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Freddie Ballentine & Kunal Lahiry recital leads slate of spring events at Seattle Opera

**Plus, School Opera Tour and Creation Lab performances
showcase Seattle Opera education programs**

SEATTLE—Seattle Opera kicks off the spring season with an exciting pair of recitals, led by a special one-night-only appearance from tenor [Freddie Ballentine](#) and pianist **Kunal Lahiry** on Sunday, April 27.

One of America's leading tenors, Ballentine returns to Seattle Opera following his "captivating" (*Bachtrack*) performance as Loge in 2023's *Das Rheingold*. He is joined by pianist Kunal Lahiry, a BBC New Generation Artist who makes his Seattle Opera debut following recent appearances at the Kennedy Center, Aix-en-Provence, and Carnegie Hall. The program, titled ***Our People***, features a diverse range of repertoire exploring Black and LGBTQ experiences, from songs by Margaret Bonds, Aaron Copland, and Sergei Rachmaninoff to newer music by Nina Simone, Ricky Ian Gordon, and David Krakauer.

"We created this program to show reverence to our people," said Ballentine and Lahiry. "Not just our contemporaries, but also the beautiful queer people who came before us, whose stories never had the ending they deserved. We tell their stories, honor their memories, and rejoice in the beauty that is Our Queerness."

On Friday, March 21, audiences will get the chance to hear Seattle Opera's 2024/25 [Resident Artists](#), **Michael J. Hawk** (The Speaker/The Old Priest, *The Magic Flute* '25) and **Tiffany Townsend** (America Robinson, *Jubilee* '24), in an intimate

evening of art songs and arias. Featuring selections from Richard Strauss's *Four Last Songs* and Margaret Bonds's *Songs of the Seasons*, as well as excerpts from Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* and Richard Wagner's *Tannhäuser*, this is a rare chance to hear a pair of stellar young singers at the outset of their careers.

Education Programs

The rest of the spring season showcases Seattle Opera's education programs. From now through early May, the [School Opera Tour](#) will take the one-act opera [Earth To Kenzie](#) to over 50 different schools across Washington State, serving an estimated 18,000 students. The opera, written for youth audiences, tells the story of Kenzie, an imaginative fifth grader who turns to her favorite video game for comfort when she finds herself living in a family shelter with her mom. Full of innovative and approachable tunes, the fully staged and costumed opera is performed with professional singers and live piano accompaniment.

Audiences in Seattle can see **Earth To Kenzie at the Opera Center** in three public performances on Saturday, June 7. Performances last 45 minutes, with an additional 15-minute post-show Q&A. The 11:00am show is a [sensory-friendly performance](#) featuring additional support for patrons with neurodiverse needs.

Finally, public performances of the slate of 20-minute operas created by the 2025 cohort of the **Jane Lang Davis Creation Lab** will be held on Friday, June 13, and Sunday, June 15. Featuring stories about a lonesome chestnut tree grappling with loss, a dying astronaut forced to face their true self, guilt and forgiveness during the Salem Witch Trials, and the silencing of women in the classical-music canon, do not miss the chance to hear the innovative work of tomorrow's next generation of opera creators. All tickets are pay-what-you-wish.

Performance and event information

- **Resident Artists in Recital**
Friday, March 21, at 7:30 PM, The Opera Center
Tickets and info at seattleopera.org/resident-artist-recital.
- **Freddie & Kunal in Concert**
Sunday, April 27, at 7 PM, The Opera Center
Tickets and info at seattleopera.org/ballentine.
- **Earth To Kenzie**
Saturday, June 7, at 11 AM, 2 PM, and 5 PM, The Opera Center
Tickets and info at seattleopera.org/kenzie.
- **2025 Creation Lab Performances**
Friday, June 13, at 7:30 PM and Sunday, June 15, at 2 PM, The Opera Center
Tickets and info at seattleopera.org/creationlab.

About Seattle Opera

Established in 1963, Seattle Opera is committed to serving the people of the Pacific Northwest through music, storytelling, and programs for people of all ages. Each year, more than 50,000 people attend the company's performances, and more than 100,000 people are served through school performances, radio broadcasts, and more. The organization brings opera to life in a number of different ways, offering artistic excellence through national and international collaborations. Seattle Opera strives to create an environment where artists, staff, behind-the-scenes workers, and members of the community feel a strong connection to the company, and to the art of opera. Follow Seattle Opera on Facebook, Twitter, SoundCloud, and on Classical KING.

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