

UPDATE: Five Young Singers Named Winners in 2014 Met National Council Auditions

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Five Young Singers Named Winners in the Final Round of the Nation's Most Prestigious Vocal Competition, the 2014 Met National Council Auditions

Each winner, who performed live on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera for the first time today, receives a \$15,000 cash prize and career-launching exposure

On Tuesday, April 1 at 7 p.m., this year's winners, joined by Deborah Voigt, will perform a concert at The Jerome L. Greene Performance Space at WQXR 105.9

New York, NY (March 30, 2014) – After a months-long series of competitions at the district, regional, and national levels, a panel of judges has named five young singers the winners of the 2014 National Council Auditions, the nation's most prestigious vocal competition. Each winner, who performed two arias onstage at the Metropolitan Opera this afternoon with conductor **Marco Armiliato** and the Met's orchestra, will receive a \$15,000 cash prize and the prestige and exposure that come with winning a competition that has launched the careers of many of opera's biggest stars.

This year's winners are **Julie Adams**, a 26-year-old soprano from Burbank, California; **Patrick Guetti**, a 26-year-old bass from Highland Park, New Jersey; **Ao Li**, a 26-year-old bass-baritone from Dezhou China, currently living in San Francisco, California; **Yi Li**, a 29-year-old tenor from Jinan, China currently living in Silver Spring, Maryland; and **Amanda Woodbury**, a 26-year-old soprano from Crestwood, Kentucky.

Earlier this afternoon, nine finalists performed arias on the Met stage in the final phase of competition. The audience for the Grand Finals Concert included artistic directors of leading opera companies, artist managers, established opera stars, important teachers and coaches, music critics, and many other industry professionals with the potential to play an influential role in the career of a young singer. The Met Auditions, currently in their 61st year, are a major stepping stone to a career as an opera singer. 130 singers on the Met roster this season have participated in the Auditions, which

were crucial in introducing many of today's best-known stars, such as **Stephanie Blythe**, **Renée Fleming**, **Susan Graham**, **Thomas Hampson**, and **Deborah Voigt**. In 2007, the National Council Audition process was captured in an acclaimed documentary, *The Audition*, which was released on DVD and aired on PBS, including a rebroadcast on WNET in December 2013.

The Grand Finals Concert was hosted by Met star **Lawrence Brownlee**, a former National Council Auditions winner who is currently rehearsing for a starring role in the Met's revival of Bellini's *I Puritani*. Soprano **Susanna Phillips**, another former winner who sings starring roles in three operas at the Met this season, performed the aria "Dove sono" from Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* while the judges deliberated.

The Grand Finals Concert was recorded for broadcast at a later date on public radio stations across the United States.

This Tuesday, April 1 at 7 p.m., this year's newly selected winners will perform a concert of varied operatic repertory at The Jerome L. Greene Performance Space at WQXR 105.9, New York City's all-classical station. They will be joined by Met star and former National Council winner, soprano **Deborah Voigt**. The event will be broadcast live on WQXR and there will be a live video webcast on both www.wqxr.org and www.thegreenespace.org; for more information, please visit www.thegreenespace.org.

Nearly 1,500 singers between the ages of 20 and 30 participated in this year's auditions, which are held annually in 40 districts and 13 regions throughout the United States and Canada and are sponsored by the Metropolitan Opera National Council. Given the reach of the auditions, the number of applicants, and the long tradition associated with them, the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions are considered the most prestigious competition in North America for singers seeking to launch an operatic career.

The remaining four finalists—**Nicole Haslett**, a 25-year-old soprano from Mt. Laurel, New Jersey; **Christopher Lowrey**, a 29-year-old countertenor from Johnston, Rhode Island; **Rafael Moras**, a 26-year-old tenor from San Antonio, Texas; and **Rexford Tester**, a 24-year-old tenor from Tazewell, Virginia—each received a cash prize of \$5,000.

The regional winners were chosen from nearly 1,500 singers who participated in auditions held in 40 districts and 13 regions throughout the United States and Canada, sponsored by the Metropolitan Opera National Council and administered by National Council members and hundreds of volunteers from across the country. Given the reach of the auditions, the number of applicants, and the program's long tradition, the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions are considered the most prestigious in North America for singers seeking to launch an operatic career. This year's Grand Finals concert was dedicated to the memory of Howard Hook, the co-founder of the National Council, who died in December 2013.

Winner Biographies

The following are brief biographical notes for the 2014 National Council Auditions winners.

Julie Adams

SOPRANO (Burbank, California)

AGE 26

Julie Adams recently earned her master's degree at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music where she also completed her undergraduate studies. As a student there she sang Blanche in *Dialogues des Carmélites*, Mimi in *La Bohème*, Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte*, and Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi*. Other roles include Lia in Debussy's *L'Enfant Prodigue* in Tel

Aviv with the International Vocal Arts Institute summer program. Last summer she was a vocal fellow at Santa Barbara's Music Academy of the West where she sang Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, and this summer she will participate in the San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program where she will be heard as Blanche in André Previn's *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Western Region.

Patrick Guetti

BASS (Highland Park, New Jersey)

AGE 26

Patrick Guetti received his bachelor's and master's degrees at The Catholic University of America and has appeared at Philadelphia's Academy of Vocal Arts as Tom in *Un Ballo in Maschera*, the title role of *Don Quichotte*, Prince Gremin and Zaretsky in *Eugene Onegin*, Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Arkel in *Pelléas et Mélisande*, and Crespel and Wilhelm in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. He has also sung José Tripaldi in Osvaldo Golijov's *Ainadamar* with Opera Philadelphia, the Commendatore in *Don Giovanni* in Martina Arroyo's "Prelude to Performance" program, Sarastro in *Die Zauberflöte* with the Bel Cantanti Opera Summer Festival, and Sarastro with The Catholic University of America. Last summer, he was an Apprentice Artist with the Santa Fe Opera. Middle Atlantic Region.

Ao Li

BASS-BARITONE (Dezhou, China)

AGE 26

Ao Li studied at Shandong University and was a member of the San Francisco Opera's Adler Fellowship program. His repertoire includes Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte*, Figaro in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Masetto in *Don Giovanni*, Lorenzo in *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, Sciarrone in *Tosca*, Fiorello and Don Basilio in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and Luther in *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*. While a member of San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program he sang Belcore in *L'Elisir d'Amore*. He was a 2013 winner of Plácido Domingo's Operalia World Opera Competition. Rocky Mountain Region.

Yi Li

TENOR (Jinan, China)

AGE 29

Yi Li is a graduate of the Sichuan Conservatory of Music and in the first year of Washington National Opera's Domingo-Cafritz Young Artist Program. He is a graduate of the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and was a member of San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program and Canada's International Vocal Arts Institute. Last summer he represented China in the 2013 Cardiff Singer of the World Competition. His operatic repertoire includes Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte*, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni*, Alfredo in *La Traviata*, Pinkerton in *Madama Butterfly*, Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, and Nemorino in *L'Elisir d'Amore*. He has received prizes from the Licia Albanese-Puccini Foundation and Gerda Lissner Foundation, and was a finalist in Spain's 2009 Montserrat Caballé International Singing Competition. Middle Atlantic Region.

Amanda Woodbury

SOPRANO (Crestwood, Kentucky)

AGE 25

Amanda Woodbury is a member of the Domingo-Colburn-Stein Young Artist Program at the Los Angeles Opera and made her debut there this season as Micaëla in *Carmen*, followed by Papagena in *The Magic Flute*. Upcoming performances include her May Festival debut in Mahler's Symphony No. 8 and Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* this summer with the San Francisco Opera's Merola Opera Program. She has also sung Laretta in *Gianni Schicchi* at the Aspen Music Festival. She completed her master's degree at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and her bachelor's degree at Indiana University where she has sung Donna Anna, Madame Lidoine in *Dialogues des Carmélites*, the Countess in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and the First Lady in *Die Zauberflöte*. Western Region.

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