

# PIA DE' TOLOMEI

## US Premiere

Music by Gaetano Donizetti

Libretto by Salvatore Cammarano

### College of Charleston Sottile Theatre

May 27, 7:00pm; May 31, 7:30pm; June 3, 2:00pm;  
June 6, 7:30pm; June 8, 7:30pm

### Artistic Team

Conductor

Director

Set Designer

Costume Designer

Lighting Designer

Lidiya Yankovskaya

Andrea Cigni

Dario Gessati

Tommaso Lagattolla

Fiammetta Baldisserri

### Cast

Pia de' Tolomei

Ghino degli Armieri

Nello, Pia's husband

Rodrigo, Pia's brother

Piero, a hermit

Ubaldo, Nello's servant

Bice, Pia's maid

Lamberto, a servant of Pia's family

Guard of the Tower of Siena

Amanda Woodbury

Isaac Frishman

Valdis Jansons

Cassandra Zoe Velasco

Kevin Langan

Nathan Granner

Vera Savage

Matthew Anchel

Alexander Simon

Spolet Festival USA Orchestra

Westminster Choir

Assistant Conductor

Assistant Director

Assistant Costume Designer

Musical Preparation

Choral Preparation

Vocal Coach

Costume Construction

Shoes

Wigs

Production Stage Manager

Supertitles

Alan Buxbaum

Luca Baracchini

Donato Didonna

Renate Rohlfing

Joe Miller

Diane Richardson

Tirelli Costumi, Costumi Atelier Nicolao, Sartoria Cineteatrale Nori Snc

Pompeii 2000 Srl

Effe Emme Spettacoli Srl

Becca Eddins

Chadwick Creative Arts, LLC

2 hours, 30 minutes | Performed with one intermission

Sung in Italian with English supertitles

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| CBS News journalist Martha Teichner hosts a Conversation with Conductor Lidiya Yankovskaya and soprano Natalia Pavlova (pp 100 and 106) at 5:00pm on Sunday, June 3, at the Charleston Library Society, 164 King St.

**Program Note**

"ricorditi di me, che son la Pia;  
 Siena mi fe, disfecemi Maremma:  
 salsi colui che 'nnanelata pria  
 disposando m'avea con la sua gemma."

- Dante

"please remember me, who am La Pia.  
 Siena made me, in Maremma I was undone.  
 He knows how, the one who, to marry me,  
 first gave the ring that held his stone."

- English translation by  
 Jean and Robert Hollander

The story of *Pia de' Tolomei* is known mostly through its mention in Dante's *Purgatory*, Canto V, which tells of a woman who is murdered by her husband. The original story takes place in the 13th century, though it is not necessarily a story particular to that time—it is a story with a universal theme that spans centuries: a wife believed faithless is killed by her husband unjustly. Everything happens in Tuscany, in the city of Siena, made up of hills and turrets, a city rich in beauty.

In my vision, Pia is a sweet woman who loves her homeland, Tuscany, and husband—she is virtuous and pure of heart. With the imminent approach of war, she works to safeguard a collection of Tuscan art—paintings and objects—that capture and represent her beloved country: landscapes, city views, and portraits of important figures in Tuscany. She protects these works with the help of some friends—art enthusiasts and expert restorers—in what they feel is an important mission.

Our story occurs around the 1930s and '40s. Like the rest of the nation and continent, Tuscany is torn by the enmity of two political factions; the fascist party is now in power, and the anti-fascist groups experience persecution by the regime. Pia dearly loves her husband, who is the mayor of the Siena, though her brother opposes him and is currently in jail as a result. She is torn between a desire to see her brother go free and the respect she feels for her husband.

A bright, warm, and sunny Tuscany contrasts with the cold, dark prison that holds Pia's brother, Rodrigo. This story is made up of the internal and external places of private affairs and political events; the intimate emotional confrontations and the great power of jealousy; the lies and betrayal that threaten Pia, who holds fast to her strength, integrity, and loyalty, at all costs; the destruction of precious paintings by her wrathful husband while she is imprisoned in the Maremma; the finality of Pia's death, propelling her to immortality in art history and literature.

Throughout this telling, there are references to several 20th-century films set in Tuscany—some movies from the 1950s, to the more recent masterpieces that tell of the fascist regime in Tuscany. Even the timing and action, the rhythm of sequences, follow film style, in order to focus the audience's attention on specific situations and particular scenes.

- Andrea Cigni

**Synopsis****Act I**

Pia de' Tolomei is married to Nello, mayor of Siena; the two come from families of warring political camps. Pia has aroused the passionate love of her husband's cousin, Ghino. Ubaldo, Ghino's untrustworthy servant, intercepted a note Pia wrote outlining a meeting with a man and delivered it to Ghino; they believe it to be proof of her infidelity. After Bice, Pia's maid, informs Ghino that Pia refuses to see him, he seeks revenge.

Surrounded by her maids, Pia tells Bice of the terrible anguish she feels for her brother, Rodrigo, whom she helped escape from Nello's prison, where he had been held as an anti-fascist. Lamberto, one of the Tolomei's servants, gives her a letter from a stranger who fled as soon as he had delivered it. Although she reveals nothing to those around her, Pia is considerably reassured that her brother managed to flee successfully and that she will soon be able to see him.

Ghino meets Nello in his pavilion. With cruel shrewdness, Ghino insinuates his suspicions about Pia's unfaithfulness, telling him to keep watch during the night to see if Pia receives any visitors. That night, Ubaldo waits outside Pia's quarters with a group of soldiers behind him. Pia's faithful servant Lamberto discovers a secret passageway that can be used to escape. Pia and Rodrigo embrace as Nello knocks loudly on the door. They say farewell hastily and Nello enters while Rodrigo disappears. Pia faints from fear, but when she is revived, Nello questions her. Her silence infuriates him and he decides to throw her in prison in the Maremma while Ghino condemns this wicked gesture.

**Act II**

Outside the castle in the Maremma, where Pia is imprisoned, Ghino appears before Ubaldo and demands to see Pia, who is suffering from a fever. Once he enters the prison, he presents himself as her savior. Pia insists she is innocent, claiming the man with her that night was her brother Rodrigo. Ghino offers her two choices: die in prison or offer him her love. Without a moment's hesitation, Pia chooses death. Ghino begins to be overcome with remorse for the part he has played in her predicament, and Pia falls on her knees, begging him to accept his responsibility. At first, Ghino wavers, but then accepts. He realizes he cannot live without her and decides to take his own life. At that very moment, a dispatch from Nello arrives, telling the prison guards to proceed with Pia's execution, since he himself might die in the imminent battle.

An elderly hermit, Piero, welcomes Nello, who has been defeated by the anti-fascists at Siena. Piero supports Pia's claims that she is innocent since he himself was her confessor. Nello's heart breaks because he still loves her. Their conversation is interrupted by the sound of shooting—Ghino has been mortally wounded by the opposition, but before dying, manages to tell Nello what actually happened. Nello frantically remembers he had given orders for Pia to be executed at dawn and rushes out followed by a handful of soldiers.

In prison, Pia is asleep as Ubaldo pours poison into the cup next to her; he leaves. Shortly after, Pia awakens from a nightmare in which her husband is killed in battle. Her anguish and fever have left her throat parched—she looks around and sees the goblet. She drinks and then collapses on the chair, expressing a wish to see her beloved husband. Nello bursts in and falls on his knees to beg her forgiveness as she lies dying. Nello turns to Ubaldo (who is protesting that he was only carrying out the orders he had received) and cries out in despair. Meanwhile, the anti-fascists have managed to enter the prison to save Pia. Rodrigo throws himself at Nello, but is stopped by Pia, who is stating her final wishes—compassion, affection, and peace. She draws her last breath in the arms of the two men.

#### Artistic Team

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**LIDIYA YANKOVSKAYA** (conductor) serves as music director with Chicago Opera Theater and resident artist at National Sawdust in New York City. Conducting engagements this season have included Washington National Opera, Chicago Philharmonic, Beth Morrison Projects, Wolftrap Opera, Opera Saratoga, Stamford Symphony, and a workshop of a new opera with the Metropolitan Opera/Lincoln Center. She is also a part of The Dallas Opera's Hart Institute for Women Conductors and Marin Alsop's Taki Concordia Fellowship, and has previously served as assistant conductor to Lorin Maazel. Previous positions include serving as conductor for Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra, as a chorus master for Boston Symphony Orchestra and Boston Pops, music director for Commonwealth Lyric Theater, music director for Harvard's Lowell House Opera, and artistic director of Juventas New Music Ensemble and Boston New Music Festival. [LidiyaConductor.com](http://LidiyaConductor.com)



**ANDREA CIGNI** (director) graduated from the University of Bologna in theater. Cigni has collaborated with international directors including Pier Luigi Pizzi, Giancarlo Cobelli, Yannis Kokkos, Alberto Fassini, and Beni Montresor. In 2006, he made his directorial debut at Teatro Amilcare Ponchielli Cremona with Vivaldi's *Andromeda liberata*. The English magazine *Opera Now* praised Cigni as one of the best young directors of 2008. In the same year, he directed a double-bill with *The Medium* by Menotti and *Gianni Schicchi* by Puccini.

In 2009, he created a new production of *Aida* in Florence, with sets by Igor Mitoraj. In 2010, he directed *La traviata* and Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*; in 2011, Rota's *Il cappello di paglia di Firenze* at Maggio Musicale Fiorentino and Bellini's *Norma* in Sassari. In 2012, he created a new production of Verdi's *Ernani* and *Madama Butterfly* for Teatro Massimo Palermo. In 2013, he directed *Il cappello di paglia di Firenze* at Wexford Opera Festival. In 2014 – 15, he directed a French touring production of Donizetti's *Don Pasquale*, as well as a production of Rossini's *La cambiale di matrimonio* in Parma. In 2016 – 17, he directed productions of Paisiello's *Fedra*; *Tosca*; *L'occasione fa il ladro*; *La straniera*; and *Pia de' Tolomei* at Teatro di Pisa. In 2018, he directed *Thaïs* by Massenet for Minnesota Opera House; *La traviata* in Trapani; and *Tosca* in Brescia. He is the director of the Conservatory Claudio Monteverdi in Cremona, where he teaches stage and performing arts.



**LUCA BARACCHINI** (assistant director) was born in Santa Margherita Ligure. After several experiences in ballroom dance competition, he devoted himself to studying singing, taking his first steps in the opera world as an extra and mime actor in several productions at the Teatro Carlo Felice (Genoa). There, he had the opportunity to meet great masters like Ettore Scola, Rolando Panerai, Giuliano Montaldo, and Dario Argento. He later worked as an assistant director, collaborating with such directors as Davide Livermore, Andrea De Rosa, Filippo Crivelli, Andrea Cigni, and others, at many Italian (Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Teatro San Carlo, etc.) and international venues (Mariinsky Theatre). Since 2016, he has enriched his perspective through set design coursework at the Fine Arts Academy of Genoa. In 2018, he directed *La traviata* in Milan for Voce All'Opera.



**DARIO GESSATI** (set designer) graduated in scenography at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts. He has collaborated with many set and costume designers, including Mauro Carosi, Odette Nicoletti, and Anna Anni. Since 2007, he has done scenic design in many prestigious theaters, including Teatro dell'Opera di Roma, Teatro Massimo Bellini in Catania, Festival della Valle d'Itria, Teatro Lirico di Cagliari, the Turkish State Opera and Ballet in Ankara, Teatro Comunale Ponchielli in Cremona, and Teatro San Carlo in Naples. He designed scenery for Adolphe Adam's *Giselle*, with choreography by Carla Fracci. He collaborated with director Arturo Cirillo on *L'inseguitore* and Scarpa's *L'infinito*; Shakespeare's *Othello*; *The Glass Menagerie*; *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*; *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*; and *Long Day's Journey into Night*, among others. He is a scenography teacher at the Accademia Nazionale di Arte Drammatica Silvio D'Amico in Rome, and at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Sassari.



**TOMMASO LAGATTOLLA** (costume designer) cultivated a strong interest in classical music as well as in artistic production from a young age. He soon focused his interest on opera, collaborating with Teatro Petruzzelli in Bari, where he worked for nine years as technical director. Lagattolla's career began with productions of contemporary music, and continued with many canonic titles. He worked with many different stage directors (Curran, Pacini, Trees, Esposito, Spada, Stetka, Cigni, Barbalich) in a number of productions; the two most successful were *Macbeth*, staged in many theaters in Italy, Spain, and Portugal; and *Il cappello di paglia di Firenze*, garnering awards from the GBOscar Eccellenza della lirica for best set design and best costume design in 2015. He teaches costume design at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bari, and, as an expert in historical costume, collaborates with the Museum of Costume and Fashion in Palazzo Pitti, Florence.



**FIAMMETTA BALDISSERRI** (lighting designer) studied at the University of Bologna, where she graduated with a degree in earth science. She began studying lighting design at the Teatro Regio di Parma, where she started working in technical assistance. She worked from 1987 – 98 at the Festival of Two Worlds in Spoleto, Italy, and then until 2004 at the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro. She began working in lighting design for a production of *La traviata*, directed by Franco Zeffirelli. Since then, she has done lighting design for a variety of directors, including Giorgio Ferrara, Stefano Simone Pintor, Aleksander Sakurov, Pierfrancesco Maestrini, and Jacopo Spirei. She has worked with Andrea Cigni on *Orfeo*; Gluck's *Paride ed Elena*; a double bill of Menotti's *The Medium* and Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*; and *Tosca* at the Minnesota Opera House, among others. She teaches lighting design at Accademia Belle Arti Bologna.

## Cast



**MATTHEW ANCHEL** (Lamberto) has been praised for his "magnetic, deep voice," by *The New York Times*. The 2017 – 18 season has been his fourth on the Metropolitan Opera roster, covering in new productions of *The Exterminating Angel* and *Cendrillon*. He also joined Santa Fe Opera to cover Tsar Dodon in their production of *The Golden Cockerel*. He debuted with St. Petersburg Opera as Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte*, sang *Messiah* with Live Arts Maryland, and sang the bass solo in Mahler's Symphony no. 8 at Carnegie Hall with the Canterbury Choral Society. He has also performed with LA Opera, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Oper Leipzig, Opera San Jose, Anchorage Opera, Spoleto Festival USA's 2016 performance of Beethoven's Mass in C Major, LA Phil, Caramoor Summer Music Festival, and Music Academy of the West, among others. Anchel will be joining Oper Stuttgart for the 2018 – 19 season singing in multiple productions.



**ISAAC FRISHMAN** (Ghino) is already making a name for himself with quick-witted stage antics and a voice described as "truly sweet and graceful" (*Broadway World*). His performance as Don Ramiro in *La Cenerentola* was praised, calling him "a true Rossini tenor with fine coloratura and great high notes" (*St. Louis Post*). Frishman makes his Spoleto Festival USA debut as Ghino in Donizetti's *Pia de' Tolomei* this season. Frishman has appeared with Kentucky Opera, Winter Opera St. Louis, Merola Opera, Des Moines Metro Opera, and Chautauqua Opera. His role credits include Count Almaviva in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Nemorino in *L'elisir d'amore*, Ferrando in *Così fan tutte*, Tamino in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, Pong in *Turandot*, and Henrik in *A Little Night Music*. Frishman holds a master's degree in vocal performance from Michigan State University and is a student of the famed Metropolitan Opera tenor Richard Fracker.



**NATHAN GRANNER** (Ubaldo), one of the original The American Tenors (Sony Classical), is known for his "vibrant and flexible" voice (*The Boston Globe*) and for possessing "utter control of a ravishing mixed head sound" (*Opera News*). Using his voice in a variety of artistic and expressive styles, ranging from opera to Broadway, from jazz to world music and classical-crossover performances, Granner is the prototypical tenor who can perform across all genres. During the 2017 – 18 season, Granner was heard as Curly in *Oklahoma* with Charlottesville Opera (formerly Ashlawn Opera); Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* with Pacific Opera Projects; and both The Magician in Menotti's *The Consul* and reprising Dr. Morel in the *The Invention of Dr. Morel* (from the 2017 world premiere).

with Long Beach Opera. This summer, Granner will appear at Walt Disney Concert Hall in concert with the California Philharmonic, and will sing Rodolfo in *La bohème* with Opera Santa Barbara this November. Last season, he sang the role of Triquet in Spoleto Festival USA's production of *Eugene Onegin*.



**VALDIS JANSONS** (Nello) made his opera debut in 2004 under the direction of Antonello Allemandi. A Latvian baritone and winner of many international competitions (including Giuseppe di Stefano 2006 and As.Li.Co. 2009), he has sung 55 roles in more than 70 theaters all over the world. Among them are Teatro alla Scala, Teatro di San Carlo in Naples,

Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, Theater an der Wien, Teatro Carlo Felice in Genoa, Teatro Filarmónico in Verona, Teatro Regio in Parma; Teatro Nacional de São Carlos in Lisbon, Lincoln Center in New York, Teatro Comunale in Bologna, National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing, and many others. He has worked with such conductors as Daniele Gatti, Fabio Luisi, Daniel Oren, Daniele Callegari, Stefano Ranzani, Lawrence Foster, Antonello Allemandi, Isaac Karabtchevsky, Asher Fisch, Philippe Augin, Stefan Anton Reck, and Pierre Vallet, and such stage directors as Gianfranco De Bosio, Lamberto Puggelli, Peter Stein, and Giancarlo del Monaco.



**KEVIN J. LANGAN** (Piero) is an American bass and makes his Spoleto Festival USA debut in this production. He has been singing professionally for 40 years in leading roles, with many of the world's leading opera houses, including the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Saito Kinen Festival (Japan), Maggio Musicale

Fiorentino, Royal Flemish Opera, Netherlands Opera, and many regional opera companies in North America. With more than 1400 career performances to his credit, he has performed more than 80 different operatic roles. Discography includes the Grammy-nominated *Le nozze di Figaro* (Teldec) under Nikolaus Harnoncourt. DVD credits include the David Hockney production of *Turandot*; *Aida* with Luciano Pavarotti; and *The Cunning Little Vixen* from Maggio Musicale Fiorentino under Seiji Ozawa. He has given solo recitals at the prestigious Wigmore Hall in London, as well as Kurt Weill at Carnegie Hall in New York.



**VERA SAVAGE** (Bice) has been praised for singing like "a dream: supple and powerful with a deep velvet shimmer" (*Opera in the Heights*); critics have noted that "whatever she sings, we believe" (*Houston Press*). Savage's 2017 – 18 season included Mercédès in Bizet's *Carmen* with the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra; Meg Page in

Verdi's *Falstaff* with Opera Saratoga and Opera on the James; and Madame Larina in *Eugene Onegin* with the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra. A frequent principal artist with Boston

Lyric Opera (BLO), Savage was last year's winner of BLO's annual Stephen Shrestinian Award for Excellence. Recently, Savage placed fourth in Shreveport Opera's Singer of the Year competition, was a finalist in the Bel Canto Scholarship annual competition, and was a semi-finalist in the Joy of Singing art song competition. Upcoming engagements include performances with Boston Lyric Opera, Commonwealth Chorale, and Rhode Island Civic Chorale and Orchestra.



**ALEX SIMON** (guard) holds a master's degree in choral conducting from Westminster Choir College of Rider University and a bachelor of music in voice performance from the University of Puget Sound. He has studied choral conducting with Dr. Joe Miller and Dr. Amanda Quist, and voice with Dr. Christopher Arneson. As a member of the

Philadelphia Symphonic Choir and Westminster Symphonic Choir, Simon has performed regularly with The Philadelphia Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic at venues including Carnegie Hall, David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center, and the Kimmel Center in Philadelphia. He also appears frequently with the Westminster Choir and Westminster Kantorei. This is Simon's second season at Spoleto Festival USA; he performed last year with Westminster Choir as part of the chorus for Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*.



**CASSANDRA ZOE VELASCO** (Rodrigo) is a graduate of the Domingo-Colburn-Stein Young Artist Program at LA Opera and is considered one of Mexico's rising stars of opera. She has appeared in *La scala di seta* and *L'Occasione fa il ladro* with ProÓpera; as Angelina in *La Cenerentola* and Isolier in *Le comte Ory* with Opera National de México; as Isabella in *L'italiana in Algeri* with Arpegio Productions; and as Charlotte in *Werther* with Festival Francés. Other highlights include singing the role of Tamiri in the US premiere of Vivaldi's *Farnace* at Spoleto Festival USA and Zweite Dame in *Die Zauberflöte* with Cincinnati Opera. Most recently, Velasco appeared as Dorabella in *Così fan tutte* with Opera San Jose; in the title role in *Maria de Buenos Aires* with Nashville Opera; as Olga in *The Merry Widow* with the Metropolitan Opera; and as Rosina in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* with Lyric Opera of Kansas City. Additional credits with the Metropolitan Opera include productions of *Rusalka*, *Idomeneo*, *Iolanta*, *Madama Butterfly*, and *Simon Boccanegra*.



**AMANDA WOODBURY** (Pia) has been praised for her luxuriant coloratura and a transfixing dramatic presence. Last season she debuted her lively Juliette in the Metropolitan Opera's new production of *Roméo et Juliette*. She then performed the role of Konstanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at Dayton Opera before appearing as Pamina

in Madison Opera's production of *Die Zauberflöte*. She also made her international debut singing Ophelia's mad scene from Thomas's *Hamlet* with Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra. Other appearances with the Metropolitan Opera include Leïla in *Les pêcheurs des perles* (2016) and Tebaldo in *Don Carlo* (2015). Next season, she will reprise the role of Leïla and is debuting Woglinde in *Das Rheingold*. During her time at the Met, she has covered Norina in *Don Pasquale* (2016) and Antonia in *Les contes d'Hoffmann* (2015), and will cover Marie in *La fille du régiment*. In 2014, Woodbury was a Grand Final Winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions.

#### Music Staff



**RENATE ROHLFING** (musical preparation) is active as a vocal accompanist, chamber musician, and orchestral pianist, and won the Sonderpreis Klavier (Special Pianist's Prize) at the 2016 Internationalen Wettbewerb für Liedkunst Stuttgart. Recent seasons saw Rohlfing in concert with various vocalists at The Kennedy Center, the Metropolitan

Museum of Art, and Carnegie Hall. She also balances a full performing schedule with her piano trio Longleash in such venues as New York's Merkin Concert Hall and Trondheim Chamber Music Festival in Norway. Rohlfing has served as a resident pianist at festivals including Cincinnati May Festival and Ravinia Festival. Upcoming highlights include recital tours with baritone Samuel Hasselhorn, a return to music staff at Opera Philadelphia, and concerts and university residencies with Longleash at New York's Scandinavia House, University of Nebraska at Kearney, and Berklee College of Music. Rohlfing is a native of Honolulu, Hawaii, and a graduate of The Juilliard School. [renaterohlfing.com](http://renaterohlfing.com)



**JOE MILLER** (choral preparation) is director of choral activities for Spoleto Festival USA, as well as conductor of two of America's most renowned choral ensembles: the Westminster Choir and the Westminster Symphonic Choir. He is also director of choral activities at Westminster Choir College of Rider University and director of The

Philadelphia Orchestra's Philadelphia Symphonic Choir. As conductor of the Westminster Symphonic Choir, Miller has collaborated with some of the world's leading orchestras and conductors, earning him critical praise. *The New York Times* wrote about Symphonic Choir's performance of Mahler's

Symphony no. 2 with the Cleveland Orchestra, "Joe Miller's Westminster Symphonic Choir was subtle when asked and powerful when turned loose." Miller is also founder and conductor of the Westminster Summer Choral Festival Chamber Choir, a program that offers professional-level choral and vocal artists the opportunity to explore challenging works for one week each summer on the Westminster campus in Princeton.



**DIANE RICHARDSON** (vocal coach) received degrees in music from Oberlin College and Columbia University. She continued her professional training at The Juilliard School, where she studied piano with Adele Marcus and vocal repertoire with Sergius Kagen and Robert Starer. She also trained abroad at the Mozarteum in Salzburg and

L'Università per Stranieri in Perugia, Italy. Skilled in operatic and lieder repertoire, Richardson has toured extensively with leading artists throughout the United States and Europe. For more than a decade, she was an assistant conductor with New York City Opera and subsequently taught at the Yale School of Music. She also served as assistant conductor for the Festival dei Due Mondi in Spoleto, Italy, and has been associated with Spoleto Festival USA since its first season. Richardson holds concurrent faculty appointments at The Juilliard School and Binghamton University.

**WESTMINSTER CHOIR** is composed of students at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey, and has been setting the standard for choral excellence for 98 years. It has been the chorus in residence for Spoleto Festival USA since 1977, performing both in concert and as the opera chorus. It also made its fourth recording with Joe Miller, Frank Martin's *Mass for Double Choir*, which will be released in September. The choir's debut recording with Maestro Miller, *Flower of Beauty*, received four stars from *Choir & Organ* and earned critical praise from *American Record Guide*, which hailed the Westminster Choir as "the gold standard for academic choirs in America." Praised by *The New York Times* for its "full-bodied, incisive singing," the Westminster Choir also forms the core of the Westminster Symphonic Choir, which has performed and recorded with the leading conductors and orchestras of our time.

**THE SPOLETO FESTIVAL USA ORCHESTRA** appears at the Festival in many different configurations, performing in opera, symphonic, choral, chamber, and contemporary music performances. Formed anew each year through nationwide auditions, the orchestra is largely comprised of young professionals or players in advanced degree programs. Alumni of the Spoleto Festival USA Orchestra are on the rosters of leading orchestras throughout the world, including the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, The Cleveland Orchestra, LA Phil, and San Francisco Symphony, among others.