

MONC AZ Newsletter- Nov. 2014

Western Region Audition Finals Update

The MONC Western Region Finals took place in Los Angeles at the Coburn School Auditorium, Saturday, November 8, with 18 singers participating. Four hours of wonderful singing later the following results were announced.

First Place-\$4800. Nicholas Brownlee, age 28-Bass Baritone from Los Angeles, who will represent the Western Region in the MONC NY Preliminaries in March, 2015.

2nd Place-\$3000. Brenton Ryan, age 28, tenor from Los Angeles

3rd Place -\$2000. So Young Park, age 28, soprano from Los Angeles

Special encouragement -\$1000. each

Lacey Jo Benter, age 27, mezzo- soprano from Los Angeles

Amina Erdis, age 24, soprano from San Francisco

Calvin Griffin, age 25, bass-baritone from Arizona

Encouragement Awards-\$500. Each

Vanessa Becerra, 25, soprano, Los Angeles; Christine Bristow, 27, soprano, Los Angeles; **Chris Carr**, baritone, 26, Arizona; Jungwon Choi, 30, soprano, Los Angeles; Laura Krumm, 27, mezzo soprano, San Francisco; YoonGeong Lee, 29, soprano, San Francisco; John Matthews Myers, tenor, 26, Los Angeles; Amy Jo Stephens, 24, Soprano, San Diego; Jure Pochaj, baritone, 30, Los Angeles; Christian Pursell, baritone, 24, San Francisco; Ariana Strahl, 24, soprano, San Francisco; Anthony Whitson-Martin, 20, baritone, San Diego.

Attending the Auditions from Arizona –**Arlyn Brewster, Ryan Taylor, Judy Wolf.**

Finals Judges: Diane Zola- Metropolitan Opera representative for this Audition; Director Artistic Administration- Houston Grand Opera, joined the company in 2000 as Director of Houston Studio; 2009-appointed chief consultant -Young Artist Program- Bolshoi Opera in Moscow.

Charles MacKay-General Director of Santa Fe Opera since 2008, formerly General Director of Opera Theatre of St. Louis; board member of Opera America.

Marlene Malas-Chair of voice dept. Chautauqua Institution; Faculty- Curtis Institute, Juilliard School and Manhattan School of Music; affiliated with opera companies including the Met, Santa Fe, Boston, Miami, and Washington D.C. where she serves as Director of the National Opera Young Artist Program and also teaches.

Several organizations offering performing opportunities for young singers independent of MONC such as Opera Showcase of the Desert, OperaWorks, Long Beach Opera were also in attendance.

Editor Note To AZ MONC Committee and Supporters: Both Calvin and Chris gave outstanding performances. They are wonderful to watch and hear on stage and delightful to know offstage. We were represented by *the best*, so know your MONC time and money was well invested in these two artists. Look forward to hearing more good things about them!

***Chris Carr** is baritone soloist for the Phoenix Symphony's "The Polar Express" Nov. 30, then in Dec. to Washington D.C. to sing the Pilot in *The Little Prince* at Washington National Opera.
***Calvin Griffin** is soloist for Richmond Symphony's Messiah (Handel) Dec. 13. A 2013 MONC AZ Finalist
***Andrea Shokery** is featured soloist for the second time with the Phoenix Symphony's New Year's Eve Celebration-Dec. 31. **Andrea** just sang a *Gilda* with the AZO's "Rigoletto".
David Margulis, tenor and former AZ Opera Studio Artist, came to the LA Auditions to support his AZ Studio friends. He is currently singing with Santa Barbara Opera-and beyond.

*Studio update from Allen Perriello, AZO Marion Roose Pullin Opera Studio Director

CHECK OUT THE OFFICIAL AZ MONC WEB SITE-WWW.MONCARIZONA.ORG

A Bit about Finances

The LA Western Region prize expenditure is \$18,000 not including the \$800. additional prize for first place that comes from the Mrs. Edgar Tobin Award from the Tobin Endowment.

This year, AZ MONC was the fortunate recipient of a Special Award honoring Nando Schellen, Director of Opera @ NAU. Donations from friends and family abroad (Netherlands) as well as the US, covered the singer awards which totaled \$4600. Other Audition expenses include air transport, lodging and hospitality of Judges, audition site fee (MIM), web site maintenance, accompanist, printing. We are also "asked" to keep funds in reserve to cover a year of Auditions. Donors should feel a real sense of pride in all we accomplish to make these auditions an artistic and financial success year after year. BRAVI!!!

If you have questions about the finances, Judy Wolf is the one to contact and will be happy to talk with you; **if you have questions or concerns about the Audition process**, background or mechanics thereof, please contact me (Arlyn Brewster). I'd enjoy hearing from you, your comments, ideas, so do not hesitate.

Costumes worn by **Luciano Pavarotti** and **Joan Sutherland** from the Met were on display at the MIM for our Auditions, courtesy of Robert Toggle, Met Opera Costume Archives Director, Dr. Manuel Jordan, Chief Curator at MIM, and Mary Sue Hyatt of our MONC AZ Board. Thanks to everyone who helped with this unique and very special treat!

The 2014 Auditions were dedicated to Jonathan Alden Clark who contributed magnificently to MONC AZ for many years.

