

# INSIGNIA

A R T I S T S

## ABIGAIL RAIFORD

*Soprano*

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In 2026, lyric coloratura soprano Abigail Raiford sings **Mozart Reimagined** with the NY Choral Society, **Carmina Burana** with the York Symphony Orchestra, proudly returns to Tulsa Opera for a **Three Tulsa Sopranos** concert and wraps her year as the soprano soloist in Handel's **Messiah** with the Alabama Symphony. Abigail also joins the Merola Opera program, singing Echo in **Ariadne auf Naxos** and covering Zerbinetta, which she will perform with the Sarasota Opera in 2027.

Abigail was a 2025 National Finalist in the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition and First Place and Audience Favorite in the D'Angelo Young Artist Vocal Competition at Opera Tampa. She won 2<sup>nd</sup> prize in the coveted Jensen Competition, took 4<sup>th</sup> place in the celebrated Giulio Gari competition and made her Carnegie Hall debut with Manhattan Concert Productions in Taylor Scott Davis' **Magnificat**. Featured as Artist of the Month in Musical America's April 2025 edition, the busy soprano was critically reviewed for her performance as Lisa in Teatro Nuovo's **La sonnambula** where OperaWire praised her "...sweet and full lyric sound that also allowed for flexibility in coloratura...clear trills and accurate roulade phrases, and high notes that were crystal clear but also playful and incredibly virtuosic. What is generally seen as a secondary character, turned into a showstopping moment following the aria."

The artist recently made a role and company debut as Julie Jordan in **Carousel** with the Will Rogers Stage Foundation, sang Peristeri in **White Raven, Black Dove** in her White Snake Projects debut, and The Farmer in Opera Philadelphia's **The Seasons** where she is also honored to be a 2025-2026 Emerging Artist. Additional engagements include a workshop with the Metropolitan Opera of **The Mothers of Kherson**.

A 1st Place winner in the Artist Division of the Camille Coloratura Awards, she was also awarded the Charles Maggio Award at the Mary J. Smith Singer of the Year Competition. 2024 engagements included performances of Fauré's **Requiem** at David Geffen Hall with Manhattan Concert Productions, Mendelssohn's **Lobgesang** with the York Symphony, Narcissa in Haydn's **Jupiter's Journey to the Earth** with The Little Opera Theatre of New York, a role and company debut with Teatro Nuovo as the

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Giulietta cover in Bellini's *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*, and soprano soloist with the Glacier Symphony for Handel's *Messiah*.

Abigail was a 2023 and 2024 District Winner of the Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition (Tulsa District), received an Incentive Award from the SAS Performing Arts Company Vocal Competition, and became a finalist in the Emerging Artist Division of the MI Opera Vocal Competition. Abigail has won numerous competitions, including 2nd Prize in the 2021 SAS Performing Arts Company Vocal Competition, and Encouragement Awards in the Gerda Lissner International Vocal Competition and the Student Division of the inaugural Camille Coloratura Awards. She was also a grant recipient from The Career Bridges Foundation.

In previous seasons, she was a Central City Opera Bonfils-Stanton Studio Artist, performing leading roles in Heggie's *Two Remain* (Kryzia) and *Die Fledermaus* (Ida), and receiving the esteemed Central City Opera Guild's McGlone Award. She was also a resident and apprentice artist for multiple seasons with Sarasota Opera, where she was heard as Second Witch in *Dido & Aeneas* and Belinda in family performances.

As a noted interpreter of Mozart's operas, Abigail's signature roles include the Queen of the Night and First Lady in *Die Zauberflöte*, and Despina in *Così fan tutte*. Other credits include Rose Murrant in *Street Scene*, Anicasia in *La Dolorosa*, Yum-Yum in *The Mikado*, and Olympia in *Pinocchio*. She sang Milhaud's *Chansons de Ronsard* with the Mannes Orchestra and John Mackey's *Songs From the End of the World* with the University of Tulsa Wind Ensemble and enjoyed concert appearances as with the Handel Choir of Baltimore for *Messiah* and with Emory University in Orff's *Carmina Burana*.

Abigail Raiford earned her Master of Music degree from the Mannes School of Music under the tutelage of Amy Burton, and her Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Tulsa, where she studied with her mother, Judith Pannill Raiford.