

2020 Spotlight Classical Voice Semifinal Panel

Dr. Peter Atherton is the Robert and Norma Lineberger Endowed Chair of Music and the Director of Operatic Studies at Chapman University. He has performed over forty-five roles ranging from Seneca in *The Coronation of Poppea* to Frederick in *A Little Night Music*. His operatic credits include performances with the LA Opera, Seattle Opera, Baltimore Opera, Lyric Opera Cleveland, Wolf Trap Opera, Virginia Opera, San Francisco Opera Touring Division, Opera Atelier, Cairo Opera and the Operafestival of Rome and Verona. He has performed with such conductors as Leonard Bernstein, Pierre Boulez, Lucas Foss, James Conlon, Kurt Herbert Adler, David Effron and Myung-Whun Chung. Dr. Atherton holds the Bachelor of Music in Vocal Performance from The Juilliard School, Master of Music in Vocal Performance from USC, and Doctor of Musical Arts from UCLA. He has received numerous awards including Artist of the Year sponsored by The National Arts Club in New York City and a full scholarship to The International Academy for Soloists where he studied exclusively with Elisabeth Schwarzkopf.

LaVista Benson, soprano, is in her 15th year teaching with the award-winning Department of Music at Riverside City College's Henry W. Coil, Sr. & Alice Edna Coil School for the Arts and is excited to have recently joined the Music Faculty at California Baptist University. Ms. Benson's favorite moments on stage have included soloist for great works such as Mozart's Requiem and Vespers, Schubert's Mass in G, Handel's Messiah, Weihnachts-Oratorium by Bach, and Haydn's Lord Nelson Mass. On the opera stage, some of her favorite roles have been becoming The Countess in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* and Adina in Donizetti's *The Elixir of Love*. Behind the stage, LaVista has enjoyed producing and stage-managing operas such as *The Elixir of Love* and Verdi's *La Traviata* as well as programming scenes from many beloved operas. Beyond the operatic venues, LaVista has been delighted to direct musicals, among her favorites being Lerner and Loewe's *My Fair Lady* and Rodger and Hammerstein's *State Fair*. Currently, Ms. Benson thoroughly enjoys singing with the Inland Empire's SOZO Jazz Band is stage manager of the ongoing comedy in her home where the stars of the show are her seven-year-old ingénue, Mila, and her six year old stuntman in training, Liam.

Mary Levin Cutler graduated USC with a Master of Music degree. She lectures in ethnomusicology and lectures for CSULA, the United Nations Association, and various schools and organizations. Ms. Cutler has received the CSULA Tribute to Excellence, the Sybil Brand Award, the 2005 CSULA Distinguished Alumnae - College of Arts and Letters, and a Music Education Award from Master Classes Int. She is a Fellow of the American Institute of Fine Arts. Currently, she serves as immediate past chair of Young Artists Int., a member of the Young Musicians Foundation. She also serves as Opera Judge for Zachary Opera Auditions, past President of the American Youth Symphony, and is a former President of the L.A. Concert Opera Association. She has performed for the Dallas Summer Musicals, the Easter Sunrise Service at the Hollywood Bowl, the Brentwood-Westwood Symphony Orchestra, and La Mirada Symphony.

Patricia Gee is an Adjunct Professor of Voice at Chapman University and University of Redlands. Ms. Gee has been a soloist in performances throughout the United States, including Menotti's *The Telephone*, Mozart's *The Impresario* and *Coronation Mass*, Respighi's *Laud to the Nativity*, and Handel's *Messiah*, among others. Patricia was active as a faculty member for the Operafestival di Roma in Rome, Italy and was also a featured soloist in the companion CD for the 21st Century Voice by Michael Edward Edgerton. Ms. Gee has been a guest lecturer for the California Music Educators Association and has been the recipient of many teaching awards, including the Excellence in Teaching Award from the University of Redlands. She received her B.M. in Music Education from USC (Magna Cum Laude) and her M.M. from the University of Redlands. Her students are presently singing in international and national opera houses and are also teaching at the university and college levels throughout the country.

Raejin Lee, soprano, has an active performing career, with appearances throughout the United States, Italy, Brazil, and Korea in oratorio, recital, and opera. She has performed such roles as Adina in *L'elisir d'amore*, Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, Juliette in *Romeo et Juliette*, Gretel in *Hänsel and Gretel*, Giulietta in *I Capuletti e i Montecchi*, Despina in *Così fan tutte*, and Laetitia in *The Old Maid and the Thief*. Dr. Lee has received many honors and awards, including a special prize for her distinguished performance of the Italian Art Song repertoire from the Italian American Cultural Foundation. Her biography has been listed in Who's Who reference books. She is co-coordinator and faculty of the vocal program at the Montecito International Music Festival. She earned her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Indiana University, her Artist Diploma from the Cleveland Institute of Music, and her Doctoral degree from Rutgers University in New Jersey as a student of Faith Esham. Originally from Seoul, Korea, Dr. Lee is currently Associate Professor and Director of Vocal Studies at La Sierra University.

Marco Schindelmann is Artist Professor of Music and Director of the University Opera at the University of Redlands and is President of the Arts Council for the City of Long Beach. As an operatic soloist and "voice" artist he has performed, presented and published internationally (Barcelona, Beijing, Munich, Singapore, Tokyo, Rome, MIT et. al.). Operas he has directed include *Norma*, *La Traviata*, *Don Giovanni*, *La Traviata*, *Die Zauberfloete* and *The Medium*. Marco is active as a collaborative artist and researcher. Projects include an original multimedia opera entitled *Beau Monde Float*, *Thirteen Six Views of Sound Beauty* for which he received an NEA grant; research on vibrato, pitch perception and aesthetic prejudice for Festival 500, Phenomenon of Singing, International Symposium VII, Canada; and an original sound score for *Atlantic* with Wesleyan University. Marco co-produces and curates SoundWalk, the largest sound art event in Southern California. He can be heard on New World Records and MPRNTBL. He is also the first male on a commercial recording label to perform the *Sprechstimme* in Arnold Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* (Centaur Records).