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SCHOOL OF MUSIC present

# THE TURN OFTHE SCREV

Composed by BENJAMIN BRITTEN

Libretto by

MYFANWY PIPER after a story by HENRY JAMES

Artistic Director and Conductor

Stage Director

Dr. JONATHAN SHAMES

Dr. NICOLE KENLEY-MILLER

Vocal Coaches Dr. HYUN KIM TYLER TUCKER

Scenic Designer RUBY RAVSTEN

Costume Designer SAMANTHA VERBSKY Lighting Designer **CONNER LIN** 

Stage Manager CHRISTOPHER SADLER PAETON WALKER

Associate Stage Manager Associate Lighting Designer LAUREN FOSTER

Production Dramatura CAYLOR K. PETERSON Intimacy/Violence Designer Dr. KATE BUSSELLE

This production contains adult themes and suggestions of sexual violence.

8 P.M. OCTOBER 16, 17, 18, 2025 and 3 P.M. OCTOBER 19, 2025

REYNOLDS PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

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#### Dear Patrons,

Welcome to the University of Oklahoma Weitzenhoffer Family College of Fine Arts and University Theater's production of *The Turn of the Screw* by Benjamin Britten. This haunting chamber opera, based on Henry James's classic novella, skillfully blends psychological drama with musical innovation. Britten scored the piece for just 13 instruments and employed a recurring "theme and variations" structure—each scene begins with a variation on a single, chilling motif, building a sense of increasing tension and unease. The opera's small ensemble and imaginative orchestration allow every voice and instrument to shine while drawing the audience deep into its mysterious world.

Thank you to Jonathan Shames, OU Opera Artistic Director; Nicole Kenley-Miller, OU Opera Stage Director; Hyun Kim and Tyler Tucker, vocal coaches; and the many School of Music faculty who prepared the singers for their roles. The School of Music also appreciates the professors who have taught and mentored the students performing with the OU Symphony Orchestra and the outstanding University Theatre faculty, staff, and student production team, whose creativity and dedication have made this immersive operatic experience possible.

Thank you for joining us and supporting the arts at the University of Oklahoma. Enjoy this evening of powerful opera, music, and theatre.

Warm regards,

Jonathan Nichol Director, School of Music University of Oklahoma

Jonathan Niehol

Dear University Theatre Patrons,

It's our pleasure to welcome you to the second production of the 2025-2026 University Theatre Season - a beautifully realized, somewhat chilling, production of Britten's *The Turn of the Screw*.

Opera has sometimes been called by critics and historians the most complete of the theatrical arts and, whether one specifically agrees with this description or not, there is no denying the considerable creative forces that come together in the production of fully staged operas such as this one.

The combination of Britten's compelling score, our talented cast onstage, chamber musicians playing in the orchestra pit, stage and artistic directors, designers of scenery, costumes, and lighting, and stage management plus crews result in a collaboration that is remarkable, especially when one remembers that the majority of them are students! But that is what we are about - providing productions that at once immerse audiences in the power of theatre and music while serving as an experiential, theatrical laboratory for the professional practitioners and performers of tomorrow.

Enjoy this production as our second century as a college dawns - we couldn't be happier to share it with you!

Warmest regards,

Professor Mary Margaret Holt

Mary Marguet Holt

Dean, Weitzenhoffer Family College of Fine Arts Nichols' Chair. Regents' Professor. and

Presidential Professor University of Oklahoma



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- Membership as of September 26, 2025 -

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Questions? Contact Kimberley Worrell, Executive Director of Advancement, OU Foundation at kworrell@ou.edu or call (405) 325-7376.

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# The Turn of the Screw synopsis

#### Act I

A wealthy uncle has engaged a governess to care for two children under his guardianship who are living at his country estate. There is only one caveat—she must never contact him for any reason. The Governess agrees and travels anxiously by carriage to the Bly Estate. The children, Miles and Flora, pepper their housekeeper Mrs. Grose with questions as they wait for the arrival of the new governess. The Governess arrives, notices the grandeur of the house, and the children beg her to come inside so they can show her the house.

A week later the Governess receives a letter about Miles, who is on holiday from his school. It informs her that he has been dismissed and can never go back because of an "injury" he committed to one of his friends. She decides not to tell the uncle.

The Governess strolls the grounds on a summer evening in disbelief over her new life at Bly. She tries to dismiss the letter from her mind. Suddenly a man appears in the window of the tower. At first she thinks it is the uncle, but realizes it is not, and her imagination runs wild trying to figure out who the man is.

A few days later, the Governess watches the children playing, and again sees the strange man staring at her through the window. Mrs. Grose sees her fright, so the Governess describes the man she has seen, and Mrs. Grose recognizes the description as Peter Quint, the former valet, who she explains was "free" with the children and the former governess, Miss Jessel. Mrs.Grose feared Quint, so she never told the uncle, and then Miss Jessel left and died, and Quint died shortly after when he fell on an icy road. The Governess is convinced that the spirit of Quint has come back to look for Miles, and she feels emboldened to protect the children.

The next morning as Miles and Flora practice their Latin, Miles begins to sing a strange song that the Governess has never heard and wonders where he learned it. Later that day, Flora and the Governess stroll by the lake. As Flora sings her dolly to sleep, the Governess sees a figure of a woman across the way and thinks it to be Miss Jessel, but then she disappears. The Governess sends Flora to go find Miles. Alone, she wonders why Flora didn't say anything. She concludes that the children are lost.

A few nights later, Miles is seen in the garden in the middle of the night. Peter Quint appears to call out to Miles from the tower. Quint gives a litany of strange images about who he is, calling Miles to follow in his footsteps. Miss Jessel appears to call to Flora to follow in her footsteps and join her in death. The Governess and Mrs. Grose come out of the house looking for the children. The ghosts seem to disappear, and the women take the children back into the house.

#### Act II

Miss Jessel appears to question Quint for calling her back from the dead and accuses him of abandoning her when she died. They commiserate about taking over the souls of the children. The ghosts seem to disappear and the Governess is seen outside the house tormented by the evil she senses.

Weeks later, the children enter the churchyard singing. The women follow behind, as Mrs. Grose tries to convince the Governess that the children are fine. The Governess insists that they are in danger—that they are "with the others." Mrs. Grose urges the Governess to write to the uncle, but she refuses. Miles asks the Governess when he is going back to school. He reveals she knows that she thinks about "the others." The Governess takes this as a dare from Miles for her to act on her suspicions.

She runs back to the house and finds Miss Jessel sitting at her desk in the school room. The Governess and the ghost verbally spar over who the children belong to. Miss Jessel disappears. The Governess finally writes to the uncle.

Miles sings the strange, haunting song in his room. The Governess comes into his room to tell him that she has written to his uncle. She asks him to tell her what happened before she came to Bly. Peter Quint is heard calling out to Miles. The candle suddenly goes out. Miles claims to have blown it out.

Quint sees the Governess' letter on the school room desk. Miles is seen creeping into the school room to take the letter as Quint appears to urge him on.

The next morning as Miles practices piano, the Governess reveals to Mrs. Grose that she has written to the uncle. While the Governess is distracted by Miles, Flora plays Cat's Cradle with Mrs. Grose, lulls her to sleep, and escapes to the lake. The Governess and Mrs. Grose find Flora by the side of the lake. The Governess sees Miss Jessel, but Mrs. Grose and Flora claim they do not. Miss Jessel appears to influence Flora against the Governess, as the Governess laments that she is losing Flora.

The following morning, Mrs. Grose is preparing to take Flora away after a night of watching over Flora's fevered confessions about the past. The Governess is relieved that Mrs. Grose finally believes her. Mrs. Grose reveals to her that her letter to the uncle was never sent and that Miles must have taken it. Mrs. Grose leaves with Flora.

The Governess presses Miles to confess if he stole her letter, as Quint's voice is heard. Miles admits that he took the letter. The Governess presses Miles to say the name of the presence that haunts him. Miles finally says "Peter Quint" and runs into her arms. The Governess promises that they will be saved now because they have destroyed him, but the boy dies in her arms as she sings the strange, haunted song that he used to sing.

#### A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

#### Nicole Kenley-Miller

When Henry James wrote the only ghost story of his career in 1898, he might not have expected that a British composer and Welsh librettist would adapt his novella into an opera 50 years later. However, the opera-loving James probably would have been enthusiastic about it, as scenes set at the opera house figured prominently in his novels. Following one of his own unsuccessful forays into writing for the stage and in need of cash, he took the kernel of a story related to him by the Archbishop of Canterbury and turned it into a serial ghost story for *Collier's Magazine*.

The public was riveted by the haunting story about a newly-appointed governess who discovers that unspeakable horrors that have been visited on her young charges by their former caretakers now dead. James himself admitted that after writing portions of the text, he found it difficult to go to sleep. Over time, the work has been praised as one of the most influential ghost stories of all time. Even the highly critical Virginia Woolf applauded *The Turn of the Screw* for "the force with which it makes us realize the power that our minds possess for such excursions into the darkness."

The most common debate sparked by the novella centers around the ambiguity over whether the protagonist, The Governess, is imagining the ghosts of the former valet and governess or if they are really there. In the novel setting, it is easier to maintain that ambiguity, because the action exists only in the reader's mind. But as soon as we move the story to the stage, we are confronted with the actual body of an actor portraying the ghosts. The challenge that our design and directing team faced was how to preserve that ambiguity on the stage. Through the costumes and lighting, every scene has been designed to obscure reality, so that it is left up to the viewer to decide for themselves—is the Governess really seeing the ghosts, or is she projecting her own narrative onto the children?

The preparation of this story has been challenging for everyone involved. At the core of the story is child abuse, and unlike the uncertainty of the ghosts' existence, that element is not called into question. We have attempted to handle this process for our students with the utmost care, understanding that portraying such a horrific story can take its toll. We were very fortunate to work with Anna Adkins, the Operations Director for the Mary Abbott Children's House here in Norman, who visited campus and helped the cast understand the behaviors that result from abuse in child survivors, in abusers, and in those who enable the abuse. Even today, one in four young girls are survivors of abuse, and one in nine young boys. In response to the story you see tonight, we invite and encourage you to support the important work of The Abbott House. You will find information here in the program to assist them financially or by volunteering.

Child abuse has been with us throughout history, and it continues because people who have a voice don't stand up to powers and systems that keep it in the shadows. Works like *The Turn of the Screw*, though it is disguised as a compelling ghost story, remind us that the human story, whether triumphant or depraved, is always with us and that, as a society, we can choose to make a change. We can demand that the truth to be told and believed. We can advocate for those who don't have a voice.

Nicole Kenley-Miller

#### **ABOUT US**

Abbott House Child Advocacy
Center is a safe place for children
to share their experiences
regarding sexual abuse, physical
abuse, and neglect, as well as being
a witness to a crime or in a drug
endangered situation.





Although a stand alone non-profit organization, Abbott House works closely with law enforcement, the district attorney's office, child protective services, mental health care professionals, and medical professionals to provide critical resources and support as the case moves through the justice system.

Our holistic approach supports the whole child - from the investigative process and necessary medical care, to assistance in finding counseling and family resources, and on toward hope and healing from trauma.

#### SYSTEM OF RESPONSE

Before Child Advocacy Centers like Abbott House were established, child victims were subjected to a stressful, scary, and difficult journey through the criminal and civil justice systems, oftentimes having to share their traumatic experiences of abuse and neglect to several different adult strangers. In many cases, this system of response added to the trauma the victim experienced.

Abbott House Child Advocacy Center provides a trauma-informed, child-friendly environment where multidisciplinary team (MDT) members work together to reduce re-victimization of the child, remove barriers to investigation and treatment, and set the child victims and their non-offending caregivers on the path to healing through a united approach to these complex and severe cases.

# A NOTE FROM THE PRODUCTION DRAMATURG Caylor K. Peterson

#### The Ghosts That Linger

The world is filled with ghosts. Not the kind you see in the newest popular horror film. Not those that haunt the merchandise counters of stores come October. Not even those told in whispers over a campfire. Rather, these ghosts are the specters of atrocity that linger in our world today.

In stories, the supernatural helps us explore uncomfortable aspects of reality. An author may examine pressing concerns of their time through images of crumbling mansions, zombified corpses, and blood-borne curses. In some ways, an audience can process real-life implications better when presented in esoteric and otherworldly forms, like an invisible spirit standing in for something people have trouble seeing. The challenge then becomes not losing the message in the fiction.

To decipher the horrors of *The Turn of the Screw*, let us cast our gaze to Britain during the mid 1800s. Industrialization was barreling along newly laid tracks of progress, uncaring in who got crushed under its wheels. Long held standards of social hierarchy and immobility find the ground shaking as it roars past. It is during this time that society began to examine the place of a child. A child in this time did not have the protections that modern society has adopted. Often, they were

considered the property of parents, rather than an individual with wants and needs. For the working class, this meant children were an economic asset able to contribute income and help the family survive. The industrial revolution demanded mass cheap labor, and children as young as five would work long hours in harsh conditions. For the rising middle class, children represented an opportunity to bolster the family's social standing. Through strict discipline and instruction, a properly educated child could marry well and ward against a family's potential fall in society.

This stands in stark contrast to how we treat children today. In 1989, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) declared children were in fact individuals with rights, rather than property, assets, or simply "receivers of care." Today, we look at child labor with horror and disgust: 16-hour days in a factory filled with coal dust, phosphorus, and disease! Sounds like a disturbing work of fiction. Science has shown us the importance that education, play, and basic health needs have in child development. Society at large wishes to protect and nurture new generations in ways that did not exist before. We wish to lay to rest the harsh injustices and atrocities that threaten youth.

There is still work to be done. The abuse children face today may not look exactly the same as it once did. There are still parts of the world where survival forces a child to work long grueling hours. Neighbors turn a blind eye to abuse next door each day. Policies are created that fail at the very protections they try to implement. People consumed by anger and power are lashing out at those they deem undeserving. As we look back at stories of old, we must consider the victories we have made and the challenges we must overcome. While many atrocities of the past are dead today, the ghost of mistreatment still lingers in modern forms.

#### Set on an English country estate in 1879

PROLOGUE/PETER QUINT | Ilhee Lee (Oct. 16 & 18)

Nicholas Hausman (Oct. 17 & 19)

THE GOVERNESS Rachel Gilliam (Oct. 16 & 18)

Gabrielle Salomon (Oct. 17 & 19)

MILES Carlie Pool (Oct. 16 & 18)

Madigan Glenn (Oct. 17 & 19)

FLORA Katelyn Cruse (Oct. 16 & 18)

Julia Hillis (Oct. 17 & 19)

MRS. GROSE Gabriela Gonzalez (Oct. 16 & 18)

Kona Davenport (Oct. 17 & 19)

MISS JESSEL Katherine Kimbrough (Oct. 16 & 18)

Elena McKenna (Oct. 17 & 19)

# **FUN FACT**

The role of Miles was originally performed by child singer/actor David Hemmings, who later starred in the films *Camelot*, *Barbarella, The Gladiato*r, and *Gangs of New York*, and directed episodes of the 1980s American TV shows *Magnum, P.l.*, and *The A-Team*. Hemmings was singing the haunting "Malo" tune in a performance of *The Turn of the Screw* when his voice change happened mid-phrase, thus ending his career as a child singer.

#### **ORCHESTRA**

Jonathan Shames, conductor Kaleb Benda, assistant conductor Yuxiao Kang and Zhengying Zhong, rehearsal pianists

> VIOLIN 1 Juan Moreno

> VIOLIN 2 Gustavo Reis

VIOLA Feiyang Luo

CELLO Rafael Lima da Silva

> BASS Antonio Sarzi

FLUTE Landry O'Neal OBOE

Cesar Blas

CLARINET

Caden Chase

BASSOON Bailey Holman

HORN Isabella Garcia

HARP Caroline Robinson

PIANO Zhengying Zhong

TIMPANI & PERCUSSION
Dill Pavelschak

#### **ORCHESTRA STAFF**

Kaleb Benda, graduate assistant Mahsan Jobeiri, graduate assistant Hyery Huang, graduate assistant Sophia Murray, undergraduate assistant

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# The Turn of the Screw MEET THE CAST



KATELYN CRUSE



KONA DAVENPORT



**RACHEL GILLIAM** 



MADIGAN GLENN



**GABRIELA GONZALEZ** 



NICHOLAS HAUSMAN



JULIA HILLIS



KATHERINE KIMBROUGH



ILHEE LEE



ELENA McKENNA



CARLIE POOL



**GABRIELLE SALOMON** 

#### WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

KATELYN CRUSE (Flora) is a vocal music education senior from McKinney, TX. Credits: OU University Theatre: Chorus, *The Merry Widow*. OU Opera Scenes: Cunégonde, *Candide*; Bridesmaid Chorus, *Freischutz*.

**KONA DAVENPORT** (Mrs. Grose) is a vocal performance junior from Mesquite, TX. Credits: OU University Theatre: Leocadia Begbick, *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*.

RACHEL GILLIAM (The Governess) is a MM Opera Performance candidate from Broken Arrow, OK. Credits: OU University of Oklahoma: Euridice, Orfeo ed Euridice; Chorus, Susannah; Valencienne, The Merry Widow, Rita, Deux Hommes et une Femme, Galatea, Acis and Galatea. Painted Sky Opera: Lucia(Cover), Chorus, Fantasma (non singing role), Lucia di Lammermoor. Garvin County Choral Society: Queen of the Night, The Magic Flute.

**MADIGAN GLENN** (Miles) is vocal performance junior from Mustang, OK. Credits: This is her OU University Theatre debut. Cimarron Opera: Chorus, *Wards*; *The Pirates of Penzance*.

GABRIELA GONZALEZ (Mrs. Grose) is a MM opera performance candidate from Friendswood, TX. Credits: OU University Theatre: Leocadia Begbick, *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny.* 

NICHOLAS HAUSMAN (Prologue/Peter Quint) is a MM voice performance candidate, with an emphasis in opera performance, from Orefield, PA. Credits: Nick will be making his University Theatre debut as Peter Quint in *Turn of the Screw*. He has previously appeared with Opera Lucca as Gherardo in *Gianni Schicchi* as well as with the Crane Opera Ensemble in productions of *Dido and Aeneas*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Zazà*, *The Enchanted Pig* and the premiere workshops of the Domenic J. Pellicciotti Opera Competition in *Strangers* and *Computing Venus*.

 $\label{eq:JULIA HILLIS} \textit{(Flora)} is a vocal performance sophomore from Moore, OK. Credits: This is her OU University Theatre debut.$ 

**KATHERINE KIMBROUGH** (Miss Jessel) is a first year MM candidate in Opera Performance from Columbia, SC. Credits: Opera at USC Arminy: *Carousel*; Donna Anna, *Opera Remasked*. This is her first role with OU Opera and OU University Theatre.

ILHEE LEE (Prologue/Peter Quint) is a DMA vocal performance candidate from Seoul, South Korea. Credits: Ilhee has performed with The Santa Fe Opera, Central City Opera, and this fall appears as Goro in *Madama Butterfly* with Opera San José.

ELENA McKENNA (Miss Jessel) is a second-year MM vocal performance candidate, with opera performance concentration, from Arlington, TX. Credits: OU University Theatre: Rita, Rita; Valencienne, Die lüstige Witwe; Euridice, Orfeo ed Euridice; Mrs. Hayes, Susannah. American Institute of Musical Studies: Soloist, Die Welt von Robert Stolz. Mediterranean Opera Studio & Festival: Lucia, Lucia di Lammermoor.

**CARLIE POOL** (Miles) is a vocal performance senior from Bartlesville, OK. Credits: OU University Theatre: Concepcion, *L'heure Espagnole*; Amore, *Orfeo Ed Euridice*. Spotlight on Opera with Tulsa Opera: The Shepherd Boy, *Tosca*; The Little Sister, *The Hiding Tree*; Oklahoma City University: Amy (cover), *Little Women*.

GABRIELLE SALOMON (The Governess) is a first-year MM candidate in opera from Lemont, IL. Credits: Arizona Opera: Serpetta, The Secret Gardener; Gretel, Hansel and Gretel Vs. The Witch; Chorus, La bohème; Chorus, Aida. ASU MTO: Mabel, Pirates of Penzance; Barbarina, Le nozze di Figaro.

KASEY ALLEE-FOREMAN (Associate Producer) has served as Associate Producer/ Production Manager for over 100 productions in the Weitzenhoffer Family College of Fine Arts at the University of Oklahoma. She is currently the President of USITT. A short listing of her professional theatre credits include: SphinxCON, a conference promoting Diversity in the Arts; Canterbury Choral: Bernstein's Mass; Houston Grand Opera: Renée Fleming's premiere La Traviata (world premiere); Stages Repertory Theatre (Houston); Houston Shakespeare Festival; Shakespeare Festival at Tulane (New Orleans); Theatre West (Los Angeles). Professional film credits include: Mystery, Alaska, Lost and Found; Austin Powers: The Spy who Shagged Me. She is proud to have served on the USITT Board of Directors as the VP for Conferences, the VP for Education and Training and as a Director. She has served USITT on the Conference Committee chair and member, IDEAS Committee chair and member, is the co-founder of the Gateway Program, and has been the Co-chair of the Women in Theatre Network. Kasey received her MFA in Costume Design and Technology and Lighting Design and Technology from the University of New Orleans and her BA in Theatre Arts from Furman University.

DR. KATE BUSSELLE (Intimacy/Violence Designer) is the founder of Heartland Intimacy Design & Training, an intimacy training company which offers academic, accessible, and affordable intimacy training entirely online. She has taught several workshops on staging intimacy, as well as designing intimacy for several productions. She is also one of the original co-founders of Theatrical Intimacy Education. She has written extensively on the topic of theatrical intimacy and de-roling and debriefing practices; her publications can be found in journals such as Theatre Topics, The Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism, Theatre/Practice, and Howlround Theatre Commons.

Kate is Assistant Professor of Movement, Intimacy, and Violence at the University of Oklahoma, where she teaches foundational and advanced movement courses, stage combat, and theatrical intimacy best practices for performers and stage managers. She also serves as the resident violence and intimacy designer for all School of Drama productions, and provides mentorship opportunities to emerging intimacy professionals within the program. Kate is an Advanced Actor Combatant with the Society of American Fight Directors (SAFD) with certifications in unarmed combat, rapier & dagger, quarterstaff, single sword, broadsword, broadsword and shield, knife, smallsword, and theatrical firearms safety.

In addition to her violence and intimacy work, Kate is a Level 1 Margolis Method Certified Educator and is currently working towards her Level 2 Certification. Margolis Method, along with Viewpoints and Laban Effort Shapes, serve as the foundation of her movement-based acting classes.

Kate's national theatre involvement includes serving as the Vice-President for the Women and Theatre Program, which aims to foster both research and production of feminist, anti-racist, and queer theatre activities and praxis. She is also a member of the Association of Movement Theatre Educators (ATME), which also falls under the umbrella of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE).

Kate completed her Ph.D. in Theatre and Performance Studies at the University of Missouri in 2019, making her the first intimacy professional with a doctorate. Kate is also a director, primarily directing all femme productions that challenge or subvert gender performance and violence, play reading festivals, and regional semi-professional theatre.

LAUREN FOSTER (Associate Lighting Designer) is a lighting design junior from Moore, OK. Credits: OU University Theatre: Production Electrician, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, CDO '24, *Life is a Dream*; Programmer, OFB '24; Lighting Designer, YCS '25, YCS '24. OU Lab Theatre: Lighting Designer, *Brilliant Traces & The Zoo Story*; Production Electrician/ Programmer, *Go Please Go*. Co.llective Arts Production: Lighting Designer, Groenland, *Where The Rabbits Roam No More*.

MARY MARGARET HOLT (Producer) began her early ballet training in Austin, Texas at Austin Civic Ballet, receiving a Ford Foundation scholarship for study with the San Francisco Ballet at the age of 15. Subsequently, she received a Ford Foundation scholarship for study at the School of American Ballet, also appearing with the New York City Ballet. Holt accepted a soloist contract the New York City Ballet upon completing her BFA in Ballet Performance. While a member of Houston Ballet, by choreographers including Stevenson, Van Manen, Van Danzig, Petipa, Balanchine, Taras, Dolin, Boris, Clouser, Franklin, Ivanov, de Mille, and O'Donnell. She also performed principal roles in Terekhov's *The Firebird, The Snow Maiden*, and *Don Quixote*. She has performed as a guest artist, teacher, and choreographer with ballet and opera companies across the United States.

Holt joined the dance faculty of the University of Oklahoma School of Dance as an assistant professor, following Miguel Terekhov as chair in 1991, and an appointment as director in 1998. As director of Oklahoma Festival Ballet, Holt has choreographed over forty ballets and operas and led Oklahoma Festival Ballet on tours to France (six), the Internationale Haydntage in Austria (two), Mexico (three), Taiwan, China, and Ecuador. Holt choreography includes the music of Franck, Haydn, The Beatles, Porter, Weill, Mozart, Ginastera, Ikard, Holley, Satie, Bartok, Orff, and Debussy and her ballets have been seen across the U.S. as well as in South America, the United Kingdom, and Europe. Under Holt's leadership, Oklahoma Festival Ballet performed works from the national repertoire by Joffrey and Balanchine as well as de Mille's Rodeo. Her students have performed with Miami City Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Ballet Arizona, Ballet Austin, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Orlando Ballet, Oklahoma City Ballet, and Tulsa Ballet, and as finalists and semifinalists in the International Ballet Competition. At the University of Oklahoma, Holt taught every course in the ballet curriculum and her continuing studies in ballet pedagogy include studying Bournonville Technique with Tage Wendt; and Vaganove Technique at the Bolshoi Academy at Vail; and in St. Petersburg and Minsk, Russia.

Holt was an honoree at the second national RDA Festival in Pittsburgh in 2007, and she received the CORPS de Ballet International Lifetime Achievement Award in 2020. She has served on the Dance Panel of the National Endowment for the Arts and been a panelist on Women in the Academy at Oxford. She is the recipient of the Governor's Arts Award, the Presidential Professorship, and the Regents' Professorship at OU where she also holds the John and Mary Nichols' Chair in Dance.

DR. HYUN KIM (Vocal Coach) a versatile artist, maintains a diverse career encompassing various roles such as pianist, vocal coach, conductor, and educator. Before joining the University of Oklahoma as an assistant professor of vocal coaching, she held positions as an assistant teaching professor at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) and visiting professor in Collaborative Piano, as well as Music Director/Conductor of the University Opera Theater at the University of Arkansas. Internationally recognized, she has been appointed as a visiting professor at institutions such as the Federal University of Santa Catarina and the University of Campinas in Brazil. Actively engaged in international scholarly organizations, Kim also serves on the board of the Sintonize Produtora Cultural-International Music Festival in Brazil. Her performances and interviews have been broadcast on KBS, KVOD-FM Colorado Public Radio, Rocky Mountain PBS, and NGT Sao Paulo.

After her early education in Korea, Kim earned degrees from the College-Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati, the University of Colorado Boulder, and the Conservatoire National Superieur de Musique de Paris. Currently, Kim is involved in an installation exhibition project in partnership with the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, sponsored by the Walton Family Foundation.

DR. NICOLE KENLEY-MILLER (Stage Director) is known for her colorful and embodied productions of opera and music theatre, and has been recognized by Opera Magazine for her "spirited handling of young, dramatically at-ease singers" and by Houston Press for her direction's "finesse and imagination." Nicole's work has been featured off-Broadway at Nancy Manocherian's the cell and on The Kennedy Center's Arts Across America Series. She is very much at home both on and off the stage as a director, producer, singer, and creative artist. As Co-Founder and Artistic Director of Sugar Land Opera, she helped establish the former Imperial Theatre, the first professional theatre space in Fort Bend County.

Nicole's credits as stage director include *The Magic Flute* with Painted Sky Opera (Oklahoma City); *La Bohème* with Opera in the Heights (Houston); *Le gare generose* and *Il filosofo di campagna* with the Fondazione Pergolesi Spontini (Italy); *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny, Acis and Galatea, L'heure espagnole, Rita, The Merry Widow* and *Orfeo ed Euridice* for The University of Oklahoma; *The Pirates of Penzance* for the Houston Gilbert & Sullivan Society; *Sondheim on Sondheim, The Bartered Bride, Albert Herring, La rondine, The Secret Marriage,* and *Gianni Schicchi* for the Moores Opera Center at The University of Houston; *Amahl and the Night Visitors* for Opera in the Heights; *Hansel and Gretel, The Impresario,* and the US premiere of Howard Blake's *The Station* for Sugar Land Opera; and the Texas premiere of Alice Parker's choral opera, *Family Reunion*, for Houston Baptist University.

Nicole's productions have garnered multiple awards through the years from the National Opera Association, The American Prize, and various film competitions. Her current research projects in opera includes the restoration of an opera by 18th-century composer Maria Teresa Agnesi, as well as the development of her own libretto adaptation of a Virginia Woolf novel.

CONNER LIN (Lighting Designer) is a lighting and sound design junior from Allen, TX. Credits: OU University Theatre: Lighting Designer, Comeback, J.D.O.T.G.O.M.E. (CDO '25); Assistant Lighting Designer, The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee; Lighting Designer, Galatians 5.17 (YCS '25); Sound Designer, As You Like It; Assistant Lighting Designer, Rita & L'heure Espagnole; Assistant Sound Designer, Crazy For You; Lighting Designer, Sensory Memories (YCS '24). Sooner Theatre Armstrong Studio Series: Associate Lighting Designer, Hadestown, A Christmas Story, Fiddler on the Roof. OU Helmerich School of Drama: Lighting Designer, Inside Siberia.

RUBY RAVSTEN (Scenic Designer) is a lighting and scenic design junior from Keller, TX. Credits: OU University Theatre: *Mytosis* (YCS '25); Lighting Designer, *As You Like It*; Lighting Designer, *Life is a Dream*; Assistant Lighting Designer, *Weaponized Fragility* (YCS '24). OU Helmerich School of Drama: Lighting Designer, *The Maids*; Lighting & Scenic Designer, *Proof.* Houston Shakespeare Festival: Lighting Designer, *Romeo and Juliet*; Assistant Scenic Designer, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Shepherd School of Music: Associate Scenic Designer, *The Ghosts of Versailles*. Off-Broadway: Assistant to the Lighting Designer, *Saturday Church*.

CHRISTOPHER SADLER (Stage Manager) is a Professor in the Helmerich School of Drama, leading the stage management emphasis since 2005. He holds an MFA in Stage Management from UCSD, and a BFA in Theatre Arts Management from Ithaca College. For OU University and Lab Theatre: Stage Manager for CDO '25, OFB '24; OFB '23; OFB '22; CDO '22; CDO '21; OFB '21; CDO '19; OFB '17; CDO '14; OFB '13; CDO '12; A Chorus Line; CDO '09; OFB '09; Lend Me a Tenor; Great Expectations; and Pal Joey. Assistant Stage Manager on The Nutcracker (2023 & 2015); OFB '18; OFB '16; Julius Caesar; OFB '12;The Two Gentlemen of Verona; and 9 Parts of Desire. OU School of Dance: Stage Manager, Haydn's Creation and The Seasons. Chris is a contributor and co-editor of Off Headset: Essays on Stage Management Life, Work, and Career, released January 2022 by Focal Press & USITT. He is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association, USITT, and the Stage Managers' Association.

DR. JONATHAN SHAMES (Artistic Director/Conductor) leads a wide-ranging musical career as pianist, conductor and artist-teacher. Since 2004 the Director of Orchestral Studies and Artistic Director of OU Opera at the University of Oklahoma, Mr. Shames has introduced Oklahoma audiences to a wide range of contemporary works, including Lori Laitman's Scarlet Letter, Luigi Nono's Il Canto sospeso, and Louis Andriessen's De Tijd. He has premiered orchestral and piano works of Joël-François Durand, Betsy Jolas, Stephen Hartke and Daniel Asia; his recordings of Asia's Scherzo-Sonata for Piano, dedicated to him, and of Anthony Brandt's opera The Birth of Something, which he recorded with Houston's Musiqa Ensemble, are available on Amazon Music. Mr. Shames has collaborated frequently with the Chickasaw composer Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate, and shares the 2005 Grammy Award for Best Contemporary Recording for his work on William Bolcom's Songs of Innocence and Experience.

Mr. Shames' work as a teacher occupies an important place in his musical life. He taught piano at Oberlin, Rutgers, and Cornell and conducting at the University of Michigan and (currently) University of Oklahoma, led the Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestras and Marrowstone Music Festival for eight years, and continues to work as often as possible with youth orchestras, pianists and conductors.

As a pianist, Mr. Shames has performed and recorded with orchestras throughout the U.S. and Europe, including the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, Cologne Radio Symphony, Belgrade Radio and Television Symphony, Boston Pops, and Seattle, Indianapolis and Milwaukee Symphony Orchestras. Music directorships have included the Olympia and Wyoming Symphonies. Mr. Shames was a laureate of several competitions including the 1982 Moscow International Tchaikovsky Competition; interviews and performances of his are featured in the widely-viewed documentary of the event.

Upcoming projects for Mr. Shames include piano recitals and concerto appearances in California, Kansas and Michigan in February and March of 2026; and recordings of Beethoven and Schubert piano works in May, 2026.

TYLER TUCKER (Vocal Coach) is a pianist, vocal coach, and conductor known for his versatility and passion for opera and art song. He currently serves on the faculty at the University of Oklahoma, where he is a vocal coach and teaches courses in lyric diction and art song literature. Additionally, he is on the music staff at Tri-Cities Opera where he coaches the members of the resident artist program, conducts, and serves as the chorus master.

Tyler also joins Central City Opera in the summers as a member of their music staff, providing coaching for the apprentice and studio artist programs. He has been on the music staff at opera companies across North America including Opera Colorado, Opéra Louisiane, and Opera in the Ozarks. He has also worked as a staff pianist and coach at University of Houston and summer programs like Spotlight on Opera and Accademia Vocale Lorenzo Malfatti in Italy.

He holds a Master of Music in Opera Coaching and Collaborative Piano from Florida State University, as well as a Master and Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance from University of Houston and Florida State University, respectively. Tyler continues to balance teaching, coaching, conducting, and performing, with a deep commitment to supporting the next generation of singers.

SAMANTHA VERBSKY (Costume Designer) is a costume design senior from Frisco, TX. Credits: OU University Theatre: Costume Designer, Contemporary Dance Oklahoma 2025; Assistant Costume Designer, As You Like It; Wardrobe Crew Head, Rita/L'heure Espagnole; Wardrobe Crew Head, Life Is a Dream; Costume Crew, Marie Antoinette; Light Board Operator, The Merry Widow; Run Crew, Everybody

**PAETON WALKER** (Associate Stage Manager) is a stage management sophomore from Mustang, OK. Credits: OU University Theatre: Associate Stage Manager, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*.

#### PRODUCTION STAFF

Producer Mary Margaret Holt

Associate Producer Kasey Allee-Foreman

Assistant Costume Designer Sydney Tuffnell Faculty Advisor to the Scenic Designer Jon Young

Faculty Advisor to the Costume Designer Lloyd Cracknell Faculty Advisor to the Lighting Designer Renée Brode

Faculty Advisor to Stage Management Christopher Sadler

Design and Production Area Coordinator Renée Brode Technical Director Akari Harada

Production Carpenter E. Pope Scenic Charge Artist Sydney Hagen

Scenic Undergraduate Assistants Sydney Brooks, Jake Cook, Elizabeth Elliott

Braxton Ellsworth, Cadence Gates Gillian Kelley, Michael Miller, Oscar Miller

Abigail Pirtle, Ruby Ravsten, Jalisa Reed

Goldie Snow, JJ Toly

Properties Director Margot Glaser
Properties Lead Michael Miller
Run Crew Head Ben Nemmers

Run Crew Dean Baumgartner, Dax Betzen

Larson Frazier, Celia Jilge, Mabel McLean

Fly Rail Operator Ben Nemmers Electrics Supervisor Eric Stehl

Lighting Undergraduate Assistants Kai Allen, Ava Booker, Ericka Dodson

Micah Dooley, Lauren Foster, Mathieu Gay Madison Heckelsberg, Noah Jittawait, Felix Joshi Lucas Knapp, Madeline Lewis, Conner Lin

Lucas Knapp, Madeline Lewis, Conner Lin Lucas Mann, Emily Morris, Carleigh Nickel Malerie Pollock, Ruby Ravsten, Sophia Smith

Production Electrician Lucas Knapp Light Board Programmer Sophia Smith Light Board Operator Kai Allen

Follow Spot Operators Alex Fish, William Thompson Audio Supervisor Kenneth Ray Woods

Audio Undergraduate Assistant Ava Booker, Madison Hecklesberg

Felix Joshi, Conner Lin

Sound Board Operator Bree Burchett
Costume Studio Supervisor Christina Dran

Costume Studio Supervisor Christina Draper
Cutter/Draper Ananda Keator
Junior Draper Chloe Mullin

Junior Draper Chloe Mullin Lead Stitcher Amy Kercher

Stitcher Stephanie Cirar, Landre Sanders

Costume Undergraduate Assistants Bree Burchett, Westbrook Hallum, Paige Kasulis,

Natalie Lane, Ian Lee, Emily Matthews Ben Nemmers, Joy Omeish, Emily Post Sydney Tuffnell, Samantha Verbsky

Wardrobe Supervisor Chloe Mullin

Wardrobe Crew Darby Bauer, Kris Campbell, Mathieu Gay

Nola McGee, Kalynn Thompkins Box Office Terrye Hudson, Sherri Morgan

House Managers Taryn Feheley

Assistant House Managers Alana Benton, Karmela Carbajal, Rylie Gatlin Lauren Konkol, Madi McVey, Ruby Peterson,

Goldie Snow, Blake Vest, Olivia Williams

Marketing Assistant Lane Houk Production Undergraduate Assistant McKenna Bowman The University of Oklahoma

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Donna Huston with daughter Robin Huston

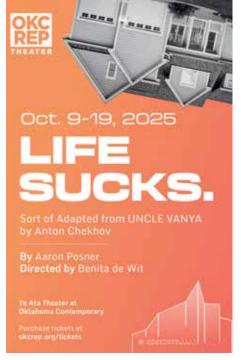
#### A Special Thank You

We will miss the beautiful smile and presence of our longtime house manager, Donna Huston, who began her well-deserved retirement at the beginning of this season. We are deeply grateful for the high standards she set as house manager and appreciate her dedication. Now we look forward to seeing Donna in the audience, enjoying the show with all of you!

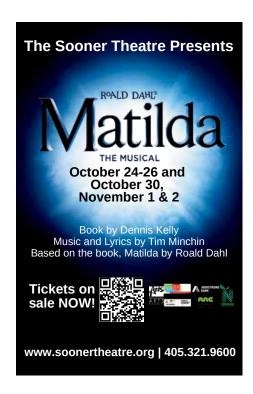
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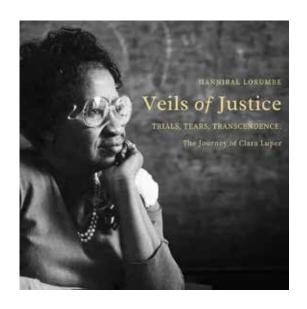








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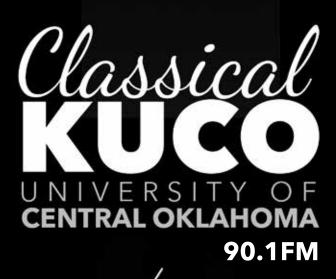




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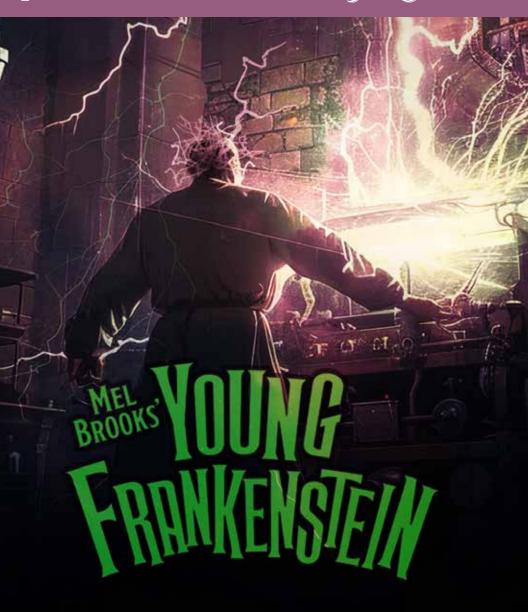
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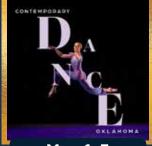
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