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**GRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT**

**LAMONT MEZZO-SOPRANO TO PORTRAY DONNA ELVIRA IN MOZART'S DON GIOVANNI**

by Miles Canaday

Jovahnna Anderson, a graduate voice student at the Lamont School of Music, will sing the complex role of Donna Elvira in the Lamont Opera Theatre production of Don Giovanni, Mozart's masterpiece of lust, revenge, and humor, on April 17-20 at the Newman Center for the Performing Arts.

"This is the most dramatic role I've ever played," said Anderson. "Elvira's so dynamic and I get to express a lot of different emotions at one time: anger, and then composure, but I'm madly in love with Don Giovanni still!"

In her first scene in the opera, Donna Elvira sings of her anger toward her lover who abandoned her. Don Giovanni hears her crying and swoops in to begin wooing her, only to realize she is in fact singing about him! Giovanni makes a smooth getaway, leaving his servant to tell Elvira that he is not worth pursuing. To illustrate his point, he shows her a tome containing the names of all the women Giovanni has slept with throughout Europe. Elvira then adds herself to the list of characters who have sworn revenge on Don Giovanni—and it's still only the second scene.

This scene contains Anderson's favorite aria, "Mi tradì quell'alma ingrata" (or "The ungrateful wretch betrayed me"), which she noted is significantly higher in range than Elvira's other arias, yet it "really shows Elvira's sympathy for Giovanni, anger toward herself, and the realization that he's never going to change." It seems Elvira is the only character who pities Don Giovanni: "If he does repent, then I can forgive myself and allow myself to be in love with him and him with me. That's why I pity him."

"Jovahnna has an exceptional voice," said Kenneth Cox, director of the Lamont Opera Theatre. "She is a very hard-working and gifted performer. In addition to her musical talent, she is a kind-hearted colleague with her peers as well as a great role model."

When asked why this opera is still relevant, especially with traditional, 18th century staging and costumes, Anderson replied that Don Giovanni "has a lot of dynamics: love, tragedy, hate, anger, revenge, sweet justice...evil-doers...get what's coming to them. Also, the music is incredible—it's just gorgeous." Plus, there's a lot of talent in the production, she added.
"All the singers are really great and well-prepared...I think that all of them combined will make this a great show."

Lamont Opera Theatre presents:
Mozart's Don Giovanni
Thursday-Saturday, April 17-19 at 7:30pm & Sunday, April 20 at 2:30pm
Gates Concert Hall
Newman Center for the Performing Arts
Newmanktx.com (303) 871-7720