



James Thompson



Jocelyn Ascherl

CLARINDA FOUNDATION TO SPONSOR SIMON ESTES FOUNDATION'S YOUNG ARTIST PROGRAM A SECOND YEAR

September 2014

The Clarinda Foundation will be sponsoring the Simon Estes Foundation's Young Artist Program for a second year, benefiting the four high school choirs within Page County. The program will be in residence September 24 & 25, 2014 in Clarinda.

Young Artists Jocelyn Ascherl, soprano and James Thompson, tenor accompanied by Jodi Goble, piano will perform in recital along with vocal students from area Page County High Schools. The Young Artist Program Concert is scheduled for Thursday, September 25th at 7:00 PM at the Clarinda High School Auditorium. There will be no charge for admission to this concert and it is open to the public.

The day prior to the concert, the Young Artists will spend time visiting with vocal music students in Page County High Schools. During each visit they will perform for students, share their experiences about how they chose a career as a professional singer and the preparation, dedication and perseverance required. In addition, they will conduct master classes where they will work with individual students on interpretation, diction, and performance skills as well as answer questions from the students. That evening the Young Artists will perform for the residents of Foster Manor.

Jocelyn Ascherl is a soprano who recently completed her Master's at Michigan State University in Vocal Performance. She has been in numerous productions, such as starring as Liesl VonTrapp in Arbor Opera Theater's *The Sound of Music*, The Queen of the Night in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, Anne Egerman in *A Little Night Music*, Adele in *Die Fledermaus*. Previous operatic roles have included Despina in Act 1 of *Così fan tutte*, and Lolo in Cedar Rapids Opera Theatre's production of *The Merry Widow*. Jocelyn is also active in musical theatre, playing roles such as Sgt. Sarah Brown in *Guys and Dolls*, Johanna in *Sweeney Todd*,

Marcy Park in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, and Jo March in *Little Women*. Jocelyn also participates regularly in competitions. She was chosen as the winner of the Advanced Singers category for the Michigan Chapter of the National Association for Teachers of Singing in Fall 2013, and competed as a national semifinalist for the NATS Musical Theater Competition at the national conference in July 2014.

As a concert soloist Jocelyn has performed both Handel's *Messiah* and Mozart's *Requiem* with Iowa State University, Schubert's *Mass in G* and Nielson's *Hymnus Amoris* with the Ames Choral Society, and was the featured soprano soloist for Oja Gjeilo's *Dark Night of the Soul* with the Michigan State University Chorale. Jocelyn also was a guest of Michigan State's Musique 21 ensemble for their performance of Michael Torke's *Four Psalms*. She was a featured soloist with the Fort Dodge Area Symphony, and a 2014 young artist of Simon Estes Foundation's Young Artist Performance Program. She is a student of Molly Fillmore at Michigan State University.

American tenor James Thompson has earned acclaim throughout the Midwest, being recognized for his "full, rich voice" and "warm singing."

On the operatic stage, Dr. Thompson maintains an active schedule, performing the leading tenor roles from works that are firmly situated within the standard repertory.

As a soloist, Dr. Thompson has performed numerous works, the most recent of which have been Handel's *Messiah* and Bach's Cantata 140 *Wachet auf!*, both with the Southeast Iowa Symphony Orchestra.

Comfortable on either side of the podium, Dr. Thompson has conducted major choral works, including Brahms' Op. 52 *Liebeslieder Walzer* and Bellini's *Salve Regina*. Choral ensembles under his direction have received superior contest ratings and are past first place champions of the San Antonio Heritage Festivals choral competition.

In 2009, Dr. Thompson was awarded a fellowship from the Consortium of Universities for International Studies and made his European debut as part of the Asolo Song Festival. As a fellow, Dr. Thompson studied and taught various genres of vocal music and made several public performances throughout the Veneto region of Italy.

Since 2009, Dr. Thompson has appeared throughout Iowa with international opera star Simon Estes, as part of the *Roots and Wings* tour, under the auspices of the Simon Estes Foundation. He is in demand as a performer and soloist, frequently appearing with area colleges, universities, and professional organizations. Additionally, Dr. Thompson is sought after as a guest clinician and adjudicator for many regional musical events.

Dr. Thompson lives and works in Iowa City, with wife Maria and daughter Lindsey, who was born in September 2013. He holds a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Cornell College, where he also served on the voice faculty from 2008-2011. Additionally, Dr. Thompson holds the Master of Music degree in voice performance from Boston University, and the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in vocal performance and pedagogy from the University of Iowa.

Collaborative pianist and composer Jodi Goble joined the Iowa State University faculty from the Boston University College of Fine Arts, where she was a vocal pianist-coach and member of the voice faculty: coaching singers, teaching phonetics, and coordinating and directing undergraduate opera scenes. During her tenure with the Tanglewood Festival Chorus she has been privileged to play under conductors James Levine, Bernard Haitink, Sir Colin Davis, Rafael Fruhbeck de Burgos, Keith Lockhart, and Seiji Ozawa, and to collaborate in rehearsal with artists such as José van Dam, Paul Groves, Yvonne Naef, Stephanie Blythe, Marcello Giordano, and Peter Serkin

The residency is part of the Simon Estes Foundation's Young Artist Performance Program which provides real world performance experience to young artists who are bridging the gap between their academic training and a professional career. Performance experience is an essential part of building a career as a professional artist. Simon Estes was fortunate, early in his career, to sing on a national tour performing 45 recitals during the course of one year. This experience laid the foundation for his career. The Simon Estes Foundation's Young Artist Performance Program offers young artists the opportunity to gain performance experience necessary for building a successful career.

For more information about the Simon Estes Foundation Young Artist Performance Program, please contact the Clarinda Foundation Office at 712-542-4412.