



A Rising Star Comes Home!

Lindsey Reynolds to Sing Lead Female Role in New Orleans Opera Production

By Dean M. Shapiro, Senior Editor

The dream of every aspiring opera singer is to perform a lead role on the stage of the New York Metropolitan Opera. For Lindsey Reynolds, that dream remains on the horizon.

However, the 26-year-old soprano is thrilled to be making her mainstage debut with her hometown's New Orleans Opera in a lead female role on April 4, 2025. On that date, and again on April 6, Lindsey will portray Adina in Gaetano Donizetti's beloved two-act opera, *L'elisir d'amore* (*The Elixir of Love*), at the Mahalia Jackson Theater.

"I am so excited and thankful to New Orleans Opera for this opportunity," Lindsey shared in a recent interview from Philadelphia, where she was rehearsing for a recital. "New Orleans holds a very special place in my heart. It's my home, where my family still lives, and it's incredibly rewarding to perform a major role here. Adina, in particular, feels like a perfect fit for this milestone."

This is not Lindsey's first time portraying Adina; she performed the role at the Chautauqua Institute in 2018 at the age of 19. Now, with years of experience and training, she's ready to bring a new depth to the character.

Lindsey grew up in the Gentilly neighborhood, the youngest of three daughters of Joycelyn Reynolds, the President and CEO of Arts New Orleans, and Rudell Reynolds. She attended St. Anthony of Padua School and De La Salle High School, beginning her singing journey at age seven with the Crescent City Lights Youth Theatre under the guidance of Julie Condy, a New Orleans Opera Chorus member. By age 10, she had joined the Children's Chorus for two New Orleans Opera productions.

"At 12, when I was preparing to audition for NOCCA (New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts), I had to choose between opera and musical theatre," Lindsey recalled. "After lessons with my first voice teacher, Givonna Joseph, my mom encouraged me to pursue opera. She thought vocal training would serve me well, saying I could be like Audra McDonald and return to musical theater after training my voice."

Lindsey flourished during her time at NOCCA, studying under mentors such as Phyllis Treigle, daughter of the late, world-famous bass-baritone, Norman Treigle. After graduating, Lindsey continued her vocal study at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, one of the most prestigious conservatories in North America.

After receiving her Bachelor's Degree in Music in 2020 and her Masters in 2022

- both from Curtis - she moved to Chicago. As a member of the Ryan Opera Center Ensemble, she sang supporting roles in several operas for the renowned Lyric Opera of Chicago between 2022 and 2024. She also has future appearances scheduled with Chicago Opera Theater and Opera Philadelphia, further enhancing her status as a rising star in the opera world.

Lehisir d'amore is a comic opera centered on Nemorino, a poor young man in love with the wealthy and independent Adina. Hoping to win her heart, Nemorino buys and drinks what he believes to be a love potion from a traveling salesman. When he unknowingly inherits a fortune, the village women flock to him, falsely convincing him of the potion's power. In the end, Adina realizes her love for Nemorino, leading to a joyous conclusion.

"What I love most about this opera is the way Donizetti portrays women," Lindsey said. "Adina has so much agency, especially for the time the opera was composed. I love performing roles that highlight strong, multifaceted women."

While much of Lindsey's repertoire includes Italian and English works, she has also performed in French in Rossini's *Le comte Ory* and in Czech in Janacek's *Jenufa*. Looking ahead, she hopes to add to her resume roles like Anne Truelove in Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*, Pamina in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, Musetta in Puccini's *La boheme*, the title role in Massenet's *Manon* and Violetta in Verdi's *La Traviata*.

Lindsey draws inspiration from legendary sopranos Maria Callas, Kathleen

PHOTOS COURTESY OF LINDSEY REYNOLDS



Lindsey with her dad and mom, Rudell and Joycelyn Reynolds



Lindsey with her sisters, Sarah and Laura

Battle and Joan Sutherland, as well as New Orleans' own Lisette Oropesa, who has graced both The Met and the New Orleans Opera stages. Earlier in 2024, Lindsey understudied a key role in Terence Blanchard's *Champion* at Lyric Opera of Chicago.

"That role was special because I attended



Lindsey and other cast members in the American premiere of Missy Mazzoli's *The Listeners* for Opera Philadelphia, September 2024. The opera was named in the best classical performances of 2024 by the *New York Times*. PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEVEN PISANO



Lindsey's final performance as an Ensemble member at Chicago Lyric Opera's Ryan Opera Center singing "Pur ti miro" from L'incoronazione di Poppea with Mezzo-Soprano, Sophia Maekawa. PHOTOGRAPHY BY KYLE FLUBACKER

school with Terence's daughters," she said. "It also suited my voice perfectly and I felt a strong connection to its New Orleans roots."

Lindsey also has a passion for contemporary works, citing Missy Mazzoli as one of her favorite composers. In September 2024, she performed in the American premiere of Mazzoli's opera *The Listeners* with Opera Philadelphia, earning great success and glowing reviews for her portrayal of Ashley Devon. This further deepened her appreciation for the composer's innovative style.

"I love singing in English and performing new operas with relatable stories. It's a wonderful way to expand opera's audience," she noted.

In addition to her operatic pursuits, Lindsey dreams of returning to musical theatre, her "first love." Past performances include *Carousel* and *Sweeney Todd*, and she hopes to one day play Clara Johnson in Adam Guettel's *The Light in the Piazza*.

Back in New Orleans, Lindsey volunteers with an animal rescue organization and she recently fostered a terrier mix named Joey. She also enjoys kickball – a mix of soccer and baseball – playing on an adult team in City Park, and listening to contemporary pop music.

As Lindsey prepares for her homecoming debut, she looks forward to a cheering section of family, friends, and opera lovers from all across New Orleans and the surrounding area. "My parents have always been very supportive of me and my career. They often travel to see my performances in different cities. I'm so lucky to have them!" she concluded.

Tickets for The Elixir of Love are available at www.neworleansopera.org or by calling the box office at (504) 529-3000 during business hours. For other inquiries call (504) 529-2278.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JACLYN SIMPSON



Lindsey in a recital at the Britten Pears Arts Festival in Aldeburgh, England, U.K., summer 2024.

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