Kanye West and Roomful of Teeth at the Hollywood Bowl, and

recording cello and vocal soundscapes for the 2018 *Fog x FLO* public art installation in Boston's Emerald Necklace. Co-founder of Just Bach, a new monthly concert series in Madison, Wisconsin, Sarah is also the Artistic Director of the Handel Aria Competition.

A native of Wabash, Indiana, tenor **Wesley Dunnagan** has been praised for his "unfailing eloquence" as the Evangelist in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*. Recently, he has appeared as a soloist with Just Bach, the Wisconsin Chamber Choir, Madison Bach Musicians, South Bend Lyric Opera, South Bend Symphony, and Kettle Moraine Symphony. Highlights include Bach's *Passions* and *Christmas Oratorio*, *Hansel and Gretel* (Witch), *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Arturo), *Falstaff* (Dr. Caius), *Così fan tutte* (Ferrando), *Gianni Schicchi* (Rinuccio), Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with Nathan Gunn in the title role, Handel's *Messiah*, *La resurrezione*, and *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day*. An assistant professor at Fort Lewis College in Durango, CO, he received his DMA from UW-Madison and holds degrees from Stanford and the University of Notre Dame.

Mimmi Fulmer performs repertoire from early music to works written for her. She has appeared as soloist at the Aspen Music Festival and Kennedy Center, premiered nine opera roles, and recorded with the Centaur, Albany, Innova, and CRI labels. The granddaughter of immigrants from Finland and Sweden, Ms. Fulmer is an advocate for Scandinavian music, and edited *Midnight Sun*, a three-volume Nordic song anthology. She is Professor of Voice and Opera at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her students are enjoying success at the Metropolitan Opera, on Broadway, and as educators at schools and universities.

American soprano **Emily Birsan** has shared her engaging skills with many of the world's finest opera houses and orchestras, including the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Welsh National Opera, Edinburgh International Festival, Boston Lyric Opera, Florida Grand Opera, Rochester Philharmonic, Bergen Philharmonic, and Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. She is a celebrated recitalist in French and German repertoire, appearing with Pro Arte String Quartet, Da Ponte String Quartet, Bach Dancing and Dynamite Festival, Aspen Ideas Festival and Madison's own Schubertiade. Hailed for her versatility and "radiant delicacy" of tone, she takes on exceptionally broad repertoire, and has also emerged in the opera world as a specialist in works by Mozart and Italian repertoire. Ms. Birsan earned her BM from Lawrence Conservatory in Appleton, WI and her MM degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Mead Witter School of Music in 2010.

Baritone **Paul Rowe** has maintained a wide-ranging career performing with many leading American musical organizations including the Boston Symphony, St. Louis Symphony, American Ballet Theater, the Madison Symphony, Musica Sacra and the Smithsonian Chamber Players. A former member of the Waverly Consort and the New York Vocal Ensemble, he has also appeared with the Ensemble for Early Music, King's Noyse, Madison Opera, and Present Music of Milwaukee. Recordings include the premiere of *Exodus* by David Itkin, with William Shatner, narrator, and the Arkansas Symphony, on the Naxos label, and the song cycles *Winterreise* and *Die Schöne Müllerin* by Franz Schubert with Martha Fischer, piano. Mr. Rowe is a Professor of Music at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Mead Witter School of Music. He and his wife, Cheryl Bensman-Rowe, are Co-Artistic Directors and founders of the Madison Early Music Festival.