



OMAHA SYMPHONY

Ankush Kumar Bahl, Music Director

program notes

2023/24 SEASON



Physicians Mutual®

OMAHA SYMPHONY

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

December 14-17, 2023

Holland Performing Arts Center

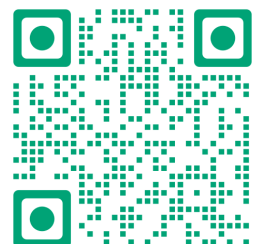
Ernest Richardson, conductor

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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

Carol of the Bells

LEONTOVYCH/ARR. NAUGHTIN

Joy to the World

TRADITIONAL/ARR. RICHARDSON

Happy Holiday - Let Yourself Go from White Christmas

BERLIN/ARR. WHITFIELD

Trepak from The Nutcracker

TCHAIKOVSKY

A Christmas Valentine

BARNES, MICHAELSON, & MRAZ/ARR. PETTIT

Jauchzet, frohlocket from Christmas Oratorio

J.S. BACH

Noel

VARIOUS/ARR. GAMBILL & GALBRAITH

Do You Hear What I Hear?

REGNEY/ARR. BARKER & LABREQUE

Hot Chocolate from The Polar Express

SILVESTRI/ARR. RICHARDSON

Like It's Christmas

VARIOUS/ARR. PETTIT

Oh Santa! from Mariah Carey's Magical Christmas Special

VARIOUS/ARR. PETTIT

Be A Santa from Subways Are for Sleeping

STYNE/ARR. MEYERS & CASTLE

Little Drummer Boy

VARIOUS/ARR. RICHARDSON

Sweet Little Jesus Boy / Mary, Did You Know?

MACGIMSEY-GREENE/ARR. COURTNEY

The Twelve Days of Christmas

TRADITIONAL/ARR. KATSAROS

Vermont Romance

VARIOUS/ARR. BARKER

Sleigh Ride

ANDERSON

Wassail! Wassail! All Over the Town

TRADITIONAL/ARR. RICHARDSON

Born Upon This Day

TRADITIONAL/ARR. RICHARDSON

O Holy Night

ADAM/ARR. RICHARDSON

Hark Ye Shepherds

TRADITIONAL/ARR. RICHARDSON

We Wish You a Merry Christmas

TRADITIONAL/ARR. RAINMAN, SEIGEL, & MOTYCHKA

INTERMISSION

Featured Artists



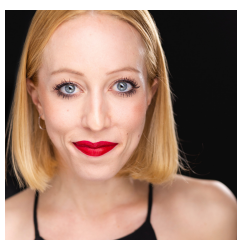
Principal Pops Conductor

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, in addition to his artistic leadership in the creation and curation of the successful Symphony Pops, Symphony Rocks, and Movies Series. 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.



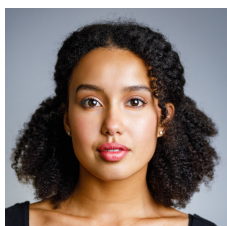
Director

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.



Associate Choreographer and Dance Captain

Lizz Picini is thrilled to be back with the Omaha Symphony's Christmas Celebration! Represented by CESD Talent Agency in both Dance and Print, she is so thankful to be living the dream in NYC! She teaches and coaches full-time in NYC when she is not touring the country, performing. Lizz is absolutely honored to have made dance history, summer of 2021, by having a LaDuca boot named after her; check out LaDuca's stunning "The Picini" rose gold boot! Some of her favorite recent performing credits include *Guys and Dolls* at The Kennedy Center, *Sister Act*, *Chicago*, and *Singin' in the Rain* all at The MUNY.



Principal

Kanisha Feliciano makes her Omaha Symphony debut after starring as Maria in *West Side Story* at the Chicago Lyric Opera and The Muny. Previously, Kanisha closed the historic run of *Phantom of the Opera* on Broadway as a Christine Daaé understudy. She also originated the role of Ann in *Flying Over Sunset* at Lincoln Center. Other credits include Lily from *The Secret Garden* at Music Circus Sacramento, along with *Sondheim on Sondheim* with the Kansas City Opera.



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

Rashidra Scott's Broadway credits include *Company*, *Ain't Too Proud...* (OBC, GRAMMY® nomination), *Beautiful* (OBC, GRAMMY® Award), *Sister Act* (OBC), *Hair*, *Finian's Rainbow*, and *Avenue Q* (Gary Coleman). Select regional appearances include *Anything Goes* (Reno Sweeney, PCLO), *Oliver!* (Mrs. Sowerberry, City Center Encores), *Hercules* (Melpomene - Muse, PaperMill Playhouse), *Ain't Too Proud* (Berkeley Rep, Kennedy Center), *Christmas in Connecticut*, *Ambassador of Love*, Reno in *Anything Goes* (Goodspeed Opera House), and Lorrell in *Dreamgirls* (Marriott Lincolnshire).



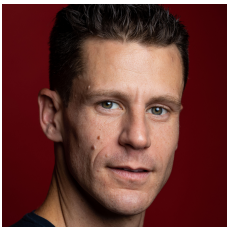
Principal

Kevin Vortmann is thrilled to return for his 11th 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!



Dancer

Henry Julián Gendron is ready and elated to bring some holiday cheer! Henry had a West Side summer, last seen at The Muny and the Lyric Opera of Chicago. Broadway: *Outsiders* (OBC), *MJ! The Musical* (Bob Fosse). Other: *Americano* (Off-Broadway), *On Your Feet!* (The Muny). He thanks God, The Mine, his family, his friends, Parker, and dedicates this performance to Alila, Jonjon, and his Abuela.



Dancer

Luke Hawkins is a 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

Erin Moore is a versatile artist, performing across mediums and genres. Credits include HBO's *Boardwalk Empire*, Netflix's *A Very Murray Christmas*, appearances on *The Tonight Show* and *Saturday Night Live*, *Follies*, *After Midnight*, *Shuffle Along*, *Rigoletto* at The Metropolitan Opera, as well as being featured with the San Francisco Symphony. TV credits include the finale of *Fosse/Verdon* on FX, season 3 of *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, and Lin-Manuel Miranda's *Tick, Tick...Boom* on Netflix. Erin is happy to be back at the Omaha Symphony this year!

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
- Youth Ensemble
- Anne Nagosky Violin & Viola Studio
- SNJ Choir

Résonance Members

Matt Bailey, Tara Cowherd, CeCe Hastreiter, Will Hastreiter, Ava Larson Gallegos, Jamie Luedtke, Eric Micks, Lauren Morrissey, Megan Parsons, Carli Tomac, Joseph O'Connor, Bret Olsen, Emily Voogd, Evan Wohlers, and Jesse Wohlman.

Youth Ensemble Members

Claire Wegner, Clara Kizer, Liam Richardson, Martin Prieto, Judson Cloudt, and Irish Gabriel Gallagher.