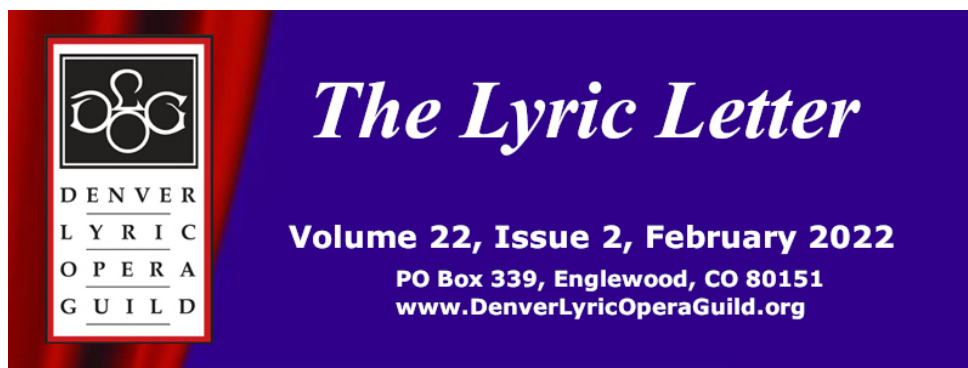


[View this email in your browser](#)



Competition season is in full swing. The Master Class is now history and the Preliminaries are approaching. The Master Class was great. Mardi Byers had great insight and, with several of the students you could actually see and hear improvement as their sessions progressed. Jeremy Reger did his always great accompaniment.

Next up, come see the Prelims. While not streamed, physical attendance is available, as long as you have proof of vaccination or a negative test within 72 hours and agree to wear a mask while inside. See you there!

**Tom Conroy**

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## Our Mission

**The encouragement and support of young singers, and the continuing educations of members in the appreciation and knowledge of opera.**

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## 2022 Competition for Colorado Singers Update



The 2022 DLOG Louise C. Conter Master Class was given by Mardi Byers on February 19th. Our competitors received some great performance time and feedback in anticipation of the main event. The entire class is available for viewing now. Just head over to the [DLOG YouTube site](#).

Our next event is the Preliminaries on March 5, 9am-5pm MT at Calvary Baptist Church. Please note the Preliminaries are in-person only and will not

be live-streamed. However, the public is welcome with proof of vaccination.

This year's competition will feature 33 candidates participating in the Preliminary round. Our judges for the events are:

#### PRELIMINARIES

Dennis Jackson  
Marcia Ragonetti  
Eapen Leubner

#### FINALS

Sam Mungo  
Wei Wu  
Leenya Rideout

[The official 2022 Competition Program is out and available for download here.](#)

Lunches are still available to order for DLOG members at the Preliminaries. Seating will be available in Fellowship Hall where you may share a meal with your friends. [The Panera order form is available on our website.](#)

#### 2022 Competition for Colorado Singers Schedule

February 19, 9am - 4:30pm    Master Class  
March 5, 9am - 5pm        Preliminaries  
March 19, 1pm - 5pm       Finals

All Events At Calvary Baptist Church  
6500 E. Girard Avenue, Denver, CO 80224

#### The DLOG Competition Committee

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## Louise C. Conter Master Class with Mardi Byers February 19th, 2022



It's one down and two to go for the 2022 Competition for Colorado Singers. On February 19th [Mardi Byers](#) kicked off events with a truly masterful Master Class with many of this year's competitors. See below for a few highlights. Also note, all SEVEN hours of the Master Class are available for viewing at any time. Just click on over to [watch the whole thing on the DLOG YouTube site.](#)



Zoe Spangler and Mardi Byers.



Mardi Byers works with Gabrielle Razafinjatovo. Jeremy Reger at piano.





Tenor Miguel Angel Ortega Bañales and Mardi Byers



Ruby Leigh Pierce working coloratura with Mardi Byers.



Nathan Jensen and Mardi Byers not leaning in. Jeremy Reger at piano.

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## SPOTLIGHT on New Members

This edition of Spotlight will focus on the youngest of our newest members. It's a pleasure to welcome -

Lillian Cogdal

Lillian was introduced to Opera at the age of 5 at a performance of The Magic Flute. She comes from a family of opera lovers and throughout her childhood attended performances of Opera Colorado and Central City Opera. Her family has long supported young artists from going with her mother to pick up singers for Central City and hosting young artists for Opera Colorado.

Lillian grew up on a farm with chickens, goats, horses, and dogs. She studied ballet for many years and danced with Colorado Ballet, frequently performing in The Nutcracker. Currently she is the Assistant Operations Manager at Athleta in Park Meadows. Interests in addition to Opera include readings, animals, live music, history and traveling, most recently to New York City that naturally included an Opera.

Favorite Opera highlights include seeing *Così fan Tutte* in Japan, *Thais* with Renee Fleming, and *Carmen* with Denice Graves.

If Lillian's name is familiar, she is 3rd generation DLOG. She is the daughter of Wendy Cogdal and granddaughter of Maradith Wilkins!

### **Kira Dills-DeSurra**

Kira is well known to DLOG members. A vibrant and gifted Mezzo Soprano, Kira was an Apprentice Artist in Central City Opera's 2017 and 2018 summer festivals and was an Artist in Residence with Opera Colorado for both the 2018/19 and 2019/20 seasons. She participated in and won DLOG Competition awards in each of two successive years. Originally from Petaluma, CA, Denver is currently her home.

Kira earned a Master of Music and Artist Diploma from Roosevelt University, Chicago of Performing Arts and a Bachelor of Music from the University of Southern California.

Kira has graciously performed for DLOG, most recently at the Summer Party and in December with Central City Opera. We will continue to see Kira on stage but she will also be working with the DLOG Board in the important role of Development.

### **Eric J. McConnell**

Eric is also a familiar name to DLOG members. Along with Kira, Eric is a past DLOG Competition winner. A Denver native, Eric trained as a young artist with Opera Colorado, Central City Opera, Opera Saratoga, and the Aspen Opera Center. He completed his Master's Degree from Northwestern University and his Bachelor's degree from the University of Miami. Eric is an Eagle Scout, a black belt in Tae Kwon Do, and a zealous collector of rubber ducks.

Eric is currently on contract with Virginia Opera for their 2021-22 season, performing as Donner in *Das Rheingold*, Colline in *La Bohème*, Bartolo in *Le nozze di Figaro* and Teacher/Star-Kitty in Frances Pollock's *Earth to Kenzie*. It's exciting to see our Competition winners undertaking their professional careers and we hope to see more of Eric in the near future.

### **Anna Montgomery**

As our 2021 First Place Competition winner, Anna is an Honorary member of DLOG for one year. We haven't been able to catch up with her, but know she is



not only deeply grateful to DLOG but is also busily working on the next steps in her career so watch for future updates.

Gayle Landis

## Donor Profile - Julie Johnston



Julie Johnston and her husband Harry Williams shared a deep love of music.

Sadly, Harry passed away last year and to honor his love for music, Julie chose to sponsor a Certificate of Merit for last year's Competition for Colorado Singers. I am pleased to say she will be doing so again this year.

With her big smile and fun fasciators, Julie has been a fixture at DLOG for around 20 years. Here's your chance to get to know this remarkable lady a little better.

Julie grew up in a very small town in Iowa near Iowa City. In Marengo everybody knew everybody, and most were related in some way or

another. The only families who didn't have relatives to celebrate the holidays were Julie's family and the dentist's family. So the families celebrated the holidays together. One Christmas, when Julie was nine or ten, she mentioned that she didn't have any money to spend, and Doc offered her a job on the spot. Julie came to spend many years at his dental office, dusting, arranging magazines when she was young and sterilizing instruments and doing the book work as she got older. When she was 5 her father took her to a University of Iowa football game. Her Mom packed a lunch in a shoe box, and they took the train to Iowa City. Julie doesn't remember who they played, she only remembers that Iowa won the game and that she wanted to attend the University of Iowa and become one of the Scottish Highlanders. Unfortunately, they disbanded while Julie was in high school.

Her first year in college, like many freshmen, she had no idea what major to choose, but one day she saw a girl walking across campus in a white uniform carrying a little blue bag. She knew the girl wasn't in nursing, so she asked her what she was studying. It turned out she was studying to be a dental hygienist.

Julie hadn't known such a profession existed as her dentist did not have a hygienist working for him. Julie had loved working at Doc's dental office, so she applied to the dental school and had a long and successful career as a dental hygienist. She loved interacting with her patients and developed many life-long relationships throughout her career. It was there that she met her husband and also where she met longtime DLOG member and past president Anne Hamilton. When Anne learned of Julie's love of opera, she told Julie she

HAD to join DLOG. Julie did indeed join the Guild and has been an active member ever since.

For those of you who know Julie, you know she has an insatiable love of travel.

It was her plan, on finishing her degree, to move to a new place every two years to see new places and garner new experiences. Like many of the bold plans we have when we are young, life got in the way. She moved to Denver after college and has lived here ever since. That did not in any way diminish her love for travel. Harry was not a fan of overseas travel, so Julie found traveling companions (DLOG friend Berryman for one) to accompany her on her many and varied excursions, both domestic and all around the globe. When asked what her favorite place to visit has been, she quickly responded "Whatever place I'm in at the moment". What a beautiful view of life. An attitude that perfectly sums up Julie and the joy she finds in and brings to life. Thank you, Julie for sponsoring one of Competition awards!

**Karen Bruggenthies**

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## **Claire McCahan Performs at the 2022 DLOG New Member Appreciation Party**



On February 6th, 2022 DLOG held a New Member Appreciation Party to welcome our new members to the joy of opera. The festivities were held at Columbine Country Club where Mezzo-Soprano Claire McCahan performed stunning renditions of "No so più" from Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, "Waldesnacht" by Schubert, "Night and Day" by Cole Porter, and many others. Brava to Claire for a wonderful performance!

Special thanks to Karen Bruggenthies for such an enjoyable event and the delicious homemade sweets!





Julie Johnston and Barbara Berryman brought the fascinators.



An Opera tour de force: Claire McCahan, Mark Van Arsdale, Karen Bruggenthies, and Kira Dills-DeSurra.

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## Marshall Fire

Some of you are aware that our wonderful Master Class facilitator Mardi Byers is a victim of the Marshall Fire. She lost her house, car, music library, her mother's piano, and scores from her opera career. If you choose to make a donation to help Mardi, please send a check made out to Mardi Byers to the

Chair of the DLOG Competition Committee:

Kathy Van Arsdale  
7321 E. Long Ave.  
Centennial, CO 80112

Kathy will collect and send these checks to Mardi. Thank you for your kindness to a singer who has suffered tremendous losses, including the theft of her GoGundMe account. Lots of sadness here.

**Kathy Van Arsdale**

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## Richard Bufton

M. Richard Bufton, 89 years old, died peacefully with his wife of thirty-six years, Suzanne by his side in U C Health, Aurora, CO of covid pneumonia early morning Tuesday, January 25, 2022. Richard was a longtime opera-lover and member of DLOG. For more info, please visit [his memorial page at the Monarch Society](#).

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## Rosemary Priester

Rosemary Priester's funeral date has been set, Saturday, March 5th at 12 noon. It will be held at her home parish of All Souls, located on Logan just north of Belleview. We have been awaiting this event until her daughter, who resides outside of the US, could attend. Many of her friends from the Denver Lyric Opera Guild have shared their heart felt condolences and we felt they should have a chance to celebrate her life.

Thank you,

**The Priester Children**

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## Opera Around Town and Colorado



REDRUM AND ROOM 217... It's Opera Colorado's *The Shining*, February 26 and March 1, 3, 4 and 6. Get your tickets now to Opera Colorado's largest ever performance at the Ellie.

[Click for Tickets!](#)



It's Central City's 90th anniversary season and the 2022 Festival has been announced. Productions include *The Light in the Piazza*, *Die Fledermaus*, and *Two Remain*.

[Get your season tickets at this link!](#)

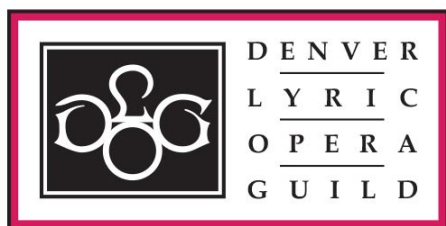


Boulder opera presents *Il trovatore* by Verdi, March 19th and 20th at the Dairy Arts Center in Boulder.

This emotional melodrama is set in 16th century Spain and has it all: witchcraft, murder, love and vengeance.

[Get your tickets here!](#)

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DENVER LYRIC OPERA  
GUILD

P.O. Box 339  
Englewood, CO 80151



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