

In consideration of the performers and other members of the audience, please enter or leave a performance at the end of a composition. Cameras and recording equipment are not permitted. Please turn off all electronic devices, and be sure that all emergency contact cell phones and pagers are set to silent or vibrate. In the event of an emergency, please use the exit nearest to you. Please contact the usher staff if you need assistance.

This event is free to all UNI students, courtesy of the Panther Pass Program.

The University of Northern Iowa honors the ancestral stewards of the land on which our university rests. Through the work we do every day to live our mission, the University of Northern Iowa aspires for you to see a community that: honors Native and Indigenous People and culture, lives the 7th Generation Principle, does good for the people and communities we serve, and embraces stewardship of our mission and land. Please see our full stewardship statement at president.uni.edu/stewardship-statement.

Performances like this are made possible through private support from patrons like you! Please consider contributing to School of Music scholarships or guest artist programs. Call 319-273-3915 or visit music.uni.edu to make your gift.



Scan this code to
give to UNI Opera!



SCHOOL OF MUSIC



UNI Opera Presents

The Beehive

Jorge Sosa, *Composer*
Melisa Tien, *Librettist*

WORLD PREMIERE
March 30th & 31st | 7:30 pm
Bengtson Auditorium

Erik Rohde, *Conductor*
Richard Gammon, *Director*

The Beehive

A comic opera

Jorge Sosa, Composer | Melisa Tien, Librettist

Cast

Abby | Gabrielle Flannery

June | Amanda McIlravy

May | Lauren Leman

Fabiola | Joley Seitz

Cover Cast

Abby | Ellie Gavin

June | Karli Jirava

May | Emma Hawkinson

Fabiola | Maria Casady

Orchestra

Flute | Breanna Daley Oboe | Lin Nikkel Clarinet | Madeline
Echternacht

Bassoon | Makayla Rasmussen Horn | Jonathon Hughes.

Trumpet | Megan Bennett Trombone | Levi Temple

Percussion | Reed Andrews | Aiden Endres

Violin I | Emma Anderson | Lauren Geerlings | Lily Stevens

Violin II | Kellie Connolly | Emma Becker | Maggie Ierien

Viola | Andrew Acosta | David Phetmanysay

Violoncello | Turner Sperry Bass | Sam Stover

Synopsis

The Beehive, a salon in Black Hawk County, Iowa, is facing the winds of change as Abby, a new stylist, arrives. Abby takes matters into her own hands as she navigates work and friendships with her fellow stylists, May and June, in this dark comedy.

Audience warning: contains themes of self harm, bullying, depictions of drinking, and language. Strobe lights will be utilized in this production.

This show will not have an intermission.

Run time is approximately 67 minutes.

Production Staff

Composer | Jorge Sosa

Librettist | Melisa Tien

Conductor | Erik Rohde

Director | Richard Gammon

Choreographers | Mandy Masmarr and Madison Engelke

Set Designer | Julia-Noulin-Merat

Costume Designer | Sarah Oliver

Hair and Makeup Designer | Carissa Thorlakson

Lighting Designer | W. Chris Tuzicka

Props Master | Gretchen Koinzan

Technical Director | Ronald Koinzan

Music Director and Vocal Coach | Korey Barrett

English Diction Coach | Anne Shikany

Assistant Conductor | Juan David Domínguez-Rincón

Assistant Director | Grace Sullivan

Rehearsal Pianist | Morgan List

Stage Manager | Gretchen Koinzan

About the Artists



Jorge Sosa, composer, is a Mexican-born composer, currently residing in New York City. Opera News described his telematic opera *Alice in the Pandemic* as “wildly imaginative, musically powerful and technically courageous” and commended “Sosa’s broad stylistic palette (which) incorporated lyrical impassioned melodies, kooky carnival music, and efficient recitative”. The Music Blog *I Care if You Listen* described Sosa’s opera *I Am A Dreamer Who No Longer Dreams* as “well-balanced to the story’s narrative, and his vocal writing aroused strong emotional peaks and valleys, magnified by the characters’ impassioned performances”. Both works were commissioned and premiered by White Snake Projects. During the 2023 season Jorge will premiere the puppet opera *Monkey* commissioned by White Snake Projects in Boston. In 2022 Jorge’s opera *I Am A Dreamer Who No Longer Dreams*, received its second production by Resonance Works in Pittsburgh, with a new expanded orchestration. Jorge was selected as a finalist for The Atlanta Opera 96 Hour Opera Project in 2022, and also premiered the opera scene “Samiir’s Feast,” commissioned by White Snake Projects. Jorge is currently collaborating with American Lyric Theater in the development of a new opera *Splintered*, co-composed with Justine Chen, with libretto by Lila Palmer. *Splintered* was awarded a 2022 Opera America Repertoire Development Grant. Jorge is an Associate Professor at Molloy University. Jorge’s music is available on all the major music download sites and through the website www.jorgesosa.com.



Melisa Tien, librettist, is a playwright, lyricist, and librettist. A resident of New Dramatists, she is co-author of the operas *The Big Swim* (Asia Society Texas Center/Houston Grand Opera, 2024), *Song of the Nightingale* (On Site Opera, 2023), and *Family Heirloom* (Experiments in Opera, 2023); co-author of the music-theater works *Swell* (HERE, 2021), *Daylight Saving*, and *Mary*; author of the plays *Best Life* (JACK, 2022), *Yellow Card Red Card* (Ice Factory, 2017), *The Boyd Show*, and *Familium Vulgare*; co-creator of the podcast/auditory experience Active Listening; and creator of the ongoing theatrical experiences Untitled Landscape and Community Forest.



She has been published in the anthology *Theater Artists Making Theatre With No Theater* (Tripwire Harlot Press, 2020) and the anthology *Modern Music for New Singers: 21st Century American Art Songs* (2021), and has authored essays for New Music USA and Innovations in Socially Distant Performance. She was a member of Berkeley Repertory Theatre’s 2022 Ground Floor Residency Lab, Experiments in Opera’s 2022 Writers’ Room, The Assembly Theater Project’s 2021 Deceleration Lab, a recipient of a 2020-2021 grant from the NYC Women’s Fund for Media, Music, and Theatre, a 2016 New York Foundation for the Arts Fellow in Playwriting/Screenwriting, and a member of the 2010-2012 Women’s Project Lab. She has presented work at the Sewanee Writers’ Conference, the Great Plains Theatre Conference, the Women Playwrights International Conference, and the National Asian American Theatre Conference and Festival. BA, UCLA; MFA, Columbia University. www.melisatien.com.

Dr. Erik Rohde, conductor, maintains a diverse career as a conductor, violinist, and educator, and has performed in recitals and festivals across the United States and in Europe and Asia. He is the Director of Orchestral Activities at the University of Northern Iowa and the Artistic Director and Conductor of the Winona Symphony Orchestra (MN). Prior to his appointment at the University of Northern Iowa, Rohde served as the Director of String Activities and Orchestra at Indiana State University where he conducted the Symphony Orchestra and taught violin, chamber music, and Suzuki pedagogy. A committed advocate for contemporary music, he has premiered and commissioned many new works by both established and young composers, and is constantly seeking to discover new compositional voices. He is the violinist of the new music duo sonic apricity, which is dedicated to uncovering and commissioning new works by living composers for violin and viola. The duo released their first recording in December 2022. Rohde holds a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Conducting from the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities. He also holds degrees in Violin Performance and Biomedical Engineering. Rohde lives in Cedar Falls, IA with his wife Erin and their children. More at <http://erikrohde.com>.



Richard Gammon, director, (he/him), is a Filipino American stage director and Director of UNI Opera. His productions include: *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* and Gluck's *L'île de Merlin* (Wolf Trap Opera); *Gianni Schicchi* and Ching's *Buoso's Ghost* (Detroit Opera); *Madama Butterfly* and Perla's *An American Dream* (Virginia Opera); Scarlatti's *Erminia* (Opera Lafayette at The Kennedy Center); *Albert Herring* and Wang's *Scalia/Ginsburg* (The Princeton Festival); *La Cenerentola* (Columbus Opera); *An American Dream* (Opera Santa Barbara); CARE Monologue Film Project (Cleveland Play House); *The Life and Times of Joe Jefferson Benjamin Blow* (National Asian Artists Project); *Rem's Three Sisters who are Not Sisters* (Manhattan School of Music); *Sankaram's Looking at You* (Carnegie Mellon); and *Sweeney Todd, La traviata, Così fan tutte, La bohème*, and *Puts' Silent Night* (University of Kentucky Opera Theatre). For UNI Opera he has directed *Dido and Aeneas*, *The Monteverdi Project*, and is the creator/director of *In the Studio* (a recital collaboration with the UNI Gallery of Art). Creative positions include: Opera Maine's Studio Artist Program director (Glass' *The Fall of the House of Usher*, Kaminsky's *As One*, Heggie's *Three Decembers*, Fairouz's *Sumeida's Song*); co-creator/director of *Art with Arias* (Portland Museum of Art/Opera Maine recital collaboration), creative associate for Seán Curran Company's *Dream'd in a Dream* (BAM Next Wave Festival); and associate director *Porgy and Bess* (Greensboro Opera) and *The Grapes of Wrath* (Detroit Opera). www.richard-gammon.com.



Mandy Masmar, choreographer, is excited to be back with UNI Opera as their choreographer for their 8th production together! Some of these works include: *Susannah*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *Seerse*, and *Merry Wives of Windsor*. She also has choreographed for TheatreUNI in many productions such as *RENT*, *Into the Woods*, and *Hair*, in addition to two world premiere musicals *Just Ann* and *The Suffragist*. Mandy was able to work with Theatre Cedar Rapids last summer choreographing for their production *Elephant and Piggie: We're in a Play!* She's currently the Artistic Director of the UNI Orchesis Dance Company, and has choreographed nearly 100 different creative works over her 15 year career. Thank you to my husband and three children for all their continued inspiration, love, and support!



Maddie Engelke, choreographer, originally from Storm Lake, Iowa, has been passionate about the arts since the age of 4 when she began her dance career. She graduated from the University of Northern Iowa in 2021 and now resides in Cedar Falls. During her time at the university, her love for dance inspired her to become the Vice President of the UNI Orchesis Dance Company, where she showcased several choreographic works, including her most recent piece presented at the American College Dance Association. Additionally, she serves as the Marketing Manager and an Instructor at Allison's Dance Center, working closely with their competition teams. As a proud UNI alum, co-choreographing *The Beehive* has been an exciting and rewarding experience for Maddie, and she is eager to showcase the work that she and her fellow co-choreographer brought to life!



Ron Koinzan, technical director, received his MFA in Technical Production from Humboldt State University in 2003. In the last 20 years he has designed and/or built over 120 productions. He is currently employed by the University of Northern Iowa as the Technical Director for the Department of Theatre. This is his 5th production with the SOM's Opera Department here at UNI. He would like to thank his family for their support and love.



Julia Noulin-Mérat, set designer, is an American, French, and Canadian producer, designer and has been the General Director + CEO of Opera Columbus for the past 3 seasons. Previously, Noulin-Mérat was for 8 years the Associate Producer at Boston Lyric Opera and was the co-Artistic Director of Guerilla Opera having begun her tenure as their Producer + Director of Production for 11 years. She is the creative director for Hong Kong-based *More Than Musical*. In addition, Noulin-Mérat has worked on over 400 opera, theater, and television productions, including 26 new operas and 22 new plays. With over 20 years of experience in the performing arts industry and a big advocate for cultural equity in opera, she is a graduate of Boston University with a Masters in Business Arts Administration, an MFA in Set Design, a Diversity Inclusion certificate from ESSEC Business School, a social media marketing specialization from Northwestern University, a Fundraising Development Specialization from UC Davis, a Finance & Leadership certification from Harvard Business School.



Carissa Thorlakson, hair and makeup designer, is based in New Jersey. Off-Broadway: Grand Hotel and Little Rock. She has also designed for, Walnut Street Theatre, The Old Globe, A.R.T., McCarter Theatre Center, Hartford Stage, Lookingglass Theatre Company, Two River Theatre, Bay Street Theater, Delaware Theatre Company, Hudson Stage Company, Temple University, Olney Theatre Center, the University of Delaware Resident Ensemble Players, The Princeton Festival, and American Repertory Ballet. She has served as a wig and makeup artist at Santa Fe Opera, Sarasota Opera, The Kennedy Center, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Signature Theatre, and Round House Theatre. Carissa also creates custom medical wigs, cosplay wigs, and teaches classes in wigs and makeup. You can find her at CThorwigs.com and [@wigician](https://www.instagram.com/wigician).



Sarah M. Oliver, costume designer, is an Assistant Professor of Costume Design and Technology at the University of Michigan. Previously she taught costume technology at University of Missouri-Kansas City and was the Senior Lecturer of Costume Technology at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. Mrs. Oliver has designed and built costumes in the United States for theatres coast to coast—from the Los Angeles Opera to the New York City Opera. She has built costumes for drama, film, dance, opera, and musical theatre productions for designers in South Africa, England, Spain, Hong Kong, Canada, China, and the Bahamas. Over the course of her career, Mrs. Oliver has worked in almost all levels of costuming—as a designer, assistant, maker, costume shop manager, wig maker, fabric dyer, wardrobe supervisor, and dresser. Recent costume design credits include (Regional) Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Kansas City Actors Theatre, Nelly Don Ltd., Unicorn Theatre, The New Theatre Restaurant, University of Michigan, UMKC Conservatory of Music and Kansas University Opera. Costume Construction Credits: (International) Celebrity Cruises Quixotic Fusion, G&S Society, Bermuda, Spanish Summer Dance Festival, The Hong Kong Ballet and Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. (New York) The Juilliard School, The Irish Repertory Theatre and New York City Opera. (Regional) Theatre Aspen, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Des Moines Metro Opera, Kansas City Actors Theatre, Unicorn Theatre, The Coterie Theatre, Gulfshore Playhouse, The Magic Theatre, Washington National Opera, and Crossroads Theatre.



Dr. Korey Barrett, music director and vocal coach, is Associate Professor and Vocal Coach at the University of Northern Iowa. Dr. Barrett's background includes training as a vocal coach, accompanist, pedagogue, and singer. At the University of Northern Iowa he serves as music director and vocal coach for UNI Opera. Barrett is also the co-founder and head vocal coach of Opera Neo, an intensive summer opera festival in San Diego, CA, that is about to embark upon its twelfth season with productions of *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *Mitridate*, and *Il trionfo del tempo e del disinganno*. Opera Neo features collaboration with musicians, conductors, coaches, and stage directors from across the country and overseas. Most recently, the company collaborated with the Hungarian State Opera in Budapest in mounting a production of Mozart's *La finta giardiniera*. Barrett has also served as coach and pianist for several seasons of the Des Moines Metro Opera and as Resident Artist coach for the Minnesota Opera. He maintains an active recital and master class schedule, with his most recent visits to Taipei and Kaohsiung, Taiwan. Prior to his appointment at UNI, Barrett served as vocal coach at the University of Oklahoma's School of Music. Other artistic venues have included Opera North, The Ohio Light Opera, the Columbus Academy of Vocal Arts, as well as projects with the Herzen Pedagogical Institute in St. Petersburg, Russia, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, Eastman School of Music Summer Institute, and the Cedar Valley Chamber Music Festival. Barrett received his Doctoral degree in piano accompanying and chamber music from the Eastman School of Music under the tutelage of Jean Barr.



Annie Shikany, English diction coach, served as English Diction Specialist for the world premiere of Tobias Picker's *Awakenings* as well as Bizet's *Carmen* in English translation at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis for the 2022 season. Other credits include English Diction Coach for Manhattan School of Music's Senior Opera Theater production of *Adventures of Vixen Sharp Ears* and MSM's Outreach rendition of *Hansel and Gretel*. She has taught English Diction at Manhattan School of Music and Voice Production and Speech at AMDA NYC. Annie is the instructor for Second-Year Undergraduate Acting for Singers at The Juilliard School in addition to her administrative role as Assistant Director of Curriculum and Schedules. She is a Registered Rodenburg Teacher and a Patsy Rodenburg Associate.



W. Chris Tuzicka, lighting designer, has worked with the UNI School of Music Opera in some fashion for the past 15 years, mostly in Lighting Design. From time to time he also assists with Scenic Design and construction. He also work at the Gallagher Bluedorn Performing Arts Center as the Assistant Technical Director: Master Electrician/Lighting Director, and always enjoys the work he gets to do with the Opera because it is a great creative outlet and opportunity to produce live entertainment. Past productions include: *Die Fledermaus*, *Magic Flute*, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *Dido and Aeneas*, *Susannah*, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, *The Impresario* and numerous one acts and Gala Events.



Gretchen Koinzan, stage manager and props master, is currently a Montessori preschool teacher getting ready to start a new school, "Prairie Rose Montessori". After moving to Iowa and raising two amazing girls she was able to freelance for the UNI Theatre Dept and UNI School of Music while teaching. Prior to moving to Iowa she worked as an Equity Stage Manager in NYC, toured with The American Indian Dance Theatre Company, toured with Story Salad Productions, worked with Norwegian Cruise Lines, and summer Rep with the Theatre Dept at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. This is where she met her husband Ron Koinzan and the rest is history.



Juan David Domínguez-Rincón, assistant conductor, is a conductor, pianist and promoter born in Bogota. He finished his professional studies in the Facultad de Artes ASAB, Bogotá. Currently he is a Graduate Assistant of Orchestra Conducting at University of Northern Iowa. He's the founder and conductor of the Orquesta Sinfónica Metropolitana de Bogotá "La MET." This orchestra is projected as one of the most outreaching for young professionals in Colombia. He directed the Orchestra Conducting program at Universidad del Atlántico, Barranquilla. As a conductor, he has participated with distinguished national orchestras such as the Orquesta Filarmónica de Bogotá and the Orquesta Sinfónica de Caldas, standing out for his keen sense of performance interpretation and leadership. As a pianist, he has embraced a wide range of projects and repertoire, inside the lines of Colombian music, Musical Theatre, and Jazz. As a promoter, he is boosting the symphonic development of the country, accomplishing new and fresh projects with a lot of projection. His leadership skills and outstanding outcomes, have made him a referent for the production of short and long term projects. Nowadays, he's known as one of Colombia's promising young conductors. Juan studies with Dr. Erik Rohde.



Grace Sullivan, assistant director, is a vocalist, teacher, and aspiring director. She is completing her final year of graduate studies at the University of Northern Iowa, where she studies with Dr. Suzanne Hendrix-Case. Originally from Oshkosh, WI, Grace holds a bachelor's degree from Ripon College. Upcoming projects include an assistant directing residency with the Bay View Music Festival. Grace has recently been seen as The Spirit in UNI's *Dido and Aeneas*, Despina in UNI's opera scenes program, and in department aria concerts. She is also an active teacher and collaborator.



Morgan List, rehearsal pianist, grew up in Nevada where she began studying piano at the age of six. In the Fall 2018, Morgan began studying music at Southern Oregon University (SOU), under Dr. Alexander Tutunov with a focus on piano performance. Morgan performed actively across the Rogue Valley as a versatile solo and collaborative musician. Morgan has also performed in the SOU musical *If/Then* and was a member of the sou jazz ensemble, wind ensemble (flute), chamber groups, and for various SOU VIP events and receptions. She was the President and founder of the MTNA collegiate chapter on the SOU campus as well. Morgan is in the process of receiving her master's degree in Piano Pedagogy and Performance at the University of Northern Iowa. She currently teaches group piano courses and accompanies the opera as part of her assistantship. She also maintains a small studio of private students and is the Treasurer of the UNI MTNA Collegiate Chapter. Her professional goal is to be a private piano teacher out of her own studio. She studies with Dr. Vakhtang Kodanashvili.

About the Cast



Gabrielle Flannery, Abby, is a soprano from Dayton, Ohio. Flannery is pursuing an MM in vocal performance and studies with Dr. Jean McDonald. Her recent performance engagements include Musetta in *La bohème* with Bay View Music Festival and Belinda in *Dido and Aeneas* with UNI Opera. This summer, Flannery will perform the role of Angelica in *Suor Angelica* and Nella in *Gianni Schicchi* with Bay View Music Festival.



Eileen Gavin, Abby Cover, is a Junior Undergraduate student at UNI pursuing a bachelor's degree in music in vocal performance. She has been involved with UNI Opera since the fall of 2021 and currently participates in Chorale. Eileen is the Secretary of Students of Singing and a proud member of the UNI Yarn Club. She is happy to call herself a student of UNI and its music program. She is a student of Professor Jeffrey Brich.



Amanda McIlravy, June, is a South Dakota based soprano, and has been perfecting her American sound since 2015. She has performed roles such as Mabel in *Pirates of Penzance*, the First Witch in *Dido and Aeneas*, Maguelonne from Pauline Viardot's *Cendrillon*, and several Daters from Michael Ching's *Speed Dating*. She is a student of Dr. Suzanne Hendrix-Case.



Karli Jirava, June Cover, is a second year music education major from Ulen, Minnesota. She is a mezzo-soprano playing the cover role of June. Outside of The Beehive, she is in Concert Chorale, and the Women's Fraternity Sigma Alpha Iota. She was previously in the chorus of UNI Opera's *Dido and Aeneas*, Susanna in the UNI Opera Scenes and Arias Concert, and was a performer for the UNI Opera Glitter or Gold concert. She is a student of Dr. Suzanne Hendrix-Case.



Lauren Leman, May, is in her final semester of graduate studies in vocal performance. Recent performances include the world premiere of *The Suffragist*, Second Witch in *Dido and Aeneas* with UNI Opera, Zia Principessa in *Suor Angelica* with Bel Canto in Tuscany, and *The Pirates of Penzance* with Cedar Rapids Opera. Upcoming: *Gianni Schicchi*, *Suor Angelica*, and *Beauty and the Beast* with Bay View Music Festival. She is a student of Dr. Suzanne Hendrix-Case.



Emma Hawkinson, May Cover, is a Junior Vocal Performance Major. She has been involved in UNI Opera during *Dido and Aeneas*, *Mozart and the Guise*, and *Glitter or Gold*. She is also involved in the Northern Iowa Symphony Orchestra, Concert Chorale, and is on the Students of Singing Executive Board. She is a student of Dr. Jean McDonald.



Joley Seitz, Fabiola, is currently in her first year of her Master's Degree and UNI. She has been studying under Dr. Jean McDonald for the past four years. She has previously been seen, in *Dido and Aeneas* with UNI Opera. She has also been several scenes programs and aria concerts during her time at UNI.



Maria Casady, Fabiola Cover, is a freshman at UNI studying Secondary Math Education, with a minor in Vocal Music. She participated in everything music in high school and has loved getting to see how different opera is and getting to know all the staff and the students involved in the production! She is a student of Dr. Suzanne Hendrix-Case.