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May 2018

The Metropolitan Opera  
*National Council Auditions*  
ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION

Karen Mohr, Editor

*National Council Auditions Executive Director  
Gayletha Nichols takes new post at  
Santa Fe Opera after 18 years at the Met*

From a young woman who was too shy to enjoy speaking on the phone, Gayletha Nichols went on to become one of the opera world's most influential figures. Speaking to students at her alma mater, Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa, she admitted that "If I had known what the path was, I might not have taken it." After two decades as a singer, teacher, and career advisor including eight years as Director of Houston Opera Studio, she joined the Met as Executive Director of the National Council Auditions in 2000. Over the past 18 years, she has traveled the country, auditioning hundreds of singers, addressing universities, conservatories, and festivals on developing the next generation of opera singers, judging



national and international competitions, and consulting young artist programs. Later this month, she will succeed David Holloway as Director of the Apprentice Program at Santa Fe Opera. Holloway said, "There is no more qualified person in opera to fill this position as Director of Santa Fe Opera's Apprentice Singers Program. Gayletha's hobby is ceramics — molding clay. What a wonderful metaphor for what our program does with singers, helping them grow out of their training phase into professional opera singers." And once she's settled into the job, what better environment in which to pursue her passion for pottery than in the rich Santa Fe art scene? During her tenure at the Met, Gayletha has helped launch the careers of some of today's most celebrated singers – and gently suggested to others that they choose another path. In her remarks at the 2018 National Grand Finals, Joyce DiDonato recalled how Gayletha's encouragement gave her the impetus and confidence to continue training, even after she failed twice to win the National Council Auditions.

Gayletha's visit to Simpson College included this advice to the voice students:  
\* Set short-term goals. Always give yourself something that is attainable for you to work on.

\* The greatest artists of our day are those who keep studying. *(continued on page 2)*

**2018-2019  
ROCKY  
MOUNTAIN  
REGIONAL  
AUDITIONS**

**Arizona District  
Saturday, November 3  
(tentative)**

**Utah District  
To be announced**

**Colorado-Wyoming  
District  
Saturday, February 23  
9:30am  
Robert and Judi  
Newman Center for the  
Performing Arts  
University of Denver**

**Rocky Mountain  
Regional Finals  
Sunday, February 24  
1:30pm  
Robert and Judi  
Newman Center for the  
Performing Arts  
University of Denver**

**National Grand Finals  
Sunday, March 31  
3:00pm  
Metropolitan Opera  
House  
New York, NY**

*Winners Update: the 2018 National Grand Finals*



On April 29, four sopranos, four mezzos, and one tenor competed on the Met stage for five \$15,000 prizes and a major career boost at the National Grand Finals concert. Bertrand de Billy led the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. Joyce DiDonato hosted and performed with tenor Bryan Hymel while the judges deliberated. Winners from left to right: Soprano Hongni Wu, 23; soprano Jessica Faselt, 25; tenor Carlos Enrique Santelli, 26; mezzo Ashley Dixon, 26 (she and Santelli are married!); soprano Madison Leonard, 26.  
*Photo: Richard Termine*

*(Gayletha, continued from page 1)*

\* It's difficult to exaggerate the importance of becoming fluent in other languages. Whatever you do, don't miss a language class. Ever.

\* Don't buy furniture. Don't buy anything that keeps you in one place for very long.

\* Auditions are interviews, you know. The more you do, the better you get at them.

\* Try new things. Be brave.

Thank you, Gayletha, for all you've done for the Met auditions and young singers. We look forward to seeing the future stars you'll help develop at Santa Fe Opera!



Joyce DiDonato with Gayletha at the reception following the National Grand Finals on April 29 (photo: Chris Mohr)

## *Please support your local Met Auditions!*

True or false? The Metropolitan Opera pays to put on the auditions in local communities.

Answer: false. It is only through the generosity of local patrons that we can meet our annual budget of \$33,000 and continue this exciting and inspiring event here in Colorado. Donations are used to pay for renting the fabulous Gates Hall at the Newman Center, judges' travel expenses, and prize money for the singers. Please join us today to help young singers' dreams come true here in our community.

I wish to be an MONC patron for \$75/year/person. Number of people \_\_\_\_\_

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Join by credit card at

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Thank you!

The Metropolitan Opera  
***National Council Auditions***  
ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION

Karen Mohr  
6226 West Jefferson Avenue  
Denver, CO 80235

**Save the Date!**  
**Rocky Mountain Regional  
Finals**  
**Sunday, February 24, 2019**  
**1:30pm**  
**Robert & Judi Newman  
Center for the  
Performing Arts**  
**University of Denver**

## *Metropolitan Opera 2018-2019 HD Calendar*

**Verdi:** Aida

Saturday, October 6 10:55am

**Saint-Saens:** Samson et Dalila

Saturday, October 20, 10:55am

**Puccini:** La Fanciulla del West

Saturday, October 27, 10:55am

**Muhly:** Marnie

Saturday, November 10, 10:55am

**Verdi:** La Traviata

Saturday, December 15 10:55am

**Cilea:** Adriana Lecouvreur

Saturday, January 12, 10:55am

**Bizet:** Carmen

Saturday, February 2, 10:55am

**Donizetti:** La Fille du Regiment

Saturday, March 2, 10:55am

**Wagner:** Die Walkure

Saturday, March 30, 10:00am

**Poulenc:** Dialogues of the Carmelites

Saturday, May 11, 10:00am

Encore screenings are shown Wednesdays at 6:30pm the following week.  
[www.metopera.org](http://www.metopera.org) for cast information and to find local theaters.