



HIGH NOTES
Pikes Peak Opera League
Early Summer Newsletter, 2021



A Message from your President, Dr. Susan Rae Jensen

Words cannot express the appreciation from myself and your PPOL Board about your support throughout this past most challenging year. Because of you, we have been able to continue monthly programs whether outdoors, via video virtual formats, or more recently indoor live performances with appropriate spacing and continued observance of all health measures. Your dues, donations, and sponsorships have hired regional professional vocalists who now more than ever have needed not just a “gig” but to have a chance to create something artistically special. Your support has not only continued to provide these quality programs but also to provide the following: 8 Young Voice Finalists’ Scholarship awards, 3 Career Enhancement Awards to assist professional artists, 2 Career Advancement Awards to encourage young professionals, 2 commissioned special video concerts for membership for the holidays & Valentine’s Day, scholarships to 2 students of the CS Conservatory to be able to continue their studies, and scholarships to 5 students in the CS Children’s Chorale so that they could continue to be a part of that pivotal choir training group. So BRAVO to you all with profound gratitude!!

There are 2 more wonderful opportunities to hear vocalists live in performance to round out our PPOL year:

--June 23, 5-8 pm: Special Event, Songs for a Summer Night at the home of Special Advisor to the PPOL Board, Stephanie Edwards. The Program will feature our PPOL spring Career Advancement Award winner, Kira Dills-DeSurra, mezzo soprano. The evening will be all inclusive with wine, food, and song. Further details and the invitation are on the next page. This is a fundraiser for our scholarship fund, and reservation availability is limited so please note the invitation details and reserve soon.

--July 25, 2 pm: a Special added outdoor Concert program in the Glen at Broadmoor Community Church, featuring Career Enhancement Award winner, Annamarie Zmolek, soprano. No tickets are needed but donations at the event will be requested for admission for our scholarship fund. Suggested minimum donation \$20pp.

****Please bring your own chair and beverage/snack. Further info is noted on page 3.**

Please remember to pay your membership dues for 21-22 to support more music & song. Info and Form on page 4.



*Songs for a Summer Night,
A summer special event for Pikes Peak Opera League
June 23, 5-8 pm
at the home and gardens of Stephanie Edwards in the Old North End.*

*An all inclusive event with wine, food, and song.
Program will feature the 2021 PPOL Career Advancement Award winner,
Kira Dills-DeSurra, mezzo-soprano.*



*Cost \$100 pp with all proceeds to go to our PPOL scholarship fund.
Availability is limited, and reservations will be accepted as received
with waiting list once limit reached.*

*Please send your reservations to PPOL, PO Box 38478, Colorado Springs, 80937-8478.
Checks preferred for this event.
Address provided upon receipt of paid reservation.*

*Venue and Event Sponsor: Stephanie Edwards, Special Advisor to the PPOL Board
Program Sponsors: Tiemens Private Wealth Management Group of Wells Fargo Advisors
and Dr. Susan Rae Jensen & Tom Trainer.*



KIRA DILLS-DESURRA **MEZZO SOPRANO**

(707) 318-4317 • dillsdes@gmail.com • kiradillsdesurra.com

Vibrant mezzo-soprano Kira Dills-DeSurra exudes magnetic charm from the rehearsal room to the main stage. A champion of new and rarely performed works, Dills-DeSurra has appeared in many American premieres, and she also cultivates skills in musical improvisation and circus arts as part of her broad-ranging palate of storytelling tools.

Dills-DeSurra manages to stay on stage for some unique performances during this irregular season: a live and limited capacity concert from the opera house balcony at Central City Opera, Colorado Symphony and Denver7's virtual Independence Eve, and Frida in a production of the new opera *Frida Kahlo and the Bravest Girl in the World* for film. Postponed engagements include Lola in *Cavalleria Rusticana* with Opera Colorado and Composer in *Ariadne auf Naxos* with Opera Steamboat.

In 2019/20 Dills-DeSurra joined Opera Colorado for her second year as an Artist in Residence, singing a performance of Rosina (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), performing principal roles in touring productions and was scheduled for the role of Shepherd Boy in the postponed production of *Tosca*. Fall 2019 she joined San Diego Symphony as the mezzo-soprano soloist in Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* under Maestro Rafael Payare.

Dills-DeSurra endeavored into early music summer of 2019, playing Diana/Giove in Diana in *La Calisto* with Opera NEO. The 2018/19 season marked her debut with Opera Colorado, singing Flora (*La traviata*), Gertrude Stein (Tom Cipullo's *After Life*), and Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*). She was also featured in touring productions as Stéphanie (*Roméo et Juliette*) and Hansel (*Hansel and Gretel*).

Dills-DeSurra hails from Petaluma, California. She earned a Master of Music and Artist Diploma from Roosevelt University: Chicago College of Performing Arts and a Bachelor of Music from University of Southern California.



Special Added Outdoor Concert Program in July

July 25, 2 pm

Outdoor Concert in the Glen of Broadmoor Community Church,
315 Lake Avenue,

featuring Annamarie Zmolek, soprano, and Dan Brink, piano,
with a tribute to American composers.

No ticket is required but donations will be requested for admission.

All proceeds go to our scholarship and artist support funds.

Suggested minimum donation \$20pp

****Please bring your own chair and beverage. There will be assistance.**

Your friends and family are most welcome!

Annamarie Zmolek, recipient of a 2021 PPOL Career Enhancement Award.

Colorado native Annamarie Zmolek has been described as “memorable and stunning” by the American Record Guide. The soprano has been featured on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera as a Semi-finalist in the National Council Auditions, having won first place in the Southwest region. One week prior to that competition, she gave a critically acclaimed performance as Violetta in *La Traviata* with Opera Theatre of the Rockies. Additionally, she has appeared as Pamina in *The Magic Flute*, Rosalinda in *Die Fledermaus*, Mimì in *La Bohème*, and Naiad in *Ariadne auf Naxos*. Ms. Zmolek spent two summers as an Apprentice Artist with Central City Opera, where she sang the student performances of the title role in *Lucia di Lammermoor* and Micaëla in *Carmen*. She also sang Mrs. Anderssen in the main stage production of Sondheim’s *A Little Night Music*, where her performance was praised by Opera News for its “sophistication.” Besides operatic credits, her oratorio performances include the soprano solos in Handel’s *Messiah*, Brahms’ *Requiem*, Mendelssohn’s *Elijah*, Beethoven’s *Ninth Symphony*, Haydn’s *Lord Nelson Mass*, Vivaldi’s *Gloria*, Fauré’s *Requiem*, Orff’s *Carmina Burana*, Mozart’s *Mass in C minor*, and Stravinsky’s *Les Noces*.

Ms. Zmolek completed her Bachelor of Music at the Eastman School of Music, and was also awarded the Performer’s Certificate in Voice. She sang the roles of Nightingale (Nightingale), Beggar Woman (*Sweeney Todd*), and Mrs. Gleaton (*Susannah*) with Eastman Opera Theater. She won the concerto competition and performed Barber’s *Knoxville: Summer of 1915* with the Eastman Philharmonia. A few months later she reprised the piece with the New Amsterdam Symphony Orchestra as the winner of their Young Artist Competition. Afterward, she completed her Master’s Degree at Rice University and performed the roles of Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* and Prima Donna in Donizetti’s *Viva la Mamma*.

Ms. Zmolek is currently an active teacher and performer in Houston. She served as a vocal instructor at Prairie View A & M University for many years and continues to maintain a busy private voice studio. She has spent 2 summers teaching voice and Italian Diction at the Boston University Tanglewood Institute. Many of her former students are pursuing voice degrees at top conservatories and singing professionally. She serves as a Staff Singer at St. Martin’s Episcopal, performing a wide range of choral and solo sacred music. During the pandemic, she and her tenor husband sang many virtual church services, putting together duet arrangements of classic anthems. She has now taught countless lessons on Skype and helped her students get in to colleges and All-state choir despite the technical difficulties and distance. However, she looks forward to returning to in person lessons, performances, and hugs when it is safe to do so. She is always thrilled to return to Colorado to sing and is excited to be doing this summer concert live for the Pikes Peak Opera League. Also, she is so appreciative of receiving this special PPOL Career Enhancement Award.



Pikes Peak Opera League Membership Application/Renewal Form

PLEASE RENEW MEMBERSHIP: Membership fees are for the PPOL fiscal and program year of September 1 to August 31 each year. **RENEW by JULY 15 to be included in Directory and to be sure that you continue to be on mailing and email communication lists.**

The Dues are **\$40 for individuals and \$60 for couples/families** and remain the same as in the previous 5 years. **Your Dues go to help underwrite and pay performers for our excellent quality programming. These vocalists and performers need our support now more than ever. Also, there will be some programs and events that are for members only or open to members first.**

Additionally, if you are interested and can support, even a part, of a program or event for this coming year, please let us know as that helps defray venue and programming costs.

Please PRINT information as is currently accurate for you even if the same as last year, inclusive of best phone #s and accurate email and mailing addresses to be assured that you will receive all updates and communications. An accurate database is crucial for these communications and keeping you informed.

Name: _____

Address: _____
(Please include FULL ADDRESS with city, state and zip code)

Home Phone: _____ Cell/Work Phone: _____

E-mail: _____
(PLEASE PRINT)

Membership Category: Individual \$40 _____ Couple/family \$60 _____

I would like to sponsor a program to further assist vocalists:

_____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ \$150 \$_____ (write in amount)

Volunteer by checking your areas of interest:

Fund Raising _____ Young Voice Competition _____ Hospitality _____ Concierge Call Team _____

Mailings _____ Special Events _____ Publicity _____ Membership _____ Greeter _____ Gift Baskets _____

Distribution Directory _____ IT _____ Graphic arts _____ Membership Name Tags _____

Make checks payable to PPOL; mail payment along with form to: Pikes Peak Opera League, P.O. Box 38478, Colorado Springs, CO 80937-8478.

You may also renew online at pikespeakoperaleague.org under Membership tab with PayPal link. Please be sure that we have all your contact information.

Thank you for your membership and support!



2021-22 PPOL Programs and Special Events Calendar

--please mark your calendars, as you won't want to miss anything!!

Opening Program--September 8, 4-6 pm at Gold Hill Mesa with win and cheese.

Address: 142 S Raven Mine Dr.

Program: Martile's stories from the opera stage

Special Event—Fall Fest on October 8, 5-8 pm, A Night in Spain

Fall scholarship fundraiser with wine, tapas, and Spanish themed music.

Location: Brookdale/Skyline, 2365 Patriot Heights

Program: Stephanie Brink with songs and arias inspired by Spain

Program on November 3, 11:30-1 pm, featuring our fall Career Advancement

Award winner, Armando Contreras, baritone. Light lunch will be served.

Location: Broadmoor Community Church Otto Hall, 315 E. Lake

Young Voice competitions in November—dates confirmed. Location: CC, tentative.

November 14, 3 pm—Master Class

November 19, 7 pm—Finalist Concert

Holiday Luncheon, December 1, 11-1:30 pm at Cheyenne Mountain Country

Club, 9 Lake Ave. Program: Martile's Merry Singers

There will be a charge for the luncheon.

Program on February 2, 11:30-1pm, featuring our scholarship recipients at

the CS Conservatory and the CS Children's Chorale. Light lunch.

Location: CS Conservatory Recital Hall, 415 S. Sahwatch

Special Event on February 18, 5-8 pm, A Broadway Revue.

Winter scholarship fundraiser with cash bar, substantial appetizers.

Location: Patty Jewett Clubhouse, 900 E Espanola St.

Program: Josh Franklin and John Wolfe from Icons, *A Return to Broadway*.

Program on March 2, 11:30-1pm, *Singing into Spring* featuring Kacie Kenton,

soprano. Light refreshments. Location: CS Youth Symphony Rehearsal Hall,
3113 Primrose Dr.

Program on April 6, 4-6 pm, featuring our spring Career Advancement Award

winner, TBA. Location: MacLaren School, 1702 North Murray Blvd

Concert at 4:15 pm with casual reception post concert with the artist.

Spring Luncheon on May 4, 11-1:30, at The Pinery, 775 W Bijou St.

There will be a charge for the luncheon. Cash bar.

Program: A Special preview to the summer Vocal Arts Festival
and Opera Theatre of the Rockies' summer production

Special Event on June 22, 5-8 pm, The Great Gatsby Party

Summer fundraiser for Vocal Arts Festival scholarship fund, with wine and
appetizer buffet. Location: Private venue, address upon RSVP receipt.

Program: Rachel and the Rhapsodies, a vocal and instrumental ensemble
from DU, with songs from the Gatsby Era and the Great American Songbook.
(featuring past Young Voice award finalist, Rachel Winnick.)

The PPOL 21-22 Board

Officers

Co-Presidents—Fran Pilch & Susan Rae Jensen
Vice President—Nicole deNaray
Secretary—Connie Joiner
Treasurer—Linda Silver
Immediate Past President—Nancy Daly

Directors

Robyn Sedgwick
Victoria Boswell
Catherine Thompson
Amalia Dobbins

Our incoming Board new positions



Dr. Fran Pilch, Co-President

Fran Pilch is a Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the US Air Force Academy. She was awarded her BA from the University of Connecticut and her MA and PhD from Yale, in International Relations. Since her retirement in 2015, she has published three books: one on the Cambodian genocide, one on early Alzheimer's, and most recently on domestic violence. She has served on the Boards of TESSA, the Children's Chorale, the Philharmonic, and CASA. She loves musical theater, especially anything by Sondheim. She is delighted to get to know all of the PPOL members!



Nicole deNaray, Vice President

Nicole has lived in Colorado Springs since 1986. Her professional life was spent in various forms of financial management, inclusive of banking, government, small business, and nonprofit accounting. Since her retirement from the CS Philharmonic in 2010, she has served on various Boards—Chamber Orchestra, Home Front Military Network Advisory Board, her HOA, and as a Mt. Carmel Community Advisor. She studied piano as a military “brat” in Germany and France, and has found returning to the piano to be a great comfort during this past year. Her husband of 45 years, Andy, passed in 2020. She feels blessed to have her son, Andrew, and family nearby & in her life. Nicole is honored to serve on the PPOL Board.





More about the new incoming PPOL Board Directors

Amalia Dobbins, Director



A native of Sonoma, California, Amalia Dobbins brings a passion for musical excellence to St. Michael's Episcopal Church where she currently serves as Director of Music. She also is the owner of Sun and Moon Voice Studio where she works with teens and young adults aspiring to careers in musical theater. Amalia regularly performs musical theater, opera, oratorio, and jazz genres and has performed with the CS Philharmonic, Colorado Symphony, Parish House Baroque, Boulder Philharmonic, and several programs for PPOL including Fall Fest outdoor concert last October. Her family includes husband, Patrick, and 2 sons, Finn and Nick. She is thrilled to serve on PPOL Board & the leadership of Young Voice Team.



Catherine Thompson, Director

Catherine taught history at the University of Connecticut and the College of Holy Cross before moving to Colorado Springs in 2019. She is an avid hiker, a joyful kayaker, a hopeful painter, and a published writer. Although she has no singing abilities, she admires those who do & will support those vocalists in her role on PPOL Board. Many of you have seen her assisting at programs and special events in so many ways.

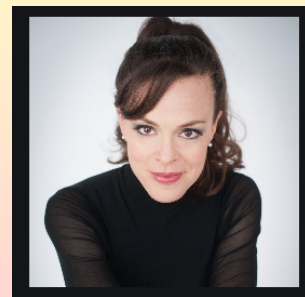
News from a couple of our favorite vocalists



The recent Opera News release about soprano Brittany Renee's performance as Micaela in Orlando Opera's production of *Carmen*. As you recall, Brittany was in the ensemble of the Met in HD production of *Porgy and Bess* for the 19-20 season.



Maire Therese Carmack, soprano, in the recent Pittsburgh Opera production of *Salome* (live performances with safety protocols, & also virtually.) She has been selected to be a 2021 Young Artist at the Glimmerglass Festival this summer.



Jennifer DeDominici, mezzo soprano, will be appearing in Central City Opera's *Carousel* performances this summer, outdoors at the Hudson Gardens in Denver.



Photos from our May 5 Luncheon at The Pinery



Victoria Boswell, Nancy Pittman,
Nicole deNaray, & Phyllis MacDougall

Dianne and Doug Herzberg

Trudy Fennewald and Susan Rae Jensen



Susanne Wheeler, Martile
Rowland, & Amalia Dobbins
--Amalia is an incoming Director

Judy Warren and Helen Gryboski

Nancy Daly, Betty Rickel,
and Lu Benning
--Nancy is Immediate Past President



Cindy Crater, Helen Gryboski, Dr. Michael
Blend, & Rex Kramer (rear)
Lesly Blend & Mary Koepp (seated)



Fran Pilch, Nicole deNaray, & Susan Rae Jensen
--Fran and Susan, incoming Co-Presidents and
Nicole, incoming Vice President



More Photos from the May 5 Luncheon



Mary Ann Siehr & Sheila Pereira (seated)
Deanna Lyons and Eve Tilley Chavez



Evelyn Kwaak and Helene Knapp
--Helene is Corresponding Secretary



Robyn Hamilton and Ros Block



Kathy Winnick and Linda Silver
--Kathy is Membership Team contact
--Linda is current and incoming Treasurer



Catherine Thompson and Connie Joiner
--Catherine is incoming Director at large
--Connie is current and incoming Secretary



Marilyn Miller and Shirley Donahue



Stephanie Edwards and Tom Trainer
--Stephanie is Special Advisor to the Board



Susan with Victoria Boswell
--Victoria is Hospitality Director



Our fabulous program with Christiana Danaé, soprano, & our PPOL 2019 Career Advancement Award winner
Accompanied by Dan Brink



Our appreciative luncheon audience at capacity. You all looked SO MARVELOUS!!

Please Support Our Generous Newsletter Sponsors

GUNARS SPONS
PRESIDENT

719.389.0906
1785 S. 8th Street, Suite B
Colorado Springs, CO 80905
email: info@sovereigntywines.com
sovereigntywines.com



FLYING HORSE
REALTY

KATHLEEN J. WINNICK

Associate Broker, GRI

cell (719) 660-1235

office (719) 886-4800

KathyW@FlyingHorseRealty.com

2748 North Gate BLVD. • Colorado Springs, CO 80921

ROBYN SEDGWICK

General Manager

1921 N. Weber Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80907
Tel: 719.578.5263
Email: robyn@kcme.org
Listener Comment Line:
719.578.5574



PRIDE OF THE ROCKIES
Manufacturers of Gourmet Candies Since 1983

Anne Marie's Chocolates
DBA: Patsy's Original
1540 South 21st Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80904
719.633.7215 Factory
719.661.9607 Cell
mike@annemarieschocolates.com
www.patsyscandies.com



Mike Niswonger
President



www.jazz935.org

ROBYN SEDGWICK

General Manager

1921 N. Weber Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80907
Tel: 719.578.5263
Email: robyn@jazz935.org
Listener Comment Line:
719.578.5574



abaTina
BOUTIQUE

Jen Johnstone, Manager

p. (719) 471-2290 f. (719) 471-3198

jen@abatina.com • www.abatina.com

1713 South 8th Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80905

Please Support Our Generous Newsletter Sponsors

Meeker Music, Inc.

Colorado Springs Oldest Music Store

Connie Hamman

624 N. Tejon St.
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

719-471-8940

connie.hamman@meekermusic.com
www.meekermusic.com



THE ART BANK and Oriental Rug Center

610 North Tejon
Colorado Springs, CO 80903
(719) 634-6073
Cell: (719) 660-0442
TheArtBank@msn.com



Blake Wilson, CRA
Certified Rug Appraiser, ORRA



Tues - Fri 10AM - 5PM
Saturday 10:30 - 2:00
Sun & Mon CLOSED
email: orlysgallery@qwestoffice.net
www.orlysgallery.com

Tomas Martinez

Phone: 719.690.3371
730 South Tejon
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

I Saw it First!



consignments of fine furnishings

Greg Wragge
isawitfirstgreg@aol.com

719.447.0077

719.475.1200

1731 ML Washington Ave.
Colorado Springs, CO 80905
Monday - Friday 9 - 5

isawitfirstconsignments.com

Please note same location but address change:
1731 Creekwalk Court, 80905