



OMAHA
SYMPHONY

Ankush Kumar Bahl, Music Director

program notes

2024/25 SEASON



Physicians Mutual®

OMAHA SYMPHONY

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

December 12-15, 2024

Holland Performing Arts Center

Ernest Richardson, conductor

Sponsored by:



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Kiewit

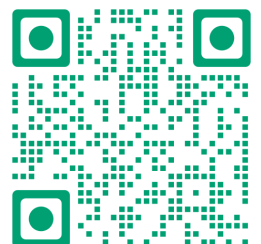


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This printed program is a condensed version. For more info about the orchestra, guest artists, and the music, download the Omaha Symphony app or scan this QR code with your mobile device.



Program List

A Christmas Scherzo

TRADITIONAL, ARR. SEBESKY

Angels We Have Heard on High

TRADITIONAL/ARR. RICHARDSON

We Need a Little Christmas

HERMAN, ARR. WENDEL

March from The Nutcracker

TCHAIKOVSKY

You Make It Feel Like Christmas

VARIOUS, ARR. MCKENZIE

Where Are You, Christmas?

CAREY

Carol of the Bells

LEONTOVYCH, ARR. RICHARDSON

Hallelujah

GAD, ARR. MCCAULEY

Santa Claus is Coming to Town

COOTS, ARR. WHITFIELD

All I Want for Christmas is You

CAREY, ARR. BISBANO

Cuban Sugar

TCHAIKOVSKY, ARR. JONER

Be A Santa from Subways Are for Sleeping

STYNE/ARR. MEYERS & CASTLE

O Come, O Come Emmanuel!

TRADITIONAL, ARR. RICHARDSON

When You Believe from The Prince of Egypt

SCHWARTZ, ARR. LANGLEY

Jingle Bells

PIERPONT, ARR. ELLIOTT

Snow Jingle Bells

BERLIN, ARR. BARKER

Rudolph Entr'acte

KATSAROS

Let it Snow, Let it Snow, Let it Snow

STYNE, ARR. SEBESKY

Sleigh Ride

ANDERSON

Il est né, le divin Enfant – Ding! Dong!

Merrily on High

TRADITIONAL, ARR. RICHARDSON

Ave Maria

SCHUBERT, ARR. RICHARDSON

O Holy Night

ADAM, ARR. RICHARDSON

Hark Ye Shepherds

TRADITIONAL, ARR. RICHARDSON

We Wish You a Merry Christmas

TRADITIONAL, ARR. RAIMAN, SEIGEL, & MOTYCKA

INTERMISSION

Featured Artists



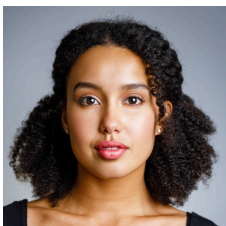
Conductor

Ernest Richardson is the principal pops conductor and resident conductor of the Omaha Symphony. Since 1993, he has been integral in the development of the Symphony's vaunted education and community engagement programs, Richardson's innovation can be especially seen in the Symphony's Choral Collaborative, Celebrate Creativity, and Mission: Imagination programs, which remain mainstays of the organization's season



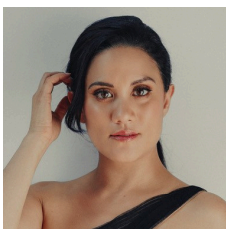
Director

Parker Esse is a multi-award-winning director/choreographer known for his visionary, energetic, and earnest story-driven work. He has been hailed a "genius" by national publications such as *The Washington Post*. After performing as a featured performer on Broadway in the Tony Award winning *Fosse* (with Ben Vereen, Bebe Neuwirth and Ann Reinking, which was taped for PBS Great Performances), in National Tours and Regionally, he began collaborating on multiple Broadway, Off- Broadway, NYC and Regional shows as an associate director/choreographer.



Principal

Soprano **Kanisha Feliciano** returns for her second Christmas with the Omaha Symphony. She performed as Maria in *West Side Story* at both the Muny and Chicago Lyric Opera. Previously, Kanisha closed the historic run of *Phantom of the Opera* on Broadway as a Christine Daae understudy. She also originated the role of Ann/Judith in *Flying Over Sunset* at Lincoln Center. Other credits include Sharon in *Masterclass* at Arizona Theater Company, Lily from *The Secret Garden* at Music Circus in Sacramento, along with operatic roles such as Suzanna (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Baby Doe (*The Ballad of Baby Doe*), and Amy March (*Little Women*). Kanisha also teaches voice lessons, specializing in the post-menopausal voice.



Principal

Diane Phelan starred as Cinderella in *Into the Woods* on Broadway, a role she reprised on the recent limited engagement national tour. Other Broadway/NY credits include *School of Rock* (Wintergarden), *The King & I* (Lincoln Center), *Bernarda Alba* (Lincoln Center), *South Pacific* (Lincoln Center Tour). Select favorites include Belle in *Beauty and the Beast* (CSTC), Maria von Trapp in *The Sound of Music* (La Mirada), Imelda in *Here Lies Love* (The Public), Julie Jordan in *Carousel* (Baayork Lee's NAAP), Mable in *Pirates of Penzance* (CTRep), and Maria in *West Side Story* at the Paris Chatelet.



Principal

Baritone **Markel Reed** "brings great articulate power and style" (*Broadway World*) to concert, recital, and opera performances throughout the U.S., Canada, and Europe. A passionate conveyor of the operatic repertoire, Reed has been cited for "delight[ing] the crowd with his musical and dramatic expression" (*Upstage Post*) in both standard and contemporary works. Recent operatic highlights include performing as Figaro in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* at Virginia Opera, Parson Alltalk in *Treemonisha* at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Young Emile in *Champion* with Boston Lyric Opera, and Joey in *The Time of Our Singing* with Theater St. Gallen in Switzerland.



Principal

Kevin Vortmann is thrilled to return for his 13th appearance with the Omaha Symphony! Favorite credits include *A Little Night Music*, *Death Takes a Holiday*, *Most Happy Fella*, *On the Town*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Show Boat*, *Paint Your Wagon*, *Lost in the Stars*, *Stairway to Paradise*, *Juno*, and *Children and Art*. He has been a featured soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, with multiple engagements at Carnegie Hall, Avery Fisher Hall and the Kennedy Center. Love to family, especially Amanda, Colin, Lucas, and Mom!



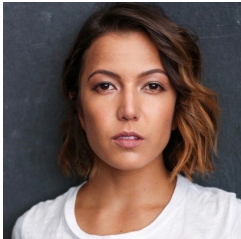
Dance Captain

Erica Mansfield is thrilled to be back celebrating Christmas with the Omaha Symphony! Broadway shows include *Mamma Mia!*, *How to Succeed...*, *Evita*, *Pippin*, *On the Twentieth Century*, *On the Town*, *Finding Neverland*, *Bandstand*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Mrs. Doubtfire*, and *Almost Famous*. National Tours include *A Chorus Line* and *Mamma Mia!* This past year Erica has had the joy of being Parker Esse's associate on *Fiddler on the Roof* (The Muny and Papermill), *Jersey Boys* (Lorraine) at Casa Mañana, and the Celtic Soiree here in Omaha. TV credits include *FBI*, *Law and Order*, *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, *The Best Man*, *That Damn Michael Che*, *Jimmy Fallon*, *PBS 50 Years of Broadway*, *SNL* and *The Kennedy Center Honors*. Happy Holidays!!



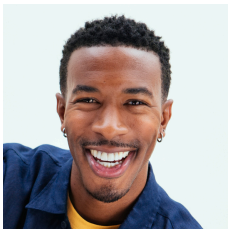
Dancer

Luke Hawkins is an NYC-based tap dancer and choreographer. Luke has choreographed for Harry Connick Jr. and performed alongside him in 43 concerts including The Hollywood Bowl, Wolftrap, UNO Lakefront arena in New Orleans, La Seine Musicale in Paris, and the Paladium Theatre in London. Luke also performed in and choreographed the Broadway show *Harry Connick Jr.'s A Tribute to Cole Porter* at the Nederlander Theatre in 2019. His theater credits include the Broadway production of *Xanadu*, *Cirque du Soleil's Banana Shpeel* (NYC) and *Joya* (Cancun, Mexico) as well as New York City Center Encore's productions of *No, No, Nanette*, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* and *On Your Toes*.



Dancer

Morgan Marcell just finished *Ragtime* at NY City Center and wrapped *Kiss of the Spiderwoman*, starring Jennifer Lopez, as part of the cast and creative team. She recently choreographed Maltby & Shire's new musical *Waterfall* and starred as The Wife in Duncan Sheik's newest musical, *Noir!* After her Broadway debut in *Hamilton* (OBC), she continued to originate roles in *Bandstand* and *Moulin Rouge!* She was Associate Choreographer/Cast for both NBC's *Annie Live!* and FX's *Fosse/Verdon*. Impassioned by education, Morgan founded the The Eliza Project, a philanthropic organization linking professional artists to the students of Graham Windham, the orphanage Eliza Hamilton started.



Dancer

Justin Prescott is an NYC-based performer, choreographer, and educator. Justin has had a performance career of over 12 years, performing in ten Broadway shows such as *Fela!*, *Motown the Musical*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Moulin Rouge*, and most recently *Funny Girl*. In addition to his performance career, Justin's TV/film credits include *In the Heights*, FX's *Pose*, The Kennedy Center Honors, and NBC's *SMASH*. As a choreographer, Justin has created original works for The American Musical and Dramatic Academy (Los Angeles), The Ailey School Professional Program, Pace University Commercial Dance Program, Steps on Broadway Summer Study, and Kinder High School for the Performing and Visual Arts in Houston, TX.

Special Thanks to Our Community Members

The Omaha Symphony would like to thank the following for their involvement with this year's Physicians Mutual Omaha Symphony Christmas Celebration!

- Résonance
- Resonance Youth & Young Artists
- Anne Nagosky Violin & Viola Studio
- SNJ Choir

Résonance Members

Tara Cowherd, Maxwell Heyden, Jamie Luedtke, Kimberly McGreevy, Eric Micks, Lauren Morrissey, Joseph O'Connor, Justin Parsley, Kara Penniston, Seth Pierce, Jillian Solano, Jay Srygley, Emily Voogd, Evan Wohlers

Youth Ensemble Members

Judson Cloudt, Irish Gabriel Gallagher, Levi Grein, Clara Kizer, Quinn Krejci, Hannes Kulik, Ava Larson Gallegos, Martin Prieto, Matias Prieto, Liam Richardson, Amaiya Taylor