

Second Ensemble Leaders Fellow Announced!

Moving the art form forward!

Portland Opera is pleased to formally announce that Alexis Walker is the company's second Ensemble Leaders Fellow, having joined the company in September 2023, for the 2023/24 season. The Ensemble Leaders Fellowship was developed to move the art form forward by providing career advancement opportunities for individuals who have been historically underrepresented in the world of opera, in both administrative and artistic roles. The pilot year took place during the 2021/22 season with Jasmine Johnson named as the first Ensemble Leaders Fellow. She returned for the 2022/23 season and has since joined the Portland Opera staff.

Each fellowship is unique and based on the goals, strengths, and leadership journey of the chosen candidate. Since joining the company in September, Walker has been working as part of the External Affairs team for the first months of her fellowship. She is working with the company to define her program and areas of focus for the remainder of the season.

"The experience so far has been so eye opening!" shares Walker. "As a performer myself, I didn't fully understand all the work it takes to run an arts organization. In just the few months I have been here, my understanding has deepened as I continue the fellowship program. I am grateful for the people I have met, and what I am being taught every time I step into the building."

"We are delighted to be working with Alexis Walker this season," says Sue Dixon, General Director of Portland Opera. "We learned so much from our initial pilot program with Jasmine Johnson that has allowed us to continue to customize this program for each individual participant. We believe strongly in this program and look forward to supporting new leaders through hands-on professional development and mentorship in our field."



Alexis Walker, Ensemble Leaders Fellow

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Alexis Walker earned her Bachelor of Arts degree with a focus in Vocal Performance at Pacific University, where her mentors and teachers included Dr. Scott Tuomi, Mrs. Judy A. Rose, and Professor Anne McKee Reed. She is a current member of Pacific University's Chamber Singers, who had the honor of performing for the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) in Spokane, Washington in 2022, and at the Oregon Music Educators Association (OMEA) Conference in Eugene, Oregon earlier in 2023. Alexis was a featured soloist in "A Gospel Mass" by Robert Ray for All Classical Radio and Pacific University Chamber Singers' performance of "Wade in the Water," arranged by Moses Hogan, in April 2023.

Alexis also enjoys working in theater and was the Stage Manager and Assistant Producer in "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee," produced at Pacific University in March 2023. Currently, Alexis is a vocal instructor and the Voice Program Director at Bach to Rock in Hillsboro, Oregon.

Teen Uses Talent to Support Local Libraries

Student Illustrates Libraries' Winter Reading Challenge

At the age of sixteen, Sunset High School student, Sophia You is already an accomplished artist who is using her talents to benefit local libraries.

In addition to sorting and shelving materials each week as a volunteer at Cedar Mill Library, You create illustrations for use in promoting library programs. The teen started out designing coloring sheets that the libraries delivered along with books to local childcare sites as part of their Bookshare Program.

The libraries' Teen Services Manager, Mark Richardson says, "Sophia has been volunteering at the library since 2021. She has created artwork for our NaMoWriMo program and our Spring Crosshatch reading chal-



Talented Sixteen Year Old Artist, Sophia You

lenge and has even designed buttons for us. We're thankful for all her contributions!"

You's latest artwork supports the libraries' Winter Reading Challenge with designs featuring the challenge's 2023 theme, "Bundle Up with a Book". Cedar Mill and Bethany Community Libraries are encouraging readers of all ages to participate in the Winter Reading Challenge, which runs

from December 1 to January 15.

The libraries' goal is 10,000 hours of community reading. Randomly chosen participants will win gift cards donated by Piccolo Mondo Toys. Readers can participate by picking up a reading log at the Cedar Mill or Bethany Libraries, downloading the Beanstack app, or by signing up online at library.cedarmill.org/read-now.



The Minidoka Swing Band

Minidoka Swing Band Concert Music of The Harmonaires

The Minidoka Swing Band was formed in 2007 to remember the music and big bands that were popular inside World War II Japanese American incarceration camps to help make life more normal for the imprisoned incarcerates. The Oregon Historical Society is thrilled to host the Minidoka Swing Band for a concert on Pearl Harbor Day in our

pavilion at noon. Admission is free and all are welcome.

The Minidoka Swing Band was formed by the late Roberta (Robbie) Tsuboi for a 2008 pilgrimage to the Minidoka Internment Camp. The band consists of 17 musicians and two vocalists, three of whom were incarcerated during WWII. Relatives of several band members were also incarcerated. The band connects audiences to the time when all internees needed something to uplift them and help them feel typically American.

The Minidoka Swing Band continues to play the music of The Harmonaires, a Seattle-based band formally known as the Mikados of Swing, as a tribute to Minidoka and all the internees who suffered a great loss during those difficult years. This performance will include narration between songs by Nola Sugai Bogle, who was incarcerated with her family at Minidoka. The Minidoka Swing Band Concert is Thursday, December 7, 12pm to 1pm.

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