



THE KURT WEILL FOUNDATION FOR MUSIC

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Announcing the 2020 Lotte Lenya Competition Semi-Finalists

Twenty-eight performers selected to compete for a chance to win top prizes of \$20,000, \$15,000, and \$10,000; total prizes to exceed \$75,000; a star-studded panel of musical theatre, opera, and Kurt Weill experts to adjudicate the semi-finals and finals.

NEW YORK (February 11, 2020) — Kim H. Kowalke, President and CEO of the Kurt Weill Foundation, is pleased to announce the semi-finalists for the 2020 Lotte Lenya Competition.

Michael Aiello (USA, 32)	Elena Howard-Scott (Canada, 23)
Gan-ya Ben-gur Akselrod (Israel, 32)	Stephanie Jabre (USA, 30)
David Anderson (USA, 24)	Gemma Nha (Australia, 19)
Zarah Brock (USA, 26)	Marie Oppert (France, 22)
Anighya Crocker (USA, 20)	Teresa Perrotta (USA, 24)
Michael Day (USA, 28)	Christine Price (USA, 28)
Darren Drone (USA, 30)	Lauren Senden (USA, 19)
Kaden Forsberg (Canada, 28)	Emma Sorenson (USA, 28)
Crystal Glenn (USA, 27)	Meg Supina (USA, 30)
Dylan Glenn (USA, 26)	Tabea Tatan (Germany, 32)
Rivers Hawkins (USA, 30)	Sophie Thompson (USA, 24)
Jonathan Heller (USA, 25)	Jeremy Weiss (USA, 27)
Michael Hewitt (USA, 29)	Ronald Wilbur (USA, 29)
Jonah Hoskins (USA, 23)	Andy Zimmermann (USA, 30)

In addition to the semi-finalists, seven applicants received Emerging Talent Awards with a cash prize of \$500 each: Melanie Dubil (USA, 22), Emily Holguin (USA, 22), Kassondra Kardos (Canada, 22), Nicole Maridan (USA, 21), Sophia Spivey (USA, 22), Kodiak Thompson (USA, 20), and Katie Yeomans (USA, 19). The recipient of the Grace Keagy Award for Outstanding Vocal Promise in the amount of \$500 is Sydney Clarke (Canada, 26).

The 2020 competition received a record number of applications – a thirty-one percent increase from last year – with submissions from twenty-four countries and thirty-three U.S. states. Each applicant submitted a video performance of four contrasting song selections ranging from musical theatre, opera, and Kurt Weill repertoire.

The semi-finals take place on 11 and 12 March in New York City, where contestants will be coached and adjudicated by Broadway and opera star **Lisa Vroman**, and three-time Tony

nominee **Rebecca Luker**. The semi-finalists will compete for a spot in the 2020 finals, which takes place on **2 May** in Rochester, New York at Kilbourn Hall in front of a live audience. Leading artists from theatre, opera, television, and film make up the star-studded panel of finals judges, including Tony Award-winning actress, singer, and director **Victoria Clark**, renowned Broadway music director and conductor **Andy Einhorn**, and Obie Award-winning actress and singer, **Mary Beth Peil**, who launched her career as the winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. The finals daytime round and evening concert in Rochester are both free and open to the public, along with all-day live streaming on the Lenya Competition website (<https://www.kwf.org/pages/lotte-lenya-competition.html>).

In addition to the top prizes of \$20,000, \$15,000, and \$10,000, discretionary awards ranging from \$3,500 to \$5,000 recognize outstanding finals performances of individual numbers or particular aspects of performances. All semi-finalists who do not advance to the finals will receive an award of \$500. Total prizes will exceed \$75,000.

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About the Lotte Lenya Competition

More than a vocal competition, the Lotte Lenya Competition recognizes talented young singer/actors who are dramatically and musically convincing in repertoire ranging from opera/opera to contemporary Broadway scores, with a focus on the works of Kurt Weill. Since its inception in 1998, the Lotte Lenya Competition has grown into an internationally recognized leader in identifying and nurturing the next generation of “total-package performers” (*Opera News*) and rising stars in both the opera and musical theater worlds. The roster of prizewinners has likewise grown to over 100, many of whom have gone on to major performing careers.

About the Kurt Weill Foundation

The Kurt Weill Foundation for Music, Inc. (<http://www.kwf.org>) is dedicated to promoting understanding of the life and works of composer Kurt Weill (1900-1950) and preserving the legacies of Weill and his wife, actress-singer Lotte Lenya (1898-1981). The Foundation administers the Weill-Lenya Research Center, a Grant Program, the Kurt Weill Book Prize and the Lotte Lenya Competition, and publishes the Kurt Weill Edition and the Kurt Weill Newsletter.