Northeastern Illinois University
Department of Music
presents

Suor Angelica & Gianni Schicchi

By Giacomo Puccini

Directed by Sasha Gerritson
Conducted by Christopher Owen

Suor Angelica orchestral edition by Bryan Higgins,
by arrangement with Motet Music Publishing Company.

Performance running time: approximately 2 hours, 20 minutes
(including one 20 minute intermission)
Dear friends,

What a pleasure to have you join us tonight for Suor Angelica and Gianni Schicchi. It’s been an AMAZING semester. The students, family, alum and friends have worked really hard and it’s definitely paid off. I am so proud of them all.

Doing traditional Italian repertoire in the original language is a lot of extra work for everyone. I’m so grateful to my friend and colleague Lucia Marchi, who coached us on every word! Mille grazie!

Puccini’s music is timeless and his work remains in the standard repertoire because it is so well crafted, so expressive and so worthy of performance. He is my favorite composer, without a doubt!

It’s been a true joy for me to have my two sons, Nate and Josh, participate in the shows this semester. They took it so seriously and as the ultimate “stage mom”, I was delighted to see their progress.

Overall, this was one of my favorite semesters of all time. The music, the acting, the effort put in by the cast members, the exceptional orchestra and the outstanding technical aspects of this production, have all touched my heart in a very meaningful way. The amazing set, the vibrant lighting and brilliant costumes are the result of the ROCK STAR team we have in place. I am a very, very lucky person to have such talented and creative people to work with.

Kay Lea, David, Chris, Christopher, Kay, Jane, Lucia, Becca, Jaime, Bill, Sienna, Kate, Rick, and many others – THANK YOU. You are bright rays of sunshine in my life.

Fondly,

Sasha Gerritson
Director

Best Wishes to
Sasha Gerritson, Cast, and Crew
on another successful production.

Hugs from Carla Michelotti & Bob Colvin
CAST LISTS

SUOR ANGELICA

Suor Angelica ................................................................. Gisella Milla
La Zia Principessa ........................................................... Rose Guccione
La Badessa ........................................................................ Andreas Tucci
La Suora Zelatrice ............................................................ Jeremy Cairns
La Maestra delle Novice ................................................... Zanneta Kubajak
Suor Genevieve .................................................................. Juli Brubaker
Suor Osmina ....................................................................... Kyrie Nelson
Suor Dolcina ....................................................................... Gretchen Sheirok
First Touriere .................................................................... Dee Kimpel
Second Touriere ................................................................ Evelyn P. Priebe
Novice .............................................................................. Liz Broeker
Novice .............................................................................. Trish Maloney
Lay Sister ........................................................................ Ahriel Mullings
Lay Sister ........................................................................ Cathy Parrilli
Son .................................................................................. Joshua Jarvis
Suor Angelica (understudy) .................................................. Emma Oberdick

Chorus
Kendall Battaglia, Isaih Brown, Jerry Brown, Cortnei Davenport, Mimi Dean,
Leticia Delgado, Samuel Francis, Eugene Jarvis, Tracy Kim, Fred Sivils,
Cherita Warren, Kirsten Zwieschowski

GIANNI SCHICCHI

Gianni Schicchi .................................................................... Wellington Da Silva
Rinuccio ............................................................................ Evan Snyder
Lauretta ............................................................................ Gretel Mink Hansen
Zita ................................................................................... Erica Sauder
Nella ................................................................................... Emma Oberdick
La Ciesca .......................................................................... Bethany Jargstorf
Betto .................................................................................. Christopher Hatcher
Marco .............................................................................. Nicholas Brubaker
Gherardo ........................................................................... Philip Platakis
Simone ............................................................................. Anthony DeFrancisco
Maestro Spinelloccio .......................................................... Robert Arcos
Il Notaro ........................................................................... Dr. Robert Heitzinger
Pinellino ........................................................................... Carlos Rodas
Guccio .............................................................................. Andre Owens
Gherardino ......................................................................... Nate Jarvis
Buoso Donati ....................................................................... Erik Kivi
Lauretta (understudy) .......................................................... Gisella Milla
Zita (understudy) ............................................................... Dee Kimpel
Congratulations to Sasha on another smashing year!

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About Suor Angelica

The opera opens with scenes showing typical aspects of life in the convent: all the sisters sing hymns, the Monitor scolds two lay-sisters, everyone gathers for recreation in the courtyard. The sisters rejoice because, as the Mistress of Novices explains, this is the first of three evenings that occur each year when the setting sun strikes the fountain so as to turn its water golden. This event causes the sisters to remember Bianca Rosa, a sister who has died.

The nuns discuss their desires. While the Monitor believes that any desire at all is wrong, Sister Genevieve confesses that she wishes to see lambs again because she used to be a shepherdess when she was a girl, and Sister Dolcina wishes for something good to eat. Sister Angelica claims to have no desires, but as soon as she says so, the nuns begin gossiping — Sister Angelica has lied, because her true desire is to hear from her wealthy, noble family, whom she has not heard from in seven years. Rumors are that she was sent to the convent in punishment.

Two tourières, having received supplies for the convent, as well as news that a grand coach is waiting outside, bring excitement to the group. Sister Angelica becomes nervous and upset, thinking rightly that someone in her family has come to visit her. The Abbess chastises Sister Angelica for her inappropriate excitement and announces the visitor, the Princess, Sister Angelica’s aunt.

The Princess explains that Angelica’s sister is to be married and that Angelica must sign a document renouncing her claim to her inheritance. Angelica replies that she has repented for her sin, but she cannot offer up everything in sacrifice to the Virgin — she cannot forget the memory of her illegitimate son, who was taken from her seven years ago. The Princess at first refuses to speak, but finally informs Sister Angelica that her son died of fever two years ago. Sister Angelica, devastated, signs the document and collapses in tears. The Princess leaves.

Not in her right mind, Sister Angelica is seized by an idea. She will meet her son in Heaven. She makes a poison and drinks it, but realizes that in committing suicide, she has committed a mortal sin and has damned herself to eternal separation from her son. She begs the Virgin Mary for mercy and, as she dies, she sees a miracle: her son running towards her. Just as she is about to embrace him, he runs away and she dies of grief.

About Gianni Schicchi

As the cranky old miser Buoso Donati lies dead in his curtained four-poster bed, his relatives gather round to “mourn” his passing but are really more interested in learning the contents of his will. Among those present are his cousins Zita and Simone, his poor-relation brother-in-law Betto, and Zita’s nephew Rinuccio. Betto mentions a rumor he has heard that Buoso has left everything to a monastery; this disturbs the others and precipitates a frantic search for the will. The document is found by Rinuccio, who is confident that his uncle has left him plenty of money. He withholds the will momentarily and asks Zita to allow him to marry Lauretta, daughter of Gianni Schicchi, a newcomer to Florence. Zita replies that if Buoso has left them rich, he can marry whom he pleases; she and the other relatives are anxious to begin reading the will. A happy Rinuccio sends little Gherardino to fetch Schicchi and Lauretta.

As they read, the relatives’ worst fears are soon realized; Buoso has indeed bequeathed his fortune to the monastery. They break out in woe and indignation and turn to Simone, the oldest present and a former mayor of Fucecchio, but he can offer no help. Rinuccio
suggests that only Gianni Schicchi can advise them what to do, but this is scorned by Zita and the rest, who sneer at Schicchi’s humble origins and now say that marriage to the daughter of such a peasant is out of the question. Rinuccio defends Schicchi in an aria “Avete torto” after which Schicchi and Lauretta arrive. Schicchi quickly grasps the situation, and Rinuccio begs him for help, but Schicchi is rudely told by Zita to “be off” and take his daughter with him. Rinuccio and Lauretta listen in despair as Schicchi announces that he will have nothing to do with such people. Lauretta makes a final plea to him with “O mio babbino caro” and he agrees to look at the will. After twice scrutinizing it and concluding that nothing can be done, an idea occurs to him. He sends his daughter outside so that she will be innocent of what is to follow.

First, Schicchi establishes that no one other than those present knows that Buoso is dead. He then orders the body removed to another room. A knock announces the arrival of the doctor, Spinelloccio. Schicchi conceals himself behind the bed, mimics Buoso’s voice and declares that he’s feeling better; he asks the doctor to return that evening. Boasting that he has never lost a patient, Spinelloccio departs. Schicchi then unveils his plan in the aria “Si corre dal notaio”; having established in the doctor’s mind that Buoso is still alive, Schicchi will disguise himself as Buoso and dictate a new will. All are delighted with the scheme, and importune Schicchi with personal requests for Buoso’s various possessions, the most treasured of which are “the mule, the house and the mills at Signa”. The relatives agree to leave the disposition of the mule, the house and the mills to Schicchi, though each in turn offers him a bribe. The women help him to change into Buoso’s clothes as they sing. Before taking his place in the bed, Schicchi warns the company of the grave punishment for those found to have falsified a will: exile from Florence together with the loss of a hand.

The notary arrives, and Schicchi starts to dictate the new will, declaring any prior will null and void. To general satisfaction he allocates the minor bequests, but when it comes to the mule, the house and the mills, he orders that these be left to “my devoted friend Gianni Schicchi”. Incrédulous, the family can do nothing while the lawyer is present, especially when Schicchi slyly reminds them of the penalties that discovery of the ruse will bring. Their outburst of rage when the notary leaves is countered by a love duet from Lauretta and Rinuccio, “Lauretta mia”; there is now no bar to their marriage, since Schicchi can provide a full dowry. Schicchi chases the relatives out of what is now his house, and when he returns stands moved at the sight of the two lovers. He turns to the audience and asks them to agree that no better use could be found for Buoso’s wealth. Although the poet Dante has condemned him to hell for this trick, Schicchi asks the audience to forgive him in light of “extenuating circumstances.”
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Gregory B. Sarchet

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Lyon Leifer

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J. Ricardo Castañeda

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Christie Miller
Gloria Orozco

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Karl Rzasa

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Edgar Campos
Katie Samayoa

Horn
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Production Manager/Lighting Designer ................................................................. Christopher Burpee
Assistant Director/Poster Design ................................................................. David Mitchell
Costume Designer ................................................................. Bill Morey
Associate Lighting Designer ................................................................. Casey Diers
Stage Manager ................................................................. Becca Levy
Technical Director ................................................................. Rick Combs
Deck Manager ................................................................. Stan Hicks
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**BIOGRAPHIES**

**Robert Arcos:** MAESTRO SPINELLOCCIO – Majoring in Classical guitar at NEIU, and studying with Brian Torosian, Robert also is excited to take voice lessons with Kathy Cowan. A newcomer to the Opera Workshop ensemble in last fall’s scene recital, he is pleased to be appearing in his first full production.

**Kendall Battaglia:** CHORUS – Kendall is a sophomore at Maine South HS and joins us under the NEIU outreach and recruitment program. She is thrilled to be a member of the cast of *Suor Angelica,* and thanks Sasha for another opportunity to perform at NEIU. This is her tenth opera under Sasha’s direction. Previously she has been in *Jekyll & Hyde, Die Fledermaus, Guys and Dolls, La Vie Parisienne, Sweeney Todd, Street Scene, A Christmas Carol* and *La Bohème.* She currently is in the Park Ridge Community Church Angeli Choir and takes voice lessons with Theresa Egan. She looks forward to continuing her career on stage at NEIU and in high school.

**Liz Broeker:** NOVICE - Liz is a sophomore at NEIU majoring in Music Education. She also appeared in last spring’s *Jekyll & Hyde.* Thanks always to Sasha!

**Isaih Brown:** CHORUS – A transfer student, Isaih comes to NEIU with an Associate’s Degree in Fine Arts with a specialized concentration in music. His main instrument is voice but is also learning the piano and guitar. Isaih is truly honored and thankful to be a part of such a terrific and outstanding production for the first time in his life. Thank you to Professor & Director Sasha Gerritson.

**Jerry Lee Brown:** CHORUS - A graduate of the NEIU TCP program in 2009, Jerry has longer connections with NEIU through stage work. He has appeared in many Opera Workshop productions including Gilbert & Sullivan's *Patience, Into The Woods, La Bohème* and recent productions of *The Secret Garden, A Christmas Carol, Sweeney Todd, La Vie Parisienne, Guys and Dolls, Die Fledermaus,*

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and Jekyll & Hyde. He is pleased to appear here again, working with this fine ensemble of friends and musicians.

**Juli Brubaker**: SUOR GENEVIEVE - Juli is delighted to be appearing in her first full NEIU production! A Master of Music grad from Northwestern University, Juli’s portfolio includes private voice/piano teacher (NEIU - CMP, Etc. Music School, MIC), Musikgarten instructor (MIC), as well as head cantor/choral assistant at Immaculate Conception Parish in Highland Park. She has performed the roles of ADINA in L’elisir d’amore, BARBARINA in Le nozze di Figaro, COBWEB in A Midsummer Night’s Dream, LUISA in The Fantasticks, MINNIE FAYE in Hello, Dolly!, VALENCIENNE in The Merry Widow, YOUNG POCAHONTAS in Pocahontas – A Woman of Two Worlds, ADELE in Die Fledermaus, VIRGINIA in The Secret Garden, and LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD in The Knightly News. She has also been honored to sing the National Anthem at the Taste of Chicago for the past 4 years.

**Nicholas Brubaker**: MARCO - Nic is currently a pursuing a second master’s degree in vocal pedagogy at NEIU and studies voice with Dr. Heitzinger. While at NEIU, he has been seen as HENRY JEKYLL/EDWARD HYDE in Jekyll & Hyde, GABRIEL EISENSTEIN in Die Fledermaus, SKY MASTERSON in Guys And Dolls, GUGLIELMO in Così fan Tutte and GARDEFEU in La Vie Parisienne. Notable work includes roles in The Gondoliers, The Merry Widow, Patience or Bunthorne’s Bride, Li’l Abner, Trouble in Tahiti, The Marriage of Figaro, The Ghosts of Versailles, The Magic Flute and Street Scene. In addition to Operatic work Mr. Brubaker is also an active recitalist and church musician.

**Christopher Burpee**: LIGHTING DESIGNER/ PRODUCTION MANAGER - Chris is happy to be returning to NEIU for this production. Previous NEIU design credits include Jekyll & Hyde, Die Fledermaus, Guys And Dolls, La Vie Parisienne, Sweeney Todd, Street Scene, A Christmas Carol and Secret Garden. Chris designs theatrical, dance, and corporate shows around the Chicagoland area, and works full time as the Technical Services Manager at Northwestern University.

**Jeremy Cairns**: LA SUORA ZELATRICE - At NEIU, Jeremy has performed in the Vocal Showcase and Opera Workshop, scene recitals, and as the BISHOP OF BASINGSTOKE in Jekyll & Hyde. Recent credits include THE BOY in He Who Says by Kurt Weill, and SORCERESS in Dido and Aeneas by Henry Purcell. Many thanks to Sasha, David, Kay and the rest of the cast and crew for their hard work and dedication!

**Wellington Da Silva**: GIANNI SCHICCHI - Wellington is a senior at NEIU majoring in Vocal Performance. He has appeared in numerous NEIU productions, including: Into the Woods, Sweeney Todd, The Secret Garden, and Guys and Dolls. He also has the pleasure of serving as the tenor soloist with the Park Ridge Community Church Chancel Choir, under the direction of Sasha Gerritson.

**Cortnei Davenport**: CHORUS – Cortnei is very happy to be returning to NEIU and Opera Workshop! Cortnei is an undergraduate Music Performance major and she studies voice with Dr. Heitzinger.

**Mimi Dean**: CHORUS – Mimi is a student at NEIU working towards a BA in flute performance. During the year she usually performs with the University Wind Ensemble and Orchestra but is currently focusing on acting with Opera Workshop. She has been a part of the Fall Opera Scenes and this is her third full show with Sasha.

**Anthony DeFrancisco**: SIMONE – Anthony is an instrumental music education major at NEIU in which his primary instrument is the trombone, although he is steadily becoming an active vocalist at NEIU as well! Anthony currently studies with Steve Duncan for trombone and with Cathy Cowan for voice. He has been seen on the NEIU stage several times most memorably as Leaf Coneybear from Spelling Bee in summer opera scenes and most recently as FROSCH in Die Fledermaus, and DON ALFONSO in the production of Così fan Tutte. Anthony also hopes to soon pick up the tuba for his own enjoyment and for the comedic relief of others.

**Leticia Delgado**: CHORUS - Lety is an NEIU Music Education major who studies voice with Dr. Heitzinger. This is her second semester at
Northeastern, after transferring from Wilbur Wright College with an Arts Associates Degree. Although she has previous choral experience, this is her first time in an opera.

**Samuel Francis**: CHORUS – Samuel returns to Opera ensemble after appearing in last fall’s scene recital! Samuel is a transfer student studying Vocal Music Education at NEIU. In addition to singing, he is also a percussionist.

**Sasha Gerritson** DIRECTOR - is a proud alum, having received both her Bachelor’s and Master’s Degree at NEIU. She also earned a Certificate in Vocal Performance from DePaul University. She has been serving as the Opera & Musical Theatre Director for NEIU for the past 10 years and before that taught Music Theory, Sight Singing and Ear training. She also is the recruitment/scholarship coordinator for the NEIU department of music. Additionally, Sasha serves on the Board of Trustees of DePaul University and is the current President of the Brookfield Zoo’s Women’s Board. In her spare time she does karate at the North Shore Dojo. Sasha lives in Glenview with her husband Eugene Jarvis and their two boys, Nate and Josh.


**Gretel Mink Hansen**: LAURETTA - Gretel is a graduate student at NEIU and couldn't be more thrilled to be playing LAURETTA! Other credits at NEIU include LUCY (*Jekyll & Hyde*), ADELE (*Die Fledermaus*), BEGGAR WOMAN (*Sweeney Todd*), and ROSE MAURRANT (*Street Scene*.) Gretel was born and raised in Miami Florida and received her Bachelor’s Degree in Vocal Performance from The University of Miami’s Frost School of Music. She has worked for Walt Disney World, The Orlando Opera, and is currently a resident artist with Chamber Opera Chicago in Lincoln Park. She has toured the U.K with Chamber Opera the past 4 summers playing MISS CARTERET in *Jane Austen's Persuasion: The Musical*. Gretel also teaches voice, piano, and early childhood music at The Music Connection in Orland Park, IL. I'd love to thank Sasha for this opportunity and my family for their endless love and support. A dream is a wish your heart makes!

**Christopher Hatcher**: BETTO - is a grad student at NEIU studying under Dr. Heitzinger. Previous roles include in DR. FALKE in *Die Fledermaus*, NATHAN DETROIT in *Guys and Dolls*, DON ALFONSO in *Cosi fan tutte*, PAPAGENO in *Die Zauberflöte*, and MASETTO in *Don Giovanni*. He hopes you enjoy the show!

**Dr. Robert Heitzinger**: IL NOTARO - Robert Heitzinger is Associate Professor and Head of Voice at NEIU. He has appeared on Broadway, with the Lyric Opera of Chicago and many other opera and music theater companies as well as symphony orchestras in the U.S. and Europe. He received his Doctor of Music degree from Northwestern University.

**Beth Jargstorf**: LA CIESCA - Bethany holds an Associate of Fine Arts, Music degree from Harper College and is continuing her undergraduate studies at NEIU. She has appeared in *Evita, Godspell*, and most recently a concert production of *Parade* at Avery Fisher Hall, conducted by the composer Jason Robert Brown. Additionally, she is a member of the Chicago Jazz Duo and acts as house vocalist at a restaurant. She is proud to be involved with Youth Opera Council, one of Lyric Opera’s outreach programs. Bethany is thrilled to have been given the opportunity to work with a group of such dedicated artists.

**Eugene Jarvis**: CHORUS – Eugene is so happy to be a part of this production with his beautiful wife Sasha and their two boys, Nate and Josh. Eugene loves to sing, play the piano, guitar and compose music and recently has been in the studio recording some of his jazz standard compositions. In addition to music, Eugene works in the video arcade game industry.

**Joshua Jarvis**: SUOR ANGELICA’S SON -Josh is 7 years old and this is his first opera. He is in the first grade at Lyon school in Glenview. In addition to being in shows, he loves to do karate, hockey, sing in Junior Choir and play Monopoly. He is SUPER excited to have a “featured part”, in his own words.
**BIOGRAPHIES cont.**

**Nate Jarvis:** GHERARDINO – Nate is 10 years old and this is his first opera. He loves to sing and to read Harry Potter books. In fact, he is very proud of the fact that he finished all 7 HP books in under a year! In addition to singing, Nate studies piano, does karate, plays hockey and sings in the Junior Choir at church.

**Jane Kenas-Heller:** ACCOMPANIST, VOCAL COACH - Jane is thrilled to continue her association with Opera Workshop, as she is Dr. Kay Kim's predecessor as staff pianist for the NEIU Music Department. As pianist for the modern dance company, Concert Dance, Inc., Jane has performed at the Ravinia Festival and at the New Dance Festival in Prague, Czech Republic. She is fortunate to have toured twice for the USO, performing on US military bases in Europe, Iceland, Greenland, and Canada. Also a singer, Jane was a finalist in the Bel Canto Competition, has sung with Chicago Opera Theatre, and toured with the Lyric Opera Center. As a composer, Jane's one-act opera, Romance Novel, was premiered at NEIU. Jane received her Master of Arts in Vocal Pedagogy degree from NEIU as a student of Dr. Phyllis Hurt, and her Bachelor of Music Degree from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point as a voice student of Dr. Ronald Combs.

**Kay Kim:** ACCOMPANIST/VOCAL COACH - an active collaborator, pianist Kay Kim performs an average of over 50 concerts a year both domestically and internationally. She has been one of the pianists of Chicago Symphony Orchestra's conductor's rehearsals, performed with the Stradivari Society artists and collaborated with Chicago Chamber Musicians. As a member of musical ambassador group Trio Chicago and Friends, Ms. Kim performs worldwide in Europe, Africa, Middle East, and Asia. She has been heard in CBS ‘Early Show’, WFMT ‘Impromptu’ and Dame Myra Hess Series. Ms. Kim serves as a full-time staff pianist and as an instructor of piano accompanying at NEIU. Her previous teaching and staff positions include Northwestern University, Indiana University and the Juilliard School. She holds a doctoral degree in piano performance from Northwestern University.

**Tracy Kim:** CHORUS – Tracy is a senior at NEIU majoring in vocal performance (mezzo-soprano). As a returning student, she is grateful for the opportunity to come back to NEIU after a hiatus and study what she loves—music! Suor Angelica is her first full length Italian opera production. Jekyll and Hyde, in 2017, was her first NEIU performance in a full musical production. Outside of school, she has been involved in a number of different ensembles, including the North Shore Choral Society. She is also the proud mother of a daughter as well as a kitten named Sonny.

**Dee Kimpel:** FIRST TOURIERE, ZITA UNDERSTUDY - Dee, an NEIU Alumna and current vocal performance major, has been in productions such as Guys and Dolls, Così fan Tutti, La Vie Parisienne, and many NEIU scene recitals. She has performed in Gilbert and Sullivan’s Patience, The Pirates of Penzance, The Mikado, Little Shop of Horrors and various musicals and operetta’s. Dee performed the role of LOIS, in NEIU's emeritus Jim Blair production of Lounging, in the summers of 2015 and 2016. ’I’m honored to be in any production of Sasha Gerritson, because I know ’you just can’t go wrong.' Glory to God! Thanks to my husband ‘Bear’, my daughter’s Zephranie and Dana. “I am a Woman - Phenomenally” ~Maya Angelou

**Erik Kivi:** CHORUS/BUOSO DONATI – Erik is very pleased to be back at NEIU for this production, again playing a dead guy. As an alumnus of the NEIU music education program, he currently teaches orchestra in Orland Park, at Orland Jr. High. He would like to thank Sasha for her continued support, as well as his family, his primary associate, and the cast and crew.

**Zanneta Kubajak:** LA MAESTRA DELLE NOVIZIE - is a NEIU Senior majoring in Music Education and was most recently seen at NEIU in Jekyll & Hyde. She has studied acting and improv at The Second City Training Center and has been seen in various productions in Chicago. Some of her favorite roles include SISTER MOORE in The Amen Corner, ANDREA in Once On This Island and POVERTY in Wealth. Zanneta is thrilled to be a part of this wonderful production and to work with such an incredibly talented bunch!
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Becca Levy: STAGE MANAGER - is delighted to be stage managing with NEIU Opera after Stage Managing Jekyll & Hyde last spring! She works as the production manager for Strawdog Theatre Company and has been on the stage management team for a number of amazing Chicago Theatres. Some favorites include Strawdog Theatre Company, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Jackalope Theatre Company, and Red Theater. Outside of Chicago: Networks Touring Presentations and Famers Alley Theatre. BFA Stage Management, Western Michigan University. Big love to Billy and Patrick!

Kate Setzer Kamphausen: COSTUME ASSISTANT – is delighted to return to NEIU as costume assistant to the brilliant Bill Morey. Kate is a Jeff Award winning costumer in town whose recent work includes Emerald City; the Factory Theater; and Kokandy Productions. Kate has pink hair, five sewing machines and an entire shelf for glue.

Sienna Macedon-Kusek: HAIR & MAKEUP DESIGN – Sienna is very excited to be here for her NINTH show! She has worked with such companies as Northbrook Children’s Theatre, Music Theatre Works, North Riverside Players, and is a current company member with Petite Opera Productions. A special thank you to Sasha for leading such an amazing production, Toph, for always being so very patient, and David for dragging me along for this crazy ride.

Trish Maloney: NOVICE – undergrad in music performance at NEIU. This is her first production, she has had a blast working with everyone!

Gisella Milla: SUOR ANGELICA – is a NEIU graduate student working towards her Master of Arts in Music. In addition to last Spring’s Jekyll & Hyde, she has participated previously in With Blood, With Ink with Third Eye Ensemble, Dido & Aeneas and La Calisto productions with Roosevelt University, as well as in operas and recitals in Peru, her home country. She has also worked at the Annual...

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Special thanks to Sasha.

David Wesley Mitchell: ASSISTANT
DIRECTOR - A graduate of NEIU, David has
been seen there in Jekyll & Hyde, The Laramie
Project, Guys and Dolls, Sweeney Todd, The
Secret Garden, and Into the Woods, as well
as other plays, operas and scene recitals.
Among others, he has also worked with
Griffin Theatre, Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre,
Strawdog Theatre, Broadway in Chicago,
Light Opera Works, and Emerald City Theatre.
Thanks and love, as always, to Sasha.

Bill Morey: COSTUME DESIGN - Bill has
designed costumes for several operas and
musicals at NEIU including The Secret Garden,
A Christmas Carol, Sweeney Todd, Street Scene,
La Vie Parisienne, Die Fledermaus, Guys and
Dolls and others. Bill is an twelve time Jeff
Award nominee, and a four time Equity Jeff
Award winner. He is also the recipient of two
After Dark Awards and the BroadwayWorld
Award for costume design.
www.billmorey.com

Ahriel Mullings: LAY SISTER - Ahriel
is a graduate, having majored in Vocal
Performance while minoring in dance. She
has been seen at NEIU in Jekyll & Hyde, Guys
and Dolls, Die Fledermaus, as well a few scene
recitals Rent and The Wild Party. Prior to NEIU,
Ahriel was in the Chicago Children’s Choir
Concert Choir for 10 years. With the choir
she toured to places like Japan, Alaska and
Argentina. Love and thanks to family and
friends.

Kyrie Nelson: SUOR OSMINA - Kyrie is
a Senior at NEIU majoring in Secondary
Education with a concentration in English.
She has previously been in the ensembles
for the NEIU productions of La Bohème, Guys
and Dolls, and Die Fledermaus. She is excited
to once again share the stage with these
wonderful performers.

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**Emma Oberdick:** **NELLA/SUOR ANGELICA UNDERSTUDY** – Emma is a 23 year old vocal performance major here at NEIU studying voice with Dr. Robert Heitzinger. She is so happy to be in her fourth full production with Sasha Gerritson. Past roles have been EMMA CAREW in *Jekyll & Hyde*, SARAH BROWN in *Guys and Dolls* and ROSALINDA in *Die Fledermaus*. Enjoy the show!

**Andre Owens:** **GUCCIO** – a previous vocal major at NEIU, Andre has been seen in multiple NEIU productions over the years including *La Bohème*, *The Secret Garden*, and *Susannah* and is excited to be returning! He enjoys signing with his church choir and has toured all over the world with them. *Love you, Sasha!*

**Christopher Owen:** **CONDUCTOR** - Dr. Christopher Owen is the Director of Choral Activities and Assistant Professor of Music Education at Northeastern Illinois University. He conducts the NEIU Chamber Singers, University Chorus, teaches choral conducting, vocal music methods and supervises clinical and student teachers. In addition to his work at the university Dr. Owen is a sought after clinician and adjudicator. As a performer he serves as a conductor and chorus master for Vox3 Collective, Chicago Opera Vanguard, and is the Director of Music at Northminster Presbyterian Church in Evanston. Nationally, he is an artistic partner with the men’s vocal ensemble CANTUS. On the international scene, he is a creative artistic affiliate with MOZAWA: an international consortium of artists, and has recently returned from Germany as a visiting artist to the Chorakademie am Konzerthaus Dortmund. He is really excited to be joining Sasha and the Opera program for his second production at NEIU.

**Cathy Parrilli:** **LAY SISTER** – Community member and friend of Sasha, Cathy is excited to be back on stage at Northeastern reprising the role of a nun. Cathy has previously performed in *Sweeney Todd* and *Guys & Dolls* at Northeastern. A resident of Park Ridge, she enjoys spending her free time with her new grandson Vinny, and also singing with the Park Ridge Chorale. *Thank you to all my friends and family who support me in my many endeavors.*

**Philip Platakis:** **GHERARDO** – Phil, an NEIU alum, is thrilled to be performing with this ridiculously talented cast and crew! He has been performing at NEIU since before graduating from its Music Education program in 2009. Favorite roles include ELDER OTT from *Susannah* and MAJOR HOLMES from *The Secret Garden*. Big ups to Sasha, family, and friends for love and support. *Thanks for coming!*

**Evelyn P. Priebe:** **SECOND TOURIERE** – Evelyn has a long history of performing. She has a particular affinity for the musical stage, having performed in many operas, operettas and Broadway-style musicals. She again returns to the NEIU stage as a lover of and performer in musical theatre.

**Carlos Rodas:** **PINELLINO** – Carlos is a NEIU vocal performance major, and is in his sixth semester of college. His last production at NEIU was *Jekyll & Hyde*. However he has done many other shows such as *Grease*, *The Sound of Music*, *Into The Woods*, and many others. He would like to thank his family for constantly motivating him to follow his dreams.

**Erica Sauder:** **ZITA** - Erica is a vocal performance major at NEIU. She has performed in *Jekyll & Hyde* (EMMA CAREW), *Die Fledermaus* (ROSALINDA), *Guys and Dolls* (SARAH BROWN), *Cosi fan Tutte* (FIORDILIGI), *La Vie Parisienne* (BARONESS) *Sweeney Todd* (CORE ENSEMBLE), *Street Scene* (MRS. OLSEN) and *A Christmas Carol* (ENSEMBLE). She has been featured in Opera Workshop Recitals of *Suor Angelica*, *Gianni Schicchi*, *Fidelio*, *La Bohème*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Abduction from the Seraglio*, and *Carmen*. Outside of school she works as an administrative assistant for Ensemble Español Spanish Dance Theatre and leads Patchwork, a folk rock band through Park Community Church in Chicago. *Thank you Sasha, for this wonderful and fun opportunity, and thanks to my family, friends, and fellow cast mates for your love and friendship. Break legs!*
Classical WFMT salutes retiring Morning Program host Carl Grapentine, who has started our day with music since 1986. Our heartfelt thanks and best wishes.

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Kay Lea (Meyers) Schuetz: SCENIC & PROPS DESIGN - Kay Lea has worked with Sasha Gerritson for over 10 years in various roles. She started her work as a stage manager fresh out of college and for the last 8 years, has been scenic designer and production manager. Kay is super thankful for the cohesive and kind team that Sasha surrounds herself with each year to put on these productions - the quality of the work and joy of doing it come easy with such a good folks on the team. Sasha Gerritson means the world to Kay - their friendship is a blessing she counts daily. She sends a CHEERS! to all the to-do lists behind them and ahead, as well as to another opening of the curtain!

Gretchen Sheirok: SUOR DOLCINA – Gretchen, an NEIU music student, is thrilled to be in another show at NEIU. This makes her 26th appearance singing and being the prop mistress. She also enjoys singing in local choir groups around the city and suburbs.

Fred Sivils: CHORUS – Fred appeared in his first musical production for Sasha Gerritson as a Community Listener in the April 2010 presentation of La Bohème. He is currently a Graduate-Student-At-Large at NEIU and has studied Voice with Kathy Cowan and Music Theory with Sasha. This is his 17th appearance in one of Sasha’s productions. He is grateful for the chance to appear again with so many highly talented fellow singers and actors.

Evan Snyder: RINUCCIO - is a second year masters student in pedagogy at NEIU. He has also studied at Catholic Theological Union (Chicago) and Western Michigan University (Kalamazoo). He is originally from the great mitten state of Michigan. This is Evan’s first NEIU stage role. Thanks to all who offer continuous support, guidance, and understanding!
Andrea Tucci: LA BADESSA – Andrea is a grad student at NEIU studying with Dr. Heitzinger. Previous roles include Gertrud in *Hansel and Gretel*, Florinda in *Into the Woods*, and Madame Pompous in *Too Many Sopranos*. She hopes you enjoy the show!

Cherita Warren: CHORUS – Undergraduate at Northeastern Illinois University majoring in Vocal Performance studying under Dr. Heitzinger. She has performed at previous NEIU recitals, but this is her first Opera Workshop Performance. She hopes you have a wonderful experience at the show.

Kirsten Zwieschowski: CHORUS – A member of the NEIU outreach and recruitment program, Kirsten is in 9th grade and is excited to be appearing in her first show! In her spare time, she trains in dance, voice, and piano. *Thanks to Sasha for this terrific opportunity!*

Congratulations to the cast & crew of Suor Angelica and Gianni Schicchi

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G. PUCCINI
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ABOUT THE OPERA/MUSICAL THEATRE PROGRAM AT NEIU

In order to give our students a variety of experiences, as they go forward with their performing and teaching careers, an intentional four year repertoire rotation was established in 2007. In between major productions we supplement the student learning experience with scene recitals drawn from all types of repertoire.

YEAR ONE: Modern opera, sung in English.
YEAR TWO: Modern musical theatre
YEAR THREE: Standard repertoire opera/operetta
YEAR FOUR: Standard/“legit” style musical theatre

2007-2008 (Year one)
*Susannah* by Carlisle Floyd & *The Medium* by Gian Carlo Menotti

2008-2009 (Year two)
*Into the Woods* by Stephen Sondheim

2009-2010 (Year three)
*La Bohème* by Giacomo Puccini

2010-2011 (Year four)
*The Secret Garden* by Lucy Simon

2011-2012 (Year one)
*A Christmas Carol* by Ronald Combs
*Street Scene* by Kurt Weill

2012-2013 (Year two)
*Sweeney Todd* by Stephen Sondheim

2013-2014 (Year three)
*La Vie Parisienne* by Offenbach & *Cosi Fan Tutte* by Mozart

2014-2015 (Year four)
*Guys and Dolls* by Frank Loesser

2015-2016 (Year one)
*The Worst One Ever* by Belshaw & *Die Fledermaus* (in English) by J Strauss

2016-2017 (Year two)
*Jekyll & Hyde* by Frank Wildhorn & Leslie Bricusse

2017-2018 (Year three)
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Suor Angelica &
Gianni Schicchi.

Break-a-leg!

Carla Knorowski
IN HONOR OF THE MEMORY OF

Beth A. Brenner

Darren and Ava Brenner would like to extend a heartfelt congratulations to Sasha and all the members of her program on another fantastic performance. Beth loved your music, artistry and vision!
CONGRATULATIONS SASHA!

Wishing you all the best on the performances of

Suor Angelica & Gianni Schicchi

From All of Your Friends at BETSON
Congratulations
TO SASHA AND THE TALENTED PERFORMERS.

Larry & Amy