



ROYAL
OPERA

JANUARY 2014

JETTE PARKER YOUNG ARTISTS 2014

The Royal Opera House is delighted to announce the five singers who will join the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme in September 2014, selected from over 390 applicants from 58 countries.

Australian soprano **Lauren Fagan**

Australian baritone **Samuel Johnson**

British bass **James Platt**

Australian tenor **Samuel Sakker**

Ukrainian bass-baritone **Yuriy Yurchuk**

The audition process for the selection of the Jette Parker Young Artists began in September 2013. 66 artists were selected to sing in the first of three rounds with 25 progressing to the second round involving a one-to-one coaching session with **David Gowland**, Artistic Director of the Programme, plus a panel audition for **John Fulljames**, Associate Director of Opera, **Peter Katona**, Director of Casting and **David Syrus**, Head of Music for The Royal Opera, as well as English counter-tenor **Andrew Watts** and **David Gowland**. A final shortlist of 12 singers auditioned on the main stage in front of a panel comprising **Antonio Pappano**, Music Director of The Royal Opera, **Kasper Holten**, Director of Opera, **Peter Katona**, **David Syrus**, **Andrew Watts**, **David Gowland** and **Siri Fischer Hansen**, Administrator of the Programme.

The five new Young Artists will join the six who continue on the Programme into their second year next Season: sopranos **Anush Hovhannisyan** and **Kiandra Howarth**, mezzo-sopranos **Nadezhda Karyazina** and **Rachel Kelly**, tenor **Luis Gomes** and stage director **Greg Eldridge**. Auditions for music staff positions for the 2014 intake will be held at the end of January, as **Michele Gamba** and **Paul Wingfield** complete the Programme in July 2014 and there is currently a vacancy for either a ballet pianist or a ballet conductor.

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Full biographical information for the new members of the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme is attached.

Jette Parker Young Artists Programme – Biographies 2014 Intake

Lauren Fagan : Soprano

Australian soprano Lauren Fagan completed a business degree before attending the Opera course at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, studying with Susan Waters. She has received support from The Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust, The Opera and Arts Support Group, The Tait Memorial Trust, Ars Musica Australis, Opus 50 Charitable Trust, The Walter Hyde Bequest and The City Livery Club London. She has won the GSMD Patrick Libby Prize for Dramatic Work and been runner up in the McDonald's Operatic Aria Final, with finalists from around Australia and New Zealand. Student roles include Lia *L'enfant Prodigue* (GSMD) and Mrs Coyle Owen *Wingrave* (Banff Centre, Canada) as well as scenes featuring Micaëla *Carmen*, title role *Jenůfa*, Marschallin *Der Rosenkavalier*, Natasha *War and Peace*, Vitellia *La clemenza di Tito*, Alice *Falstaff*, Fiordiligi *Così fan tutte* and First Lady *Die Zauberflöte*. Plans include Blue Fairy *The Adventures of Pinocchio* (Jonathan Dove) at the Guildhall School. She will represent the Guildhall School in the Bruce Millar/ Gullivar competition (Glasgow) and be a member of the 2014 Glyndebourne Festival chorus. She will join the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme in September 2014.

Samuel Johnson : Baritone

Australian baritone graduated with a Bachelor of Music from the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University, where he was a recipient of the RJ Hamer Opera Scholarship with the Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust. Other awards include the Dr Francesco Castellano Operatic Italian Award and the Mostyn Hanger Award for an Outstanding Performance in an Operatic Production (*Saul, Gianni Schicchi*). He also won the Sunshine Coast Performance Scholarship. Student roles in Australia include Count Almaviva *Le nozze di Figaro*, title role *Gianni Schicchi*, Pandolfe *Cendrillon*, title role *Saul*, Styx *Orpheus in the Underworld*, Taddeo and Silvio *Pagliacci*, Peter Quince *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Father *Hansel and Gretel*. He has also performed Nick Shadow *The Rake's Progress* at the Brisbane Festival, conducted by Alex Ingram and directed by Anna Sweeny OA. He has performed in concert with Queensland Symphony Orchestra at Queensland Performing Arts Centre as well as appearing as a guest artist in a Puccini Gala Concert with tenor Simon O'Neill. He will join the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme in September 2014.

James Platt : Bass

British bass James Platt was educated at Chetham's School of Music and went on to study at the Royal Academy of Music and on the Opera Course of the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, where he was a finalist in the Gold Medal Competition and was awarded the Silver Medal by the Worshipful Company of Musicians. He has studied with Brindley Sherratt and John Tomlinson and continues his studies with Janice Chapman. As a Samling Scholar, he will work with Malcolm Martineau, Stephen King and Thomas Allen. He is the recipient of a Richard Van Allen Award and an Independent Opera Scholarship. A Jerwood Young Artist at Glyndebourne, he sang the role of Notary *Don Pasquale* and covered Mr Flint *Billy Budd* in this year's Festival. Future plans include High Priest of Baal *Nabucco* in his debut for Welsh National Opera. His concert and recital appearances include Glyndebourne's Ebert Room Recital Series, the Brighton Festival, Bridgewater Hall, Royal Festival Hall, Christ Church Spitalfields and Barbican Hall. Conductors with whom he has worked include Valery Gergiev,

Colin Davis, Charles Mackerras, Andrew Davis, Paul McCreesh, Laurence Cummings and Mark Elder. He will join the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme in September 2014.

Samuel Sakker : Tenor

Australian tenor Samuel Sakker completed a Bachelor of Music at Queensland Conservatorium. He was a finalist in the Australian Singing Competition, receiving the Foster Audience Vote Award, the Royal Northern College of Music Award and the Universal Records Prize, reached second place in the More Than Opera German-Australian Opera Grant, received a scholarship from the Dame Nellie Melba Trust for two years running and recently won second prize in the Herald Sun Aria Competition. He began his professional engagement as an artist with Opera Queensland during his studies and then joined Opera Australia as a member of the full-time chorus, while also understudying and performing roles for the company. He performed as a soloist in a New Year's Eve Gala, *Manon*, *Capriccio*, *Candide* and the world premiere of *Bliss* in Sydney and at the Edinburgh International Festival and covered roles in *Manon*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Bliss*, *La fanciulla del West*, *Rigoletto* and *Partenope*. Other engagements include Young Servant *Elektra* and Fenton *Falstaff* for West Australian Opera, Trin *La fanciulla del West* for Opera Queensland, Don Ottavio *Don Giovanni* for Opera Oz, Alfredo *La traviata*, Baroncelli *Rienzi* and soloist in the Verdi 100th Birthday Gala for Melbourne Opera and tenor soloist in Bottesini *Messa da Requiem* at the Brisbane Festival. Plans include Alfredo *La traviata* for New Zealand Opera. He will join the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme in September 2014.

Yuriy Yurchuk : Bass-baritone

Ukrainian bass-baritone Yuriy Yurchuk took Bachelor and Masters degrees in finance and accounting and worked as a financial consultant with PriceWaterhouseCoopers for seven years before discovering his passion for opera when meeting Professor Marc Alon Embree in Chicago. He subsequently studied at the Vocal Performance Masters Program at DePaul University School of Music in Chicago. He is a grand prize winner in the Monastero Foundation Bel Canto Competition and a finalist in the Chicago NATS vocal competition. Opera engagements include Marcello *La bohème*, Constable and Narrator *Threepenny Opera* for DePaul Opera Theater, King of Egypt *Aida* in a tribute to Martina Arroyo at the 36th Kennedy Center Honors Awards in Washington and the four villains *Le Contes d'Hoffmann* with the Prelude to Performance Program in New York. Plans include Ford *Falstaff* with DePaul Opera Theater. He will join the Jette Parker Young Artists Programme in September 2014.

FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE JETTE PARKER YOUNG ARTISTS PROGRAMME

The Jette Parker Young Artists Programme supports the artistic development of young professional singers, conductors, directors and répétiteurs. The Young Artists are an international group of outstanding professionals at the start of their careers who have undertaken formal training and have already worked with professional companies. They are not students, but contracted, salaried employees of the Royal Opera House, who work here full-time over two years.

There is no age limit for those on the Programme, but when choosing the Young Artists the audition panel take into consideration the stage individuals have reached in their careers and where they will be in terms of career development and age after working for two years on the Programme.

The Young Artists work on productions for The Royal Opera, singing small roles, covering larger roles or joining the music or directing staff. They also receive coaching in all opera

disciplines. They work with Royal Opera music staff, a wide range of freelance music and language coaches and visiting singers, directors and conductors. Every facility of the Company is made available to them so that their talents are nurtured through total immersion in the life of the Royal Opera House. For further information, visit www.roh.org.uk/about/jette-parker-young-artists-programme

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