

OUR PERFORMERS

Susan Dennis is an active soloist equally at home with Musical Theatre and Classical staged productions. She is a member of the Chicago Chapter of NATS and enjoys adjudicating aspiring singers as well as preparing students for college auditions, and vocal competitions. Susan is on the Board of *Working in Concert* and an active member of Chicago Cabaret Professionals.

Kenneth Fobs' career spans theatre, singing, and on-camera projects in both Chicago and New York. In Chicago, he's graced stages at The ETA Theatre in *East of Jordan*, *Steppers Ball*, and *Get Ready*; at Theatre on the Lake in *The Piano Lesson*; at the Kathryn Dunham Theater in *Chicago* and *Chocolate Chips*, and at Chicago State University in *Brother Malcolm*. In New York, he brought his talents to The Nuyorican Poets Café in *Jack Pot Melting*, and *Don't Tell Mama's*. Join Ken on **October 19, at Epiphany Center for the Arts** for *Music, Life, Love & Truth*.

Sheri Flanders, actor, comedian, vocalist, is a member of the Playground Chicago Theater Company. Her film and theater criticism appears in *Chicago Sun-Times* and the *Chicago Reader*, and featured on WTTW Chicago Tonight and WGN Radio.

Claudia Hommel, singer-actor, is co-founder of Chicago Cabaret Professionals, the Chicago Paris Cabaret Connexion, and the performing arts Working In Concert. She has led SongShop since 2003. She is known for her Paris-themed shows and recordings. Cabaret-paree.com

Rosalind Hurwitz has been performing professionally in Chicago for over 20 years. Equally at home singing and acting, she's appeared in *My Fair Lady* and *Suor Angelica* this year, and will be seen in *The Comedy of Errors* this fall.

Alison Isсен has sung in ensembles of all types throughout her life and returned to doing theatre in the Orlando area several years ago. This nurse/psychotherapist moved to Chicago 2 years ago and has appreciated the opportunities to learn and sing presented by the Chicago cabaret community.

Randolph Johnson is acclaimed for his portrayal of Charlie in *The Bridges of Madison County* (4 Jeff Awards); Horse in Kokandy's *Full Monty*, Blood in ETA's production of *Every Night When The Sun Goes Down*, Cousin Acey in *The Clara Ward Story*; Booker T. Washington in *Ragtime* at Porchlight Music Theatre and Big Noise Theatre; Bailiwick Theatre's *Kiss of the Spiderwoman*; Newt Lee in *Parade* and Jacques Brel at Theo Ubique, Max Roach Trio, U of I Black Chorus, and Chicago Chamber Opera.

David Kellen is a seasoned piano player based in Chicago. He performs both solo and as a keyboardist with several prominent Chicago event bands including jazz ensembles, and internationally in countries including France, Russia, and Spain. He directs music at the Lutheran Church of St. Luke in Itasca and contributes to numerous prestigious events and corporate clients.

Staci Kelley, singer, actress, director has performed in and directed several productions in the Chicago area. A longstanding member of CCP, she brought her duo show *A Walk through Love* to Davenport's in 2006 and performs for Working In Concert and Opportunity Knocks.

Kelci Kosin, soprano, has earned both national and international acclaim as a versatile performer and holds an extensive repertoire spanning song, opera, and musical theatre. Her performances include Rosalinda in *Die Flendermause*, Mimi in *La Boheme*, Fiordiligi in *Cosi fan tutte*, title role in *Suor Angelica*, Lola in *Gallantry*,

Grace Farrell in *Annie*, and Miss Honey in *Matilda*. Kelci is a full-time voice faculty member and Coordinator of Vocal Studies at Columbia College Chicago. She holds a Doctor of Arts in Music from Ball State University.

Lauren Lassen grew up performing and producing musicals at home with her older brother and singing in choir. She loves singing in productions by Working In Concert and most recently has been seen at Epiphany Center for the Arts as a finalist in Chicago Cabaret Professionals Emerging Artist Showcase.

Jennifer McCabe has been a collaborative pianist and coach for over 25 years, performing with esteemed artists in Chicago and music directing both opera and musical theater productions. She is a sought-after teaching artist whose students are consistently accepted into and attend prestigious schools and music camps. Jennifer is also a worship musician who leads choirs, as pianist and organist.

Carl Ratner, baritone, has served as Artistic Director of Chicago Opera Theater and Chamber Opera Chicago, and leading Western Michigan University's Opera Department. Well known for recitals and concert work, he has sung in 14 languages in 6 European countries. He now serves as Associate Artistic Director of Bellissima Opera, directs many of their operas, and is President of Working In Concert.

Christine Steyer, soprano, has distinguished herself as an artist of great versatility. She has sung in 40 productions at Lyric Opera of Chicago and is an avid recitalist. In addition to being a private voice teacher, she is the cofounder of Working In Concert, the Artistic Director of its Bellissima Opera initiative, and librettist for the *Tales of Transcendence* opera series.

Lauren Sutherland, coloratura soprano's recent performances include Phyllis in the Savoyaires' production of *Iolanthe*, Suor Osmina/Second Touriere in the Valkyrie Ensemble's *Suor Angelica*, and in concert with Great Lakes Operetta and Fox Valley Opera. Lauren received her Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance from the Wheaton College Conservatory and completed her graduate studies at UMKC, studying under Dr. Maria Kanyova.

Join us at our preview concerts as we go OFF TO PARIS for the Chicago Paris Cabaret Connexion in late October.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28 at 4 —PM BARBARA SMITH AND FRIENDS

Featuring also Carolyn Broquet, Tirzah Joy, Sonia Oyola, David Hoffman, Julia Hawkins, LouElla Rose, Claudia Hommel and music director Daniel Stetzel!

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12 at 4 PM —Anne Burnell brings together CHICAGO SOUNDS

The second of our preview concerts is led by Anne Burnell with Howie Pfeifer and Mark Burnell at the piano. Featuring musical genres that make Chicago sing! Blues, jazz, R&B, classical, musical theatre and burlesque.

Both shows: **Gateway Lounge at the Copernicus Center**, 5216 West Lawrence in Chicago (free parking lot, quick by the Kennedy Xway) Tickets will be posted soon at <https://copernicuscenter.org/upcoming-events/>

A benefit for Working In Concert

Popera Pairings

In a River Forest Garden

Sunday, August 24, 2025 at 4 PM

Collaborative Pianists: David Kellen & Jennifer McCabe

Coordinators Claudia Hommel & Susan Dennis

ACT I

- Rosalind Hurwitz*** *I've Been Invited to a Party* - Noël Coward
- Claudia Hommel*** *Mandoline* - Gabriel Fauré & Paul Verlaine (arranged by Dennis Luxion & Bobby Schiff)
- Susan Dennis*** *Musetta's Waltz* - ___Puccini (*La Bohème*)
- Carl Ratner*** *Je te veux* – Erik Satie & Henri Pacory
- Staci Kelley*** *Gimme, Gimme* - Jeanine Tesori (*Thoroughly Modern Millie*)
- Christine Steyer*** *Per pietà bel idol mio* - Vincenzo Bellini
- Christine Steyer*** *Open Arms* - Steve Perry & Jonathan Cain
- Randolph Johnson & Susan Dennis*** *The Closer I Get to You* - James Mtume & Reggie Lucas
- Alison Issen*** *Poor Butterfly* - Ray Hubbard & John L. Golden (*The Big Show*)
- Alison Issen*** *Maybe* - Claude-Michel Schönberg & Alain Boublil & Michael Mahler (*Miss Saigon*)
- Lauren Sutherland*** *Impossible* – Richard Rodgers & Oscar Hammerstein II (*Cinderella*)
- Lauren Sutherland*** *Ah douce enfant* – Massenet (*Cendrillon*)

Entr'acte

Working In Concert educates, advocates for, and mobilizes a network of performers to use the art of song to build community. We prefer to play up close and personal. Our initiatives include Bellissima Opera & Song, Black Voices in Cabaret, Chicago Paris Cabaret Connexion, Chicago Cabaret Week, SongShop Live and Diverse Voices in Schools (cabaret and opera in the classroom)

ACT II

Kenneth Fobs & Claudia Hommel *Gifts of the Blackbird* - Gabriel Fauré & Paul McCartney

Kelci Kosin *Art Is Calling to Me* - - Victor Herbert (*The Enchantress*)

Lauren Lassen *I Have Confidence* - Richard Rodgers (*The Sound of Music*)

Sheri Flanders *Simple Joys of Maidenhood* -Lerner & Loewe (*Camelot*)

Kelci Kosin *The Jewel Song* – Charles Gounod , Jules Barbier and Michel Carr (*Faust*)

Staci Kelley *I Dreamed a Dream* - Claude-Michel chönberg (*Les Miserables*) -

Randolph Johnson *God Bless the Child* – Billie Holiday & Arthur Herzog, Jr. (arranged by Blood Sweat and Tears)

Carl Ratner *Car je t'aime* - Henri Crolla & Pierre Vielhomme

Claudia Hommel *Madame Arthur* – Yvette Guilbert & Paul deKock

Kenneth Fobs *Time after Time* - Jule Styne & Sammy Cahn

Lauren Lassen & Ensemble *So Long, Farewell* - Richard Rodgers & Oscar Hammerstein II (*The Sound of Music*)