



Jalisa Andrews



Dominic Sibanda



Ephraim Sykes



Kristin Yancy

## Naomi André

### Panel Chair

**Naomi André** is Professor in the Department of Afroamerican and African Studies, Women's and Gender Studies, and the Residential College at the University of Michigan. She received her B.A. from Barnard College and M.A. and Ph.D. (Music: Musicology) from Harvard University. Her research focuses on opera and issues surrounding gender, voice, and race in the US, Europe, and South Africa. Her publications include topics on Italian opera, Schoenberg, women composers, and teaching opera in prisons. Her book, *Black Opera: History, Power, Engagement* (University of Illinois Press, 2018) won the Lowens Book Award from the Society for American Music and Judy Tsou Critical Race Studies Award from the American Musicological Society. Her earlier books include *Voicing Gender: Castrati, Travesti, and the Second Woman in Early Nineteenth-Century Italian Opera* (2006) and *Blackness in Opera* (2012, co-edited collection). She has edited and contributed to clusters of articles in African Studies and the Journal of the Society for American Music. Currently she is a co-editor for the essay collection *African Performance Arts and Political Acts* (University of Michigan Press, forthcoming in 2021). She is the inaugural Scholar in Residence at the Seattle Opera and a founding member of the Black Opera Research Network (BORN).

## Panel

### Jalisa Andrews

Jalisa Andrews born and raised in South Wales, first language Welsh. Since graduating from Laine Theatre Arts in 2016 Jalisa has most recently starred in *The Left Behind* for BBC THREE, available now on BBC iplayer. Jalisa was also featured in *Nativity Rocks!* as Miss Bailey. In contrast she has danced and modelled for Gok Wan.

Theatre credits include: The UK premiere of *The Life* (Southwark Playhouse) as Chichi, UK premiere of *Nativity* the musical UK Tour as TJ'S mum and on-stage swing, QDOS Entertainment Jack and the Beanstalk (The Royal Derngate Theatre, Northampton) as Spirit of the Bean, QDOS Entertainment *Cinderella* (Swansea Grand Theatre) as Fairy God Mother and *BARK!* playing Boo at Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Television credits include: *Don't Stop Believing* (Channel 5), Edward of Conway Advert (S4C/ ITV WALES) and Wyt Ti'n Gêm (S4C).

### Ephraim Sykes

**Ephraim Sykes** received a Tony Nomination for his portrayal of "David Ruffin" in *AIN'T TOO PROUD* (The Life and Times of the Temptations) on Broadway. Other Broadway credits include: *Hamilton: An American Musical* (OBC), *Memphis* (OBC), *Newsies* (OBC), *Motown* (OBC) and *The Little Mermaid*. TV/Film credits include: "Seaweed J. Stubbs" in *NBC's HAIRSPRAY LIVE!*, "Marvin" on Vinyl, Luke Cage, Smash, 30Rock, Leave It On The Floor, Woody Allen's Crisis in Six Scenes, and Detroit directed by Kathryn Bigelow. A native of St. Petersburg, Florida, Ephraim graduated from the Alvin Ailey/Fordham University BFA program with departmental honors and toured with the Ailey II Company for two years.

### Dominic Sibanda

**Dominic Sibanda** trained in Musical Theatre professionally at Laine Theatre Arts in Epsom, U.K. At the Laine Theatre Arts, Dominic performed in the pantomimes Peter Pan (Ensemble/Cover Hook) and Snow White (Prince Henry). Sibanda left college early to join the West End Cast of Disney's Aladdin and the later feature of the production in Disney+ digital capture. Recent performances include Indio/cover and Bernardo in West Side Story at the Leicester Curve, Seaweed in Hairspray with Royal Caribbean and Prince Charming in Cinderella at The Theatre Royal Windsor.

### Kristin Yancy

**Kristin Yancy** is a dancer, actor, singer, and creator based in Brooklyn, New York. She has appeared on television and in Broadway houses and regional theaters around the country. Some favorite credits include *The Cher Show* (Broadway, Vacation Swing), Summer, The Donna Summer Musical (Broadway, u/s Disco Donna), Josh Rhodes' *The Who's Tommy* (The Kennedy Center), Guthrie Theater's *West Side Story*, directed by Joseph Haj and choreographed by Maija Garcia (Dance Captain, u/s Anita), Hostage, a film by Ryan Heffington, and the Off Broadway hit *Queen of the Night*, directed by Christine Jones and choreographed by Lorin Latarro. Prior to the pandemic Kristin was performing as a cast member of *Bliss*, a new musical, which had its world premiere at the 5th Avenue Theater on February 14th, 2020. Kristin holds a B.A. in Comparative Arts with minors in Writing and Design from Washington University in St. Louis, and has trained at Joffrey Ballet School, San Francisco Conservatory of Dance, Heidi Marshall Studio, The Barrow Group, The Will Bryan Vocal Studio, with Eddie Schneckner, and with Marianne Wells. Kristin is an Executive Producer and Co Founder of MinuteZero, an immersive events company that specializes in site specific, theatrical live performance. [kristinyancy.com](http://kristinyancy.com); [theycallmeyancy.com](http://theycallmeyancy.com).