

SPEED DATING TONIGHT

Words and music by Michael Ching
Based on a concept by Dean Anthony




OPERATERPS

SING. ACT. CREATE.

February 4 & 5
7:30pm

Gildenhorn
Recital Hall

SPEED DATING TONIGHT

Words and music by Michael Ching
Based on a concept by Dean Anthony

Cast (in order of appearance)

Rhys Burgess.....Himself
Elle Gilbert.....Bartender
Sarah Jane Runge.....Waitress
Darby Brandenburg.....Kaylee
Megan Flynn.....Liz
Anton Von De Motter.....Aaron
Matthew August.....Simon
Helen Mann.....Julie
Joshua Bates.....Toby

A note from the directors:

We are thrilled to be bringing Speed Dating Tonight! to life this season. The show is a unique production and is the perfect fit for OperaTerps. Conceived by director Dean Anthony and written by Baltimore composer Michael Ching, it was originally scored for about 25 singers for premiere at The Brevard Music Center. This opera is extremely flexible and can have anywhere from 5 to 30 characters, depending on the specific needs of the school/company. Moreover, the score is wonderfully malleable. The individual solos are available in keys for every voice type and can be sung by a singer of any gender. It was a dream as directors to be able to create a show with bespoke roles that fit each of our performers like a glove.

- Clare & Jessica



Originally produced and directed by Dean Anthony at Janiec Opera Company 2013.

This OperaTerps performance is produced by Amanda Densmoor.

This production is generously sponsored by the Pepsi Enhancement Fund.

Special thanks to Aaron Muller and Ashley Pollard for all your help.

THE CREATIVE TEAM



Rhys Burgess (Pianist)

Originally from Michigan, Rhys is a DMA student in Collaborative Piano at UMD under Professor Rita Sloan. He has received first prize in the 2018 Marjorie Conrad Art Song Competition, was a finalist in the Douglas Wayland Chamber Music Competition, and was the recipient of the 2017 Virginia Marks Collaborative Piano award for his performances in the BGSU Concerto Competition. He holds degrees from Oakland University and Bowling Green State University.



Jessica Harika (Co-director)

Lebanese-American stage director and producer Jessica Harika has directed and produced productions ranging from the traditional to the experimental. She currently serves as Associate Artistic Director of Playthings Theatre Company (NYC) and as Artistic Director of River City Opera, a company she co-founded in 2019 in her hometown of Richmond, VA. Her work has been seen with RVA Baroque, The Blue Hill Troupe, The Artist Co-op, The Pit NYC, The Duplex Cabaret Theater, Capitol Opera Richmond, City Lyric Opera, Janiec Opera Company, and The Manhattan School of Music.



Clare Lillig (Co-director)

Clare Lillig is a second year student in the Maryland Opera Studio (MOS). She is a graduate of Anderson University, where she earned her dual degrees in Voice Performance and Dance. Recent roles include Monica, (*The Medium*), Susanna (*The Marriage of Figaro*), Miss Pinkerton (*The Old Maid and the Thief*), Stacey (*Sunder-premiere*), and Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*). Clare is also an experienced dancer and choreographer and has trained at Hubbard Street Dance Chicago and the Joffrey Ballet Chicago. She has choreographed shows such as *Fame*, *Aladdin*, and many more.



Beth Ann Zinkievich (Music Director)

Beth Ann Zinkievich is a senior music education major at the University of Maryland where she studied voice with Martha Randall and Delores Ziegler. Over the years, she has been heavily involved with various choral ensembles as a singer, accompanist, and conductor. She has served as co-director of Femmes de Chanson, a UMD student-led choral ensemble, and is an instructor with Glorystar Children's Chorus.

THE CAST



Matthew August (Simon)

Matthew August is a student at the University of Maryland studying vocal performance. Before attending university, Matthew danced classical ballet professionally. He trained at the Kirov Academy of Ballet in Washington D.C. and competed in Youth American Grand Prix, where he won first prize in their regional competition. He passed on to finals in New York City and performed his solo piece at the Lincoln Center. Matthew worked for the Boston Ballet and Pennsylvania Ballet companies. He moved on to the University of Maryland to study music, and his dreams are to eventually work on the Broadway stage.



Joshua Bates (Toby)

Joshua Bates is a junior studying Vocal Performance and English. He appeared as Thomas Bouche in OperaTerps' 2020 production of *Down in the Valley* and Wille Webster in OperaTerps' 2021 recorded production of *Can You Keep a Secret?* With Storytellers Theatre Arts, he has performed as the Beast and Lumiere in *Beauty and the Beast: The Musical*, and as Javert in *Les Miserables*. He is excited to continue developing his craft in this quirky production of *Speed Dating Tonight* as, well, who he is in real life...?



Darby Brandenburg (Kaylee)

Darby Brandenburg is a junior pursuing a major in aerospace engineering and a minor in vocal performance. This is her second season with OperaTerps, previously seen last year as Phoebe in OperaTerps' *Can you Keep a Secret?* Additionally, she has performed with the University Chorale and will be performing with the Chamber Singers this semester.



Megan Flynn (Liz)

Megan Flynn is excited to be playing the role of Liz in *Speed Dating Tonight*. She is a sophomore studying vocal performance and French at UMD, and this is her second OperaTerps production. Last year she sang the role *Sofia* in the OperaTerps virtual production *Can You Keep a Secret?* When she is not speed dating, she enjoys reading, baking, and traveling.

THE CAST



Elle Gilbert (Bartender)

Elle Gilbert is a senior at the University of Maryland, College Park studying Voice Opera and Hearing and Speech Sciences. Their most recent role was originating Robert Overacker in the premiere of Niagara. Other recent roles include Aunt Trish in “Can You Keep A Secret” with OperaTerps, Princess Zara and the American Orchestra Member in VLOC’s production of “A Gilbert and Sullivan Drawing Room”. Elle is also the President and Founder of 32 Bars, a musical theatre troupe at UMD. Gilbert is grateful for the opportunity to perform in such an amazing show surrounded by an incredibly talented team.



Helen Mann (Julie)

Helen Mann is a senior vocal performance and music education major. She studies with Delores Ziegler. This is her third year working with OperaTerps, having previously sung in Kurt Weill’s *Down in the Valley* and OperaTerps’ virtual production *Can You Keep a Secret?* Helen is also a co-director of the student-led treble ensemble Femmes de Chanson. She is excited to play the role Julie in *Speed Dating Tonight!*



Sarah Jane Runge (Waitress)

Sarah Jane Runge is a senior at University of Maryland studying Theatre, Government and Politics, and Women Studies. She has sung Donna in *Mamma Mia!* And Gertrude in *Suessical*. Sarah Jane studies voice with Liangjun Shi as part of the voice elective.



Anton Von De Motter (Aaron)

Anton Von De Motter is a senior vocal performance and journalism major at the University of Maryland. In previous OperaTerps productions, he has sung Leon in *Signor Deluso*, Peter in *Can You Keep a Secret?* and was part of the ensemble in *Down in the Valley*. Most recently, he was seen as Laurie in *Little Women*, and in a Second Season production of *Martius*, a student-made one act musical.